



A CASE STUDY ON QUALITY OF SCHOOLING AT A NON-RESIDENTIAL SARASWATI SHISHU VIDYA MANDIR

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Abstract

This paper is a research based study with the findings of a case study conducted on a non-residential school run under “Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha”. The objective of this study was to make in-depth case study with reference to the dimensions of quality education such as: school environment, classroom environment, teaching learning process, student evaluation practices, teacher-pupil relationship, and organization of curricular activities, school community relationship, and learning achievement of students. Data were collected from the case through Information Schedule-cum-Checklist for Essential Facilities, Interview Schedule for Head Master/ Pradhan Acharya, Questionnaire for Teachers, Interview Schedule for Parents-cum-Community Members and Guidelines for Focus Group Discussion with Students, Classroom Observation Schedule, Achievement Test Battery-I & II, Field Notes, and Photographs. The key informants were selected purposively, which constituted the sample of the selected case study such as: Head Masters/Pradhan Acharya: 02 Teachers/Acharya: 12, Students: Class-VI-120; Class-VIII-120, and Parents: 20. The findings revealed that the infrastructural facilities were very excellent. The teaching learning process in different school subjects was excellent. The student’s evaluation process was based on the continuous and comprehensive evaluation process. Such evaluation proves includes both scholastic and co-scholastic aspects of students’ learning. The learning attainment of students was high as very negligible percentage (5%) students had secured scores below 30% in an achievement test. In Math and Social Studies, more than 25% students of Class-VI have obtained scores above 80% and in English 20-25% students have also secured scores more than 80%.

Keywords: Case Study, Quality of Schooling, Non-Residential School, Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir.



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INTRODUCTION

“Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha” is a registered organization affiliated to Vidya Bharati, which is having its registered office at Lucknow. All state committees are affiliated to Vidya Bharati. The Purva Kshetra a state committee is situated at Bhubaneswar and is known as Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha. The schools run by Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha was named as Saraswati Shishu Mandir and/or Saraswati Vidya Mandir which are affiliated to Board of Secondary Education, Odisha and provide education as per BSE, Odisha pattern.

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The education system at the schools under Shiksha Vikash Samiti is quite different from other schools in Odisha because of its students' achievements. The schools run by SVS, Odisha have been showing their dominance in school education in starting from Class-I to Class-X.

Quality of Education was a compressive term. It includes quality learners, quality environments quality content, quality processes and quality outcomes as described by Adams in 1993. Quality of education was defined in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, equity. Referring to these dimensions, quality of education in this study was explored in terms of school environment, classroom environment, teaching learning process and student evaluation, teacher-pupil relationship, organization of curricular activities school community relationship and learning attainment of students.

Many studies have been conducted on the quality dimensions in school education. Among those, Farombi (1998) observed that school environment may have negative influence on students' academic achievement especially if such environment lacks good school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, has poor teacher quality, type of location of school was questionable, there was small class size and over population of students in classrooms. According to Akande (1995), learning can occur through one's interaction with one's environment i.e. books, audio-visual, software and hardware of educational technology; so also, size of classroom, sitting position and arrangement, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, shelves on which instruments for practical were arranged (Farombi, 1998). The learning environment determines to a large extent how a student behaves and interacts, that was to say that the environment in which we find ourselves tend to mould our behaviour so as to meet the demands of life whether negatively or positively (Tsavga, 2011). Freiberg, Driscoll and Knights (1999) observed school climate, instructional materials, discipline, physical facilities, teacher quality, and type of location of school and class size produce better school leavers with high achievement. Academic achievement in this context simply means the scores students have obtained in either examination or test which has led to their performance. School climate, discipline and physical facilities have significant influence on academic achievement of secondary school students (Odeh, Oguiche & Ivagher, 2015).

Poor and inadequate facilities affect the overall performance of the institutions (Hussain, et al. 2012). Lyons (2001) stated that poor school facilities adversely impact teachers' effectiveness and also their performance. Consequently it negatively affects

students' achievement. Culp (2005) found that success can be ensured by using visual displays in classroom. Higgins, et al (2005) noted that desk arrangement can affect students' achievement and attention. Suleman and Hussain (2014) state that classroom favourable environment has a significant positive effect on the academic achievement scores of secondary school students.

The system of examination was inflexible. It was based on a 'one -size -fits -all' principle, wherein the individuality and creativity of the learner were not taken into account. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) developed on the basis of 21 position papers has looked into every aspect of school education. The document states that examinations require systemic reforms in the context of evaluation and assessment. The high failure rates, increasing number of school drop outs, unhealthy competition, stress, nervous breakdowns and suicides among learners make it imperative for Indian educationist to look into the evaluation system of the country which was at present examination oriented. The need of the hour was to prepare our young learners as innovative problem-solvers and not as rote-learners.

NCF (2005) proposed a shift in the approach towards teaching and learning, from the earlier behaviorist approach to the constructivist approach. Under the behaviorist approach the student's achievement was determined on the basis of memory, as a result of which, the meta-cognitive skills such as critical thinking; reasoning ability and problem solving were totally neglected. Whether, this new approach of learning was adapted in schools?

It was also suggested that assessment could be summative, formative or diagnostic, where summative assessment was carried out at the end of a course to assign the students grade. It involves judging overall competence and sometimes assigning grades, levels or scores to individual pupils. On the other hand, formative assessment was carried out throughout the academic session also known as educative assessment. Studies have also reported the importance of formative assessment as formative assessment has a strong impact on children's progress in primary and early years' settings (McCallum, 2000; Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2002, p. 7).

Kapur (2008) suggested assessment for better learning can take various forms such as: Self assessment, which enables students to monitor their own progress against specific objectives and evidence from their own work. Peer assessment, which helps to improve learning and to develop social and cooperative skills. Teacher's assessment, in which progress

and strengths were recognized, difficulties diagnosed and strategies to overcome them planned.

It was assumed that the success of the schools run by SVS Odisha may be because of the quality teaching learning, shift of earlier evaluation pattern to current assessment practice suggested in NCF-2005, cordial pupil-teacher relationship, parental involvement and above all conducive environment for learning in such schools. The questions were raised, whether, really the quality of education provided in these schools were learner centric, cordial so as to promote enhanced learning. The hidden cause of the success needs to be explored. Hence, the investigator intends to conduct a study on quality of education in schools under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha

Keeping in mind the quality dimensions of education and the success of schools run under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha, the researcher attempted to conduct a case study on a non-residential school as a part of her doctoral research. In addition, she did a case study on residential school. This paper was based on the findings of the case study on a non-residential school with regards to the quality dimensions of such as school environment, classroom environment, teaching learning process, student evaluation, teacher-pupil relationship, organization of curricular activities, school community relationship and learning attainment of students.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the case study was formulated as: to make in-depth case study of a selected Saraswati Shishu /Vidya Mandir with reference to the dimensions of quality education such as: school environment, classroom environment, teaching learning process, student evaluation practices, teacher-pupil relationship, organization of curricular activities, school community relationship, and learning achievement of students.

Research Questions of the Study

Corresponding to the objective of the study the research questions were posed as:

1. To what extent the school environment (e.g. classroom, playground, boundary wall, toilets, residential rooms, drinking water, kitchen, and dining hall) was conducive for learning?
2. To what extent the classroom activities were learner centric?
3. Whether the teaching learning process followed in the schools under study was appropriate so as to promote learning?
4. What were the practices of student evaluation followed in the school under study?

5. How cordial was the teacher-pupil relationship in the school under study?
6. What were the curricular activities organized in the school under study?
7. How was the school community relationship under study?
8. What was the learning achievement of students at different levels in basic school subjects?

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology followed for this study was qualitative i.e., case study. Details of methodology comprised that selection of case, selecting sample (key informants), tools of collection of data and techniques of data analysis was.

The Case: One non-residential Saraswati Shishu/Vidya Mandir named “Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir, Ghodabazar, Puri, Odisha” was selected through purposive sampling technique.

Key Informants within the Case: The key informants were selected purposively, which constituted the sample of the selected case study such as: Head Masters/Pradhan Acharya: 02 Teachers/Acharya: 12, Students: Class-VI-120; Class-VIII-120, and Parents: 20.

Tools used for Data Collection: Information Schedule-cum-Checklist for Essential Facilities, Interview Schedule for Head Master/ Pradhan Acharya, Questionnaire for Teachers, Interview Schedule for Parents-cum-Community Members, Guidelines for Focus Group Discussion with Students, Classroom Observation Schedule, Achievement Test Battery-I & II, Field Notes, and Photographs.

Data collected for the study were analyzed qualitatively with thick descriptions. Besides, data pertaining to learning attainment of students collected through Achievement Test Batteries (for Class-VI & Class-VIII) were analyzed quantitatively (percentage analysis).

RESULTS

The Case Profile

Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir, Ghodabazar Puri was a popular school that came into existence in 1992 whose foundation was laid by some noble and dedicated souls of the locality who were inspired by the ethics and ideology of Vidya Bharati under Akhila Bharatiya Shiksha Sansthan to bring out a trend in qualitative education. The Schools was situated at Ghodabazar near to railway station Puri. Total 1600 students were studying in the school starting from Shishu Prarambha to Class-X. Total 70 teachers including two Head Masters were teaching in the schools and non-teaching staff was 20. More than 60% teachers

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were trained and others were untrained. This Institution was imparting academic, cultural, technical, physical and ritual education to more than Sixteen Hundred students from Shishu Prarambha to Class 10th. It deploys about Seventy Teachers in different faculties. By their tireless and sincere efforts, the students of our Shishu Vidya Mandir always come out with flying colours in various competitions and examinations year after years.

School Environment

The school was having 30 classrooms with well sitting arrangement (Desk & Bench) and Verandah. The classrooms were provided with blackboards. The science laboratory was quite good and also in the computer laboratory all the computers were in working condition, where the students learn about use of computer. The school was having a play ground for organizing various activities such as games and sports, and annual function. Different types of sports, games were organized in the play ground during the game period as per the time table and also after the school hour.

Sports materials like Volley ball, foot ball, carom, cricket, badminton, ring ball, chess etc were available in the school. The musical instruments such as Harmonium, Flute, Tablas, Dholak, Ginni were available in the school.

More than 2000 (Two Thousand) valuable course books, reference books, Maps, Guides were kept in order for use of students and teachers. School provides First Aid treatment to its students who were found ill or wounded during school hours and the parents concerned were being informed immediately. Besides, Health Camps were arranged twice a year for free check up of ENT, Eye and Skin by reputed and professional doctors.

Classroom Environment

The black board was clearly visible to the students. The classrooms were well lighted by the electricity connectivity as well as daylight as the windows were well structured for the purpose. The rooms were well ventilated. It was observed there were maps and charts in the classrooms. For computers, there was a separate computer laboratory for the students for computer education. It was observed that the infrastructure facilities were well and more conducive for better learning in comparison to other types of schools in Odisha. The lab was equipped with 15 Systems with net connections. One technically sound and qualified teacher was engaged for computer lab.

The Science Lab of the schools was functioning under proper supervision of 3(three) well trained Science Teachers. Almost all required apparatus were available for the students from Class VI to Class X to do various experiments.

Teaching Learning Process and Classroom Activities

Morning Shift (Shishu Batika) from Class I to III of the school starts at 06.45 am to 10.30 am. Day Shift starts from Class IV to X at 10.50 am to 04.25 pm. The day of the Vidya Mandir used to begin with the holy prayers for the Goddess Maa Saraswati, Param Brahma Omm and Bharat Mata which created a pious and homely atmosphere to learn.

The classroom observation process was done for the period of one week. Two classes of all the major teaching subjects were observed by the researcher to assess the teaching learning process and student evaluation process of that particular subject. The use of TLMs, Innovative practices including learner participation, Teacher's response, scope for interaction among learners, Monitoring & supervision practices and lesson note and diary assignments were observed and enquired. The subjects were: Odia, English, Mathematics, Sanskrit, General Science, History, Geography etc. Subject wise observation was mentioned below:

- **English Class:** The teaching activities in English **classes were observed** as: Set induction (i.e., creating physical & emotional environment; asking previous question, motivation, arousing curiosity among the students) was found to be excellent; statement of aim (i.e., explaining teaching aspect, getting answer from the students and writing topic on Black Board was found to be excellent. Under explaining aspect (i.e., vocabulary, fluency, clarity and proper clarification of the teaching unit) was observed to be good. The questioning skill was observed as average. Reacting to the students and the class was observed as average. Stimulus variation, use of teaching aids was average poor. BB work was good. Classroom management was found to be good. Mastery over the subject and the unit of teaching was observed good. The teacher was not getting the feedback from the students. Giving assignment and ensuring achievement were observed as good.
- **Odia class (Class-VIII):** Set induction (i.e., creating physical & emotional environment; asking previous question, motivation, arousing curiosity among the students) was found to be good; statement of aim (i.e., explaining teaching aspect, getting answer from the students and writing topic on BB was found to good. Under explaining aspect (i.e., vocabulary, fluency, clarity and proper clarification of the teaching unit) was observed to be poor. The questioning skill was observed as good. Reacting to the students and the class was good. Stimulus variation, use of teaching aids was good. BB work was good. Classroom management was found to be good.

- **Mathematics Class :** The Mathematics classes (Class-VIII, & IX) of the school were observed under 12 aspects through 05 point scale as excellent, good, average, poor, and very poor. Writing topic on BB was found to be excellent. The questioning skill was observed as excellent. Reacting to the students and the class was observed as good. Stimulus variation, use of teaching aids was average excellent. The teacher was following the unique methods of teaching mathematics (i.e., Vaidika Math) to make the mathematical calculation easy. This method being followed in the school was originally a research method of Saraswati Vidya/Sishu Mandir system of education which enables the student to get prizes in the state/national level competitions.
- **History Class:** The teaching learning process of the History class (Class-VI & VIII) was observed under 12 aspects through 05 point scale as excellent, good, average, poor, and very poor. The teaching activities such as: asking previous question, motivation, arousing curiosity among the students) was found to be good; statement of aim (i.e., explaining teaching aspect, getting answer from the students and writing topic on Black Board was found to good. The questioning skill was observed as average. BB work was good. Classroom management was found to be excellent. The Teacher was trying to get feedback from the students. Giving assignment and ensuring achievement were observed as good.

Student Evaluation Process

The evaluation process of the student's achievement in the school was based on the CCE covering scholastic (related to intellect) and co-scholastic (related to hand and heart) achievements of the pupils. It was revealed from the sources (interviews with the teachers, observation of records/classes) the school conducts two types of assessment i.e., formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment was conducted by the teacher continuously to monitor student progress in a supportive environment. Both the teachers and the students were very much encouraged in this system of evaluation.

The project assignments were given individually and in a group to develop basic understanding, practical skills among the students. It was also organized to develop qualities like leadership, communicating skills, organizing skills which were the important factors for assessment. The summative assessment was carried out by the teachers at the end of course completion with the objective to measure how much the students have acquired the learning.

Life skills, social and emotional skills were developed among the students by organizing different activities in special classes such as ten formula given by WHO on self awareness, development of personality, empathy, cooperation etc. These were assessed on the basis of imaginative questions, generation of new ideas, effective communication, accepting other's views etc.

Health and physical education was also assessed by observing good hand-eye coordination, activities in the play ground, sportsmanship etc. Besides all of the activities, the progress reports, parent teacher meetings were organized for getting feedback from both ends for the holistic development of the students.

Teacher-Pupil Relationship

It was revealed from the sources (interviews, observation and FGD) about the pupil teacher relationship in the school. It was very cordial. Every teacher seems to be very cautious about the health of each and every student. Teachers enquire about the personal problems about the students. The teachers were really the friends, guides and the philosophers. The students see the teachers as the God. They encourage the students to utilize properly the study hours and the play hours as per their importance. *Medha Bharati Krushna, Ganita Pratibha Puraskar* was given every year. Those secure above 90% in HSC exam were felicitated in a meeting/function with mementos.

Organization of Curricular Activities

The data collected from different sources (interviews with teachers and parents, FGD with students) revealed about various curricular activities organized by the school such as:

- **Sports, Games and other Physical Activities :** The sports, games and physical activities include Badminton, Baseball, Basketball, Football, High Jump, long jump, discus throw, running, cycling, volleyball, Wheel Bell with one iron stick (low weight), Tick wood for Malkhamb practice, Kabaddi , Kho-Kho etc. were played by the students under the guidance of the experienced physical education teacher. Physical education, work Experience, Drawing and Painting, Music and Dance form a part of the activities in the school.
- **Yoga and Meditation:** The students practice Yoga, Pranayams, Sakha, Drills in the morning for concentration in mind. Yoga Divas was celebrated on June 29 ever year. The meditation was not compulsory for all but the students were doing perfectly and some students were blinking their eyes and open again and again.

- **Moral and Spiritual Education:** Worship of goddess Saraswati, Sri Guruji (the founder), the Bharat Mata during morning prayer. Biography of great educator and historians were taught during the moral education period. Stories from Puranas were told during the class.
- **Literary Competition:** The literary competition such as Essay, Debate (Sishu Sabha), Quiz, Vedic Mathematics (Vaidika Ganita), general knowledge, and other creative writings in English, Sanskrit, Odia were organized in the school for the students of different classes separately and also in group. Spoken English classes were also organized for the students. The winners in the competitions were awarded prizes in the annual function of the school.

School Community Relationship

As revealed from the parents, teachers and FGD held with students, the school maintains school-community relationships. The parents were invited during different occasions such as parent-teacher meeting, annual function and any other special function. The students were encouraged to perform the cleanliness, awareness programmes in the nearby localities of the city.

Learning Attainment of Students

The learning attainment of students was assessed by administering an achievement test battery containing question on basic schools subjects such as Language (English), Mathematics and Social Studies. The battery consisted of 45 questions (15 questions from each subject) and was administered to the students of Class-VI and VIII separately. The percentage of students at different levels of attainment in these basic schools subjects was presented below:

Table 1: Percentage of Students at Different Levels of Attainment in Basic School

Subjects (Class-VI) (N=120)				
Performance Levels Subjects	< 30%	31-49%	50-79%	>80%
Language (English)	07 (5.83%)	42 (35%)	50 (41.67%)	21 (17.50%)
Mathematics	06 (5%)	26 (21.67%)	61 (50.83%)	27 (22.50%)
Social Studies	05 (4.17%)	38 (31.67%)	52 (43.33%)	25 (20.83%)

Table-1 depicts learning attainment of students in Class-VI. The performances of such students were categorized into four levels i.e. below 30%; between 31-49%; between 50-

79%; and above 80%. The performance was assessed in an achievement test battery specially prepared for the purpose. It was evident from the table that in English language 17.50% students have obtained more than 80% scores; 41.67% students have obtained scores between 50-79%; 35% have obtained scores between 31-49%; and only 5.83% students have secured less than 30% or they were unable to secure pass marks.

Similarly, in Mathematics, only 5% students were below 30% of marks; 22.50% have secured more than 80% marks. Likewise, only 4.17% students have obtained less than 30% of marks in social studies; 20.83% students have obtained more above 80% scores.

**Table 2: Percentage of Students at Different Levels of Attainment in Basic School
Subjects (Class-VIII) (N=120)**

Performance Levels Subjects	< 30%	31-49%	50-79%	>80%
Language (English)	07 (5.84%)	45 (37.50%)	46 (38.33%)	22 (18.33%)
Mathematics	05 (4.17%)	23 (19.17%)	64 (53.33%)	28 (23.33%)
Social Studies	06 (5%)	36 (30%)	54 (45%)	24 (20%)

Table 2 depicts the performance of students of non-residential school of Class-VIII in an achievement test battery consisting of questions of major school subjects. The performances of such students were grouped into four levels ranging from below 30% to above 80% of scores. In English language, the performance shows that, 18.33% students have obtained above 80% of marks whereas only 5.84% students have obtained less than 30% of marks. 37.50% students have obtained scores between 31-49% in English; and 38.33% students have obtained scores between 50-79% in English.

In Mathematics, 23.33% students have obtained more than 80% marks; 53.33% students have obtained scores between 50-79%; 19.17% students secured between 31-49% marks and only 4.17% have secured scores below 30%.

Further, in Social Studies, similar performances have been observed from the table. Only 5% students have obtained scores below 30% in social studies whereas 20% have secured scores more than 80% in Social Studies. It was clear from the table, that the performance of students was satisfactory in major school subjects.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- 1) Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir (Non- Residential), Ghodabazar, Puri in the state of Odisha was a private school run by its Management Committee under Shiksha Vikash Samiti, Odisha and affiliated to Board of Secondary Education, Cuttack, Odisha.
- 2) This was a co-educational school and non-residential in nature, which was established in 1992. More than 1600 students were studying during data collection. Seventy (70) dedicated teachers were teaching different subjects with 20 non-teaching staff. The pupil-teachers relationship was very cordial in nature.
- 3) There were 30 classrooms with well sitting arrangement (Desk & bench). Each classroom was suitable for minimum 50 students to be seated. Sports materials like Volley ball, foot ball, carom, cricket, badminton, ring ball, chess etc. were available in the school.
- 4) The classrooms were well lighted by the electricity connectivity as well as daylight as the windows were well structured for the purpose.
- 5) The rooms were well ventilated. It was observed there were no globe, maps, and charts in the classrooms.
- 6) The teaching learning process of the Odia class (Class-VII) was observed and out of 12 aspects of teaching learning activities, all activities were excellent except questioning skill which was average in a five point scale.
- 7) The teaching activities of English class such as: Set induction (i.e., creating physical & emotional environment; asking previous question, motivation, arousing curiosity among the students) was found to be excellent; statement of aim (i.e., explaining teaching aspect, getting answer from the students and writing topic on BB was found to be excellent. Except these aspects, other aspects were observed to be good.
- 8) Mathematics class was very interesting; the students learn by fun sp also History, geography and general science classes.
- 9) The student's evaluation process was based on the continuous and comprehensive evaluation process. Such evaluation proves includes both scholastic and co-scholastic aspects of students' learning.
- 10) Physical activities like Yoga, Sports, and Gymnastics etc. were organized with the aim to make the children strong and fit, so that, they can be good sportsmen and their physical capabilities can be adequately developed.
- 11) The literary competition such as Essay, Debate (Sishu Sabha), Quiz, Vedic Mathematics (Vaidika Ganita), general knowledge, and other creative writings in

English, Sanskrit, and Odia were organized to create a competitive mind academically among the students and to enable the students to be more creative, to face different competitive examinations in future.

- 12) Majority the students were satisfied with the school environment available in the campus such as: classrooms were sufficient with good sitting arrangement, good library with plenty of books, drinking water facility, toilets facility.
- 13) The success rate of the learning achievement of students was 100 percent.
- 14) The learning attainment of students reveal very negligible percentage (5%) students have secured scores below 30% in an achievement test battery especially prepared for the purpose in major schools subjects such as Language, Math, and Social Studies for Class-VI and Class-VIII. In math and social studies, more than 25% students of Class-VI have obtained scores above 80% and in English 20-25% students have also secured scores more than 80%.

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