

# **Chapter V**

## **Findings and Discussion**

## CHAPTER V

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.0 Overview of the previous chapters

The previous four chapters have presented thematic framework, review of related literature, methodology, data presentation, analysis and interpretation of data. Recapitulating these chapters, this study is about understanding the nature of participation of learners in municipal elementary schools of Surendranagar with the purpose of gaining an insight into what makes learners complete elementary education. The learning from this study will help to facilitate those learners who are to be helped to complete elementary education. Also, as more learners complete elementary education, it will lead to creation of society with more literate adult learners. In order to understand what has helped those learners who have completed their elementary education, it becomes necessary to gain an understanding of learners, their background, the schools where they study and the broader framework of government policy initiatives for promotion of UEE.

The research questions for the study are:

- The overall achievement in terms of literacy rate is 73.19% in Surendranagar city. What has made the learners sustain in school and contribute to the achievement of the goal of UEE?
- Though the three cities in Saurashtra region have a high literacy rate, it is not similar in all the three cities. What are those conditions which have facilitated learners' completion of elementary education in Surendranagar city?
- How are these learners, parents and school related to each other and influence the completion of elementary education?

- What are the different combinations of aspects influencing learners and lead them to complete of elementary education?

In order to address these research questions, it was necessary to study the several factors operating simultaneously in the school system. In view of the distinct variations in the different school systems in India such as, private, public, government, central board, and so on, the present study was delimited to all schools in one school system i.e., all municipal schools in Surendranagar city with Classes up to VIII. Accordingly, the study is titled 'Understanding the Nature of Participation of Learners in Elementary Education in Municipal Schools of Surendranagar'.

The objectives of the study are:

- To study the background of learners who have completed primary education in municipal schools of Surendranagar city in terms of:
  - Growth indicators of learners
  - Profile of learners
  - Family profile of learners
  - House profile of learners
- To study the school profile of municipal schools of Surendranagar city in terms of:
  - Facilities in school
  - Learning engagement with respect to
    - Teaching learning
    - Teacher learner relationship

- Discerning participation of learners in elementary education as an interplay of; background of learners - growth indicators of learners, profile of learners, family, house and school profile

For the sample, all the 22 municipal elementary schools of Surendranagar city, 490 learners who had completed eight years of elementary education continuously in the 22 municipal elementary schools of Surendranagar, 63 teachers of these schools who had taught these learners during the eight years of the learners' elementary education, 22 principals of these elementary schools and 35 parents of these learners were identified as sample. The tools used for the present study were Proforma for background of learners, checklist for facilities in school and informal interaction for learning engagement of learners. Based on the data analysis and interpretation, the findings of the study that emerge to address the research questions are presented.

## **5.1 Findings**

The findings of the study are presented variable wise.

### **Background of Learners**

- Economic condition and parental education of learners is low in the family of learners but most of them live in own houses with basic minimum facilities of water, electricity, sanitation and have access to several gadgets such as refrigerator, fan, air cooler and television. The learners have comfort of basic facilities in house. Most of the learners have age appropriate height and weight. Most of the learners live in small nuclear families with maximum of six family members. Most of the learners are Hindu. Most of them belong to OBC irrespective of any religion.

### **Profile of School**

- As all municipal elementary schools in the sample are under the purview of government schemes and all learners derive benefits from these schemes; schools are regular in their functioning with adequate teachers and carry out prescribed activities for teaching learning. This attracts the learners to come to school.

### **Nature of participation of learners in Municipal Elementary Schools**

- As both parents are working, learners need some attention which could be one of the reasons for learners sustaining in school; further, going to school provided peer contact which is very essential at their stage of development
- Nearness of school makes it easy for learners to attend school regularly as they can easily walk.
- Inadequate space at home and the family size makes the parents to send their child to school.
- Parents may not be educated but they sent their child to school for various reasons such as low economic condition, benefits of government scheme, high aspiration for their child' future and awareness towards education of their child.
- Schools with pucca building and wall all around provide secure large space and other facilities in school which they may not have at home, making it enjoyable along with age cohorts.
- All schools are safe and secured as all school have boundary walls with space in terms of play ground where learners liked to play with age cohorts.
- Schools have learning material which is attractive for them. Though learners have electronic equipment such as Television at home, the parents may be unaware of

taking advantage of them for educational purposes. But in school, Television is used for broadcasting different audio visual programmes through which learners learn.

- Computer availability is another attractive feature in school ensuring learners to continue in school.
- Schools are seen as a space where a variety of learning activities happen and learners get attention of teachers. Thus, when teachers are attentive to learners and learning resources are provided, learners participate in school. Teaching learning when largely based on SSA prescribed guidelines seem to have been working to create an enabling environment in school for learners and then to make them continue and complete their elementary education. The spirit of SSA is to make schools rich environments for learners with the aim of attracting them to school and to make them participate in schooling. The SSA Mission seems have achieved this aim to a considerable extent.
- All the above are seen to have impacted learner participation in several school activities. However, not many creative activities are evolved by teachers mostly as they are hands full with their various responsibilities which go beyond classroom activities.

## **5.2 Discussion**

The present study is driven by the question that what made the learners complete their elementary education in municipal elementary schools. The purpose of this question is to understand what has helped learners sustain in schools and thereby share the understanding to help different learners in different contexts to sustain and complete

elementary education. In this attempt, the present study covers the background of learners and school profile to find out how the combination of these aspects have helped the learners to continue in school and complete their elementary education. The findings indicate that there is a continuous interplay between aspects about learners' background and aspects of school which has helped the learners to complete elementary education. Considering this in terms of gender of learners, it has been found out that almost equal numbers of boys and girls have participated in elementary education and completed their elementary education in municipal schools. Grass root level efforts to bring girls learners to school also were made. One of the municipal elementary school in Surendranagar city was established only for girls as the parents did not wish to send their girls child to study with boys. Gender equity to some extent in term of receiving elementary education appears to have been achieved in Surendranagar city as the finding reveals that regularity of girls and academic achievement has been high. This is not supported by the study of Singh & Mukherjee (2015) which found, "Completion of secondary education is biased towards boys". Further, academic achievement of girls is better than boys. The finding of Ramchandran (2004), "if regularity can be assured, girls perform as well, if not better, than boys in school.", supports the finding of the present study. The fact of improved girls' education in general is also reflected in the findings of studies of Josephine (1998); Uma, Kavitha & Prashanti (2014); Baruah (2013); Chaudhary (2012) and; Augustine, Dasgupta & Menon (2012). This implies that efforts towards girl's education seem to have been successful in bringing girls to school as well as making girls to complete elementary education.

An analysis of the learners' background in terms of caste shows that the present study revealed that irrespective of any religion the learners belonged to OBC category of caste. As a large number of castes is covered under OBC and the fact of less population of SC (10.22%) and ST (1.22%) as per Census, 2011 in Surendranagar city, most of the learners who completed elementary education belonged to OBC. This finding is not substantiated with one of the finding of Ramchandran (2004), "Caste and community of children influence educational participation and outcomes along with the economic status." One of the sampled Municipal Elementary School H has all Muslim learners as the locality near the school is Muslim. Participation of learners belonging to SC and ST category has been found to be less in elementary education and this is supported by the study of Gouda & Sekher (2014). The general category might have preferred to admit their child in low cost in terms of low fees private school as there are several private schools which cater to the middle class and lower middle class. This might have attracted the general category learners which resulted into low participation of general category of learners in government elementary schools. This also indicates that government initiatives for UEE have been able to penetrate general category learners and reach the OBC. As a special case of a girl learner who is Christian and belongs to OBC among all the learners, come from family where both parents' education level is of graduation level though the income is low. The parental education for the girl learner assured high academic performance and regularity in school. Thus, girls' education seems to have been promising as almost equal number of girls have continued and completed their elementary education. These girls were benefitted by government initiatives. In addition to this, the learners belonging from OBC category both boys and girls have benefitted most from program of SSA and UEE



which helped them to continue to be in school. The next level perhaps is to explore how it can attract and retain learners from SC and ST castes.

Learners from nuclear family appear to be in large numbers who completed elementary education which finds consistency with the study of Joubish & Khurram (2011) as this study indicated family size as one of the reason for drop out. It shows that if family size smaller, the learners tend to complete their elementary education without dropping out. In nuclear family, generally, the earning member of family has no responsibility other than that of spouse and children. The earning of the family member is not more than Rs.60,000 per annum among majority of learners but the mother's income seemed to have been helpful as majority of mothers also earn. Also, in this type of family, majority of learner's house profile seem to be conducive to learners in terms of ownership of house, space, resources and electronic gadgets at home. The reason for owned houses in the nuclear family could be that they were inherited and so further investment for houses is not needed. Thus, the family could afford household items such as TV, mobile and refrigerator. The learners come from low educational as well as economical background completed their elementary education which is not supported by finding of Singh and Mukherjee (2015) that "Parental education is associated with occupation type, aspirations and most importantly economic stability, which in turn help children to complete secondary schooling." The achievement of learners is key aspect for completion of elementary education in the present study where majority of learners have achieved B grade which is above average. Thus, the present finding finds consistency with the studies of Yelkperci, D. (2016), Pettigrew (2009), Suleman, Hussain, Khan & Nisa (2012), Ovansa (2017), Memon, Joubish & Khurram (2010), Dahie, Mohamed & Moalim (2016),

Singh & Choudhary (2015) & Islam & Khan (2017), Considine & Zappalla (2002), Nguru & Amollo (2017), Barry (2006), Kapinga (2014), Okioga (2013), Das & Sinha (2017), Singh and Mukherjee (2015) and Ramchandran (2004). These studies also contradict the present study where it found few learners with lower grades also continued and completed their elementary education. These studies found low education and economic condition of family influenced the achievement of the learners. On the contrary, Loken (2007), Michubu (2013), Lin & Lv (2017) and Satyarthi (2018) found no influence of socio economic condition of parents on achievement of learners. In such conditions, the free education by government with incentives compels the parents to admit their child in government elementary schools especially when the school which is at the nearest location from their house. Thus, nearness of the school found to have helped learners to be regular in school as they can walk easily. The present finding is substantiated with the study of Raj (2011), Charles (2014), Mbolela (2010) and Ramchandran (2004) where distance between school and house of learners contributes to completion of their education.

All the schools found to have under the purview of government scheme and parents of learners seem to have been aware of the benefits from government in terms of free education, MDM, free uniform and free textbooks as per norms. Thus, all the learners derive benefits of these schemes which appear to have helped the learners to continue their education. This is supported by Manimangala (2012); Paul & Mondal (2012); Kaushal (2009) and; Josephine (1998). More specifically MDM seem to have profound effect on learner elementary education as MDM as one of the government initiatives in school is found to have co-existed with high regularity of learners and health status as per IAP norms. Further, the co existence of appropriate health condition and high regularity is found in the present study which is also supported by Glewwe & Miguel (2008). It

indicates that the learners received the nutritious food for required number of days in school as one time meal which is likely to have influence on their health and become regular in the school which is supported by UNESCO EFA (2011b). This becomes evident when parents, learners as well as teachers perceive MDM as drive for learners as well as parents to make learner regular in school. The learners' one of the basic needs of food is assured by providing food on daily basis in the school which is supported by the findings of Kaushal (2009). The aim of MDM to provide nutrition support and to attract learners to get admission in and continue in school seems to have successful in government elementary school which finds consistency with the findings of Paul & Mondal (2012), Kaushal (2009) and Josephine (1998). It can be stated that the unhealthy condition of learners might have negatively influenced their participation in elementary education which is substantiated by the findings of Kishore & Shaji (2012). Further, the learners and their families have made optimum use of benefits received from government during eight years of schooling as it would help them to reduce expenses related to schooling especially when income of learner's family is low. The school as a mediator have made these benefits available to learners and their families so that those benefits would facilitate the learners to come to school and complete their elementary education. Over and above the responsibility of teaching, teacher took some efforts for MDM quality check and timely distribution of uniform and textbooks from schools. Along with the regular activities in school, teachers could provide motivation to learners to continue their elementary education. Thus, the learners who come from economically and educationally weak background continued to be in elementary municipal school having benefitted by government initiatives which is found in the present study. It indicates that

the low economical and educational background brought the learners to school where the learners sustained due to various government initiatives which learners received. The initiatives of SSA helped to hold the learners in the school as different aids were provided to learners as well as to school and teachers to improve quality of teaching learning.

The learners' regularity in the school is found to be high. This might be because of various reasons. It may not be always interest for learning but it could be just interest to be with children of similar age. One of the reasons could be, open place for play is available in school which perhaps they might not find at home or nearby home as is evident from the description of their homes. The learners are also occupied with activities along with teaching learning which perhaps they did not have scope at home to enjoy and participate. The learners participated in different activities which show that different activities have been conducted in class as well as at school level for learners to provide them scope for their overall development. All these reasons could have tempted learners to come to school as learners perhaps would not get scope to participate in such activities at home or anywhere else. Hence having come to school, exposure to different activities of teaching learning and equipments in school could be the reason that helped the learners in strengthening the regularity in school. Then learners look at school as an opportunity to have learning experience which required the school to provide enabling learning environment for learners. To provide such enabling learning environment in school, facilities which make them come to school are to be made available to the learners. To maintain regularity of learners in school, the government facilitated each school with basic facility which is found to be available in all school. All the schools are found to have safe and secure with boundary wall, large play ground and pucca building which

learners may not have at home and where learners liked to play. This finding is supported by the study of Mbolela (2010), Bhunia, Shit & Duary (2012), Kanyora (2014) and Barrett et al. (2019) whereas not supported by one of the findings of McGowan (2007) indicating, “student achievement, attendance and completion rate measures were not found to be statistically significant in relation to school facility conditions.” The prescribed norms for provision of infrastructure facilities and timely providing learning resources in school might be driving force for making all these facilities available for learners by school authorities. The provision of learning resources provides capacity building to teachers due to which teachers could conduct variety of activities in class and also at school level. Further, the availability of different sports equipments, musical instruments, computers, furniture and other electronic equipments are made available under the provision of SSA initiatives. The schools have learning material which is attractive for the learners. This finding is supported by the study of Bisht (2016). The infrastructure facilities in school are given importance not only to attract but also make them attend the school for the whole day. It has helped teachers and principal to make the required facilities available in the school which could be helpful to sustain learners in the school and enjoy in the school. What has strengthened the availability of learning resources and its use in school is the notifications received by government. This fact is further strengthened by the lack of facilities at home where learners seem to have less scope of . Thus, what brings learners to school and to continue in school is combination of all these aspects. This particularly is observed in the case of availability of ICT facilities in school and its use for teaching learning. In addition to other electronic equipments available in school, computer

availability is another attractive feature in school ensuring learners to continue in school. which is in agreement by the findings of Muema, Mulwa & Mailu (2018).

Further, if schools provide a variety of experiences in school then it is likely to attract learners. Having come to school, exposure to different activities of teaching learning and equipments in school helped the learners in strengthening the regularity in school. Then learners look at school as an opportunity to have learning experience which makes the school to provide enabling learning environment for learners. Thus, when teachers are attentive to learners and learning resources are provided, learners participate in school. Teaching learning when largely based on SSA prescribed guidelines seem to have been working to create an enabling environment in school for learners and then to make them continue and complete their elementary education. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Kanyora (2014) and Adams, Lemaire & Prah (2013). So, if learners are given some support for the constraints they face at home, the learners are likely to be sustained in schools and they are likely to participate in schools. With special reference to the kind of support learners receive from teachers motivates and attracts learners to come to school and complete their education which is substantiated by the findings of Be (2017), da Luz, (2015), Alnasseri (2014), Košir & Tement (2013), Ayaz & Shah (2013), Lee (2012), Joubish & Khurram (2011), Yunus, Osman, & Ishak (2011), Camp (2011) and Mbolela (2010) & Nugent (2009). On the contrary, the lack of such motivations and support from teachers might also have resulted into non continuation in elementary education. This is supported by the findings of Joubish & Khurram (2011). Thus, when school compensates the lack of availability of resources at home; learners are attracted to school and they continue in school. The finding of the present study is substantiated by the findings of

Kanyora (2014), Joubish & Khurram (2011), Augustine, Dasgupta & Menon (2012), Raj (2011) and Manimangala (2012). Hence, coming to school and maintaining regularity appears to have been facilitated by interplay of low education of parents; lack of learning support at home; lack of learning support at home; lack of resources at home; easy access to school; support provided by teachers; exposure to different activities and; equipments in school.

Moving towards regularity, it is observed that the learners who completed their elementary education are found to also have high regularity. At the same time high regularity did not ensure high academic achievement. Most of the learners had average academic achievement. This is consistent with the findings of study by Antony & David (2014) and Raj (2011). In addition to this, school readiness is found to be in poor status among all the learners which co exists with average academic achievement. This finding is supported by Bhise & Sonawat (2017), Goodman & Sianesi (2005), Bibi & Ali (2012), Puhan, Ray & Das (2019) and Brophy, 2006. Further, the low economic condition, low education of learners' parents, are co existing with less school readiness of learners which is not supported by Ashetu (2014). Though the learners have average academic achievement, it is better than a poor academic achievement. Further, given the context of family where learners are depended on classroom teaching, they have less support at home for learning and less school readiness which might have resulted into their average academic achievement. The less support for learning at home seemed to have been result of the low education of parents as well as low income. But, learners' high regularity seem to have been due to the efforts of schools as well as that of family where school and family both contributed for the continuation of learners in elementary education which is

supported a by a study of Mbolela (2010) which show, “both home environment and school environment are factors that contribute to girls’ low rate of completion of basic education.” It shows that though the learners received less support for learning at home, parents’ awareness for education to some extent perhaps have positively influenced their regularity in school. This is in agreement with the study of Mbolela (2010). It can be stated that the learners whose parents are aware about education come to school and continue their elementary education. In addition to this, parents are also aware about different benefits received in school which may help them make their children to continue and to complete elementary education.

Though the parents appear to have shown initiative to admit learners to government elementary school, they have not shown similar initiative towards pre primary education. This could be due to less awareness about the role of pre primary education as a foundation for education in schools as parents’ education is also found to be low where majority of mothers are illiterate. Hence, out of the three years of pre primary education, majority of learners are found to have completed only two years and some have not completed even a single year of pre primary education. Thus, the conditions such as small families as in nuclear families, low income and low education with awareness towards government initiatives have tendency to support learners for education. Under same conditions, the caste too does not seem to be hindrance for learners in continuing elementary education which is not substantiated by the finding of Ramchandran (2004).

High regularity seems to have emerged as an important aspect with benefits received from government, easy access to school and facilities provided in school. Average academic achievement seems to have emerged as another aspect with poor school



readiness, less support for learning at home. This is compensated by learning engagement provided in school to learners. Specifically for easy access to school, the school location is found to have been within one km as recommended by Kothari Commission (1964) in its idea of neighbourhood schools. Low income of family, benefits received by government, easy access to school seem to have attracted learners in the school especially girls. On the other side, facilities provided in school; activities under teacher learning; other activities conducted at school level; care and support provided to learners by teachers; different grants to enhance the facilities in school and; teaching learning seem to have facilitated sustenance of the learners in the school which has resulted into high regularity in school and made learners complete their elementary education. This indicates that school succeeded in providing enabling environment to learners so that they could sustain and complete their elementary education. Thus, background of learners compels them to take admission in government elementary school and the enabling environment in schools sustained the learners so that learners could continue and complete their elementary education.

Thus, it appears that given the context of the learners' profile, the parents to some extent seem to be aware of the importance of education and the benefits provided by government for their child's education. This compelled the parents to admit their child into the school. Further, less support to learning at home seemed to have made learners more depended on classroom teaching which resulted into the high regularity among learners. The government prescribed norms for facilities in school as well as for teaching learning has attracted the learners to continue in their elementary education. Provided with such conditions, the learners' motivation towards education have made them

complete their elementary education which to some extent seemed to have been influenced by the support provided by teachers to learners. It is teachers who followed government prescribed guidelines for teaching learning, made optimum use of the available facilities in the school to learners and also took initiatives personally so that the learners would complete their elementary education. The principal as an organisation head made efforts to make sure all the government prescribed are followed by teachers and to bring community to support the learners. The human factor has helped the government initiatives to be effective in sustaining learners in the schools. However, documentation of all activities and processes is not very systematic both in the school and at the DEO's Office. Even attendance and academic performance of learners are not maintained completely and used for seeing learner development as progression.

Thus this study has explained schools are no more non-attractive places. Given the Mission mode of SSA, this extent of success has been possible. If things had been organised better as hinted above, greater success would be possible. If the Mission mode of SSA does not continue the positive influences may fade. This present status of elementary education will result into the better literate adults as it is assured that these learners have at least completed their elementary education with some learning experiences though do not have high academic achievements. These learners will have tendency for further education as they will have better awareness towards education.

#### **Shortfall of the Study**

The findings of the present study are constrained by certain factors. In few schools, as not even a single teacher who taught to learners taken as sample was teaching, data from these schools regarding teacher's perception of teaching learning was inadequate. The

teachers who taught to these learners either got transferred or retired and thus could not be contacted despite various efforts. Also, principals of the school who were in the same school during the eight years of the sample learners were not available as they were transferred. So, data is not comprehensive in terms participation of learners during eight continuous years in the school. The data related to academic performance of learners of all elementary classes were not maintained at 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' office as informed by the concerned officials and thus not shared with the investigator. The data related to academic performance of learners of all elementary classes could have provided comprehensive view of performance of learners during their elementary education for all eight years. This data would have helped in a year wise analysis which would have shown deeper insight into the continuation of elementary education by learners. Therefore, findings of the present study are constrained by the non availability of comprehensive data.

### **5.3 Suggestions for the Further Studies**

The present study is delimited to one city that is Surendranagar city, yet it has provided good insight into what makes learners to complete elementary education. But it cannot be generalized for state or for nation. In order to gain deeper understanding, suggestions for future research are given.

- Studies can be conducted focusing on only lower primary and upper primary in greater detail across region variations and on a larger scale, these regional variations can be urban and rural, different cities in same state and different states.
- Since SSA is over and attention is now shifted to RMSA, it is now important to study what is happening to the teaching learning and teaching learning material

provided to school under SSA. It is also important to study how are teachers have responded to it. Even with SSA, documents are not maintained and records are not available. To derive insight for policy, documents needs to be maintained.

- Trend analysis of academic performance and regularity of learners can be conducted.