

Schooling of Children Living in Slum Areas: An Analysis of Selected Households from Hyderabad and Ludhiana

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ABSTRACT

Ensuring equality in education is the foundation to develop just, fair and egalitarian society. In the modern democratic societies, education is the only mechanism to transcend the barriers of social exclusion and prejudices. In fact, it is education that enables the development of people's capabilities, access to choices and exercise of freedom in information driven age. Thus addressing lack of access to and inequality in education is central to achieve social justice and by extension broader societal development. Access to education by various social, economic and other vulnerable groups needs to be continually examined to identify areas of concern. Notwithstanding high aggregates in urban areas, slums continue to be deficient in public provision of education that adversely impacts the participation. It is in this context the present paper makes an attempt to map the educational scenario of the children living in slum areas of Hyderabad and Ludhiana and analyses the ground reality in determining how much the efforts of the State have been able to reach these disadvantaged groups. It seeks to present an overview of the status of education of children of 6-17 years of age living in select slum areas. Though slums are generally deficient in the provision of public services, and households usually have low income but they are not uniform across the country. The present study contrasts the participation of children in slums located in two different cities viz., Hyderabad and Ludhiana. These two cities are quite different. The former is a modern hi-tech city with varied sources for employment and living and the later principally manufacturing city focused on hosiery. Households in slums of Hyderabad have varied occupations, higher level of education and income. Households in slums of Ludhiana are migrants primarily

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from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh dependent on manufacturing and construction activities with low education and incomes. The present paper examines how this contrast manifests in the participation of children in education. The results reveal that the participation of children from slums in Hyderabad is high, more children attend private schools, study in English medium. In contrast participation of children from slums of Ludhiana in education is very low, seldom found in private schools and have to study in not so familiar language. From these findings the paper hints a few priority areas for policies.

1. Introduction

Urban India is quite diverse and fragmented with differentiation between cities and within cities. There are cities that accommodate more than 15 million and there are small cities, which are inhabited by fifty thousand people. There are cities with modern infrastructure, high level human capital competing with other global cities for investment. There are cities that are saddled with crumbling infrastructure, low productivity manufacturing. Cities are also differentiated within with exclusive echelons of living on the one side and cramped places on the side of drainage, railway track, etc. Out of its total 377 million (31.16%) urban population, roughly 93.06 million reside in slum areas, thus creating a urban divide that not only defines geographical division but also reflects poverty, malnutrition, health hazards, a host of socio-economic and educational disparities and deprivations. If education of poor urban children is not to suffer, then the need to undertake special measures cannot be overstated. Unfortunately, in the discourse on universal elementary education, and equal opportunity for secondary education, conditions faced by urban children in general and children living in slums in particular are conspicuous by their absence. At one level the perception that urban areas and children living in urban areas are having better access to education and educational infrastructure in urban areas is better than in rural areas might have led to this overlooking. At another level, perhaps even more importantly, the limited availability of data on education in urban areas particularly disaggregated by slums and non-slums, difficulties involved in collection of data from urban areas, and other practical issues like overlapping jurisdiction by multiple agencies might have also contributed to this neglect. In addition, examination of issues like assessment of access to

education in urban areas is not easy as conventional 'distance approach' is not relevant to urban areas. Further, changes taking place in urbanisation and in urban areas further compound issues confronted by poor and by those living in slums in accessing public services including education. In this context it would be interesting to know how accessible schools are to children living in slums? Whether all children living in slums are participating in schooling? Whether private schooling is complimenting or substituting public schooling? Who and what proportion of children in slums are availing private schooling?

Against this background, the present paper makes a modest attempt to identify the specific issues faced by children residing in slums. The paper is drawn from a research study which was conducted in selected slums of Hyderabad and Ludhiana focusing on the access, participation and learners' competencies dimension, cutting across all levels of school education. The paper describes the educational status of children of 6-17 years of age in select slums of both the cities. It also examines how household and individual characteristics affect whether a child goes to elementary and secondary school or not, continues and completes the elementary and secondary level of education or drops out.

2. What does the Previous Research Say?

The issues confronted by children living in slums in accessing education and the relationship of education, health status, need to work (child labour) are examined by several researches in the recent past. A few select studies are reviewed. A study conducted in eastern slums of Kolkata (Khasnabis and Chatterjee, 2007) reveals that retaining the students in a formal school is far more difficult than enrolling them particularly if the students are from very poor economic backgrounds and students belonging to disadvantaged families still do not attend classes regularly. Montgomery et al. (2007) observes while studying the educational status of children living in slums of Allahabad that educational attainment of the poor children can depend not only on the standards of living of their own families but also on the economic composition of their local surroundings. Other studies have found that the poverty and the inability of the parents to bear the education related expenditure still remains a major cause for low enrolment and high dropout rate among the children living in slum areas (Chugh, 2004; Tsujita, 2009). Banerji (2000, 2005) pointed out that the nature and quality

of schools are the determining factor rather than the financial constraints of the families. The study identifies that the children do not become literate even after attending the school for four to five years. Teachers' uncaring behaviour acts as a major push out factor for many of them. The neglect by teachers, poor teaching, discrimination, cruelty or punishment meted out by teachers become the teacher centric reasons for dropping out of schools (Govindaraju and Venkatesan, 2010). Valerie Lewis (2010) observes that despite significant progress in universal primary education, slum children lack seriously in terms of participation in secondary education. Children living in slums are more disadvantaged compared to rural and other urban children. There is also decline in their attendance resulting in their poor educational participation. Another research study supporting it further states that the guardians of the students belonging to the disadvantaged families do not assign much value to the elementary education (Khasnabis and Chatterjee, 2007). The educational background of the parents, especially of the mother, plays a key role for more successful educational biographies of children. Although the economic situation of the household has considerable influence (Bhat and Bhat, 2010), but the authors argue that the society's prevailing socio-cultural conditions also play a major role for the child's schooling opportunities too. The social construct of gender, leads to severe discrimination towards the girl child (Bhat and Bhat, 2010). Mahadevia (2009) found that in the select slums of Ahmedabad the dropout rate was higher for boys in comparison to girls as they get absorbed in the informal economy. Miller (2005) discusses the dynamics and complexities of language instruction in diverse urban context and proposes that if children are to be retained, then the schools must provide primary education in their home language and later move to the standard language. In urban areas the deployment of the teachers needs to be made on the basis of the vernacular language of the children studying in the schools. Due to the poor quality in the government schools, few researchers argue, the contribution of private sector in India especially in urban India has increased tremendously since 1990s (Kingdon, 1996; Nambissan 2012). Some researchers (Boyle et al., 2002; Lall, Dixon, Tooley 2007, Srivastava, 2007) claim that the low fee private or Budget schools are on increase and they are serving to the children of poor as well. They claim that these schools provide better quality education which has been assessed on the

basis of number of indicators like teacher regularity, class size, pupil achievement. The preference of parents to send their children to these schools is due to English as the medium of instruction and they perceive teachers are more accountable. All these factors multiply with each other to give an outcome of shifting toward non state provisions.

The present paper revisits some of the issues confronted by the children living in slums by collecting data from slums located in Hyderabad and Ludhiana, the former a metropolitan city provides employment opportunities in high end service sector and the latter a manufacturing hub where employment opportunities are concentrated in small scale manufacturing sector.

3. Methodology

Primary data was collected from the selected slums of Hyderabad and Ludhiana. Four slums from Hyderabad and three slums from Ludhiana were chosen randomly. In Hyderabad Hera Nagar, ASR Nagar and Sai Nagar, Kanka Durga Nagar, Tulja Bhawani Nagar slums were taken up situated in Guddi Malkapur in Golconda Zone, and in Ludhiana, Dr. Ambedkar colony Pakhowal road, Bihari Colony Tajpur Road, Ludhiana, Shaheed Bhagat Singh NR Balmiki Colony were the sampled slums. Field level surveys were carried out in different stages. In the first stage of the survey, complete enumeration of all households was undertaken to identify households with children in the age group of 6-17 years. Data on socio-economic and educational characteristics of the households were also collected in the first stage. Total number of 2791 households from Hyderabad and 1219 households from Ludhiana were surveyed. Information gathered from the initial survey helped in the selection of sample for the second stage. In the second stage, few households were selected on random basis which had children in the age group of 6-17 years. The detailed information on the socio-economic background, access to schooling, nature of schooling availed, expenditure borne by parents for the education of their wards in the government and private schools was collected from 706 households in Hyderabad and 622 households in Ludhiana. The present paper focuses on the analysis of the data collected from sample households (706 in Hyderabad and 622 in Ludhiana) having 6-17 years of children.

4. Profile of Sample Households and Children

4.1 Demographic Composition of Population

Slums are complex communities with residents of different religious groups sharing together the same area. Information on the population belonging to different religions was also obtained to understand the educational status of children belonging to different religions. Majority of select households in Ludhiana and Hyderabad belonged to Hindu religion, above 22 per cent belonged to Muslim religion in Hyderabad while only 1 per cent belonged to Muslims religion and around 2.3 per cent belonged to Sikh religion in Ludhiana.

In Hyderabad, around 48.5 per cent of the children belonged to OBC category 34.6 per cent to SC category whereas in Ludhiana, the proportion of SC category population is higher with 43.1 per cent in comparison to all other categories of population.

Table 1
Composition of Population by Religion, Social Category and Age of Selected Households

Particulars	Hyderabad		Ludhiana	
	Number	%	Number	%
Social Groups of Population				
Scheduled Castes	1067	34.6	1326	43.1
Scheduled Tribes	370	15.2	7	0.2
OBCs	1341	48.5	1065	34.6
General	300	9.7	678	22.1
Religious Groups of Population				
Hindu	2426	78.8	2974	96.7
Muslim	652	22.2	28	1
Sikh	-	-	74	2.3
Age Groups of Population				
0 to 5 years	291	9.5	267	8.7
6 to 14 years	901	29.3	1199	39
15 to 17 years	223	7.2	209	6.8
18 to 59 years	1369	44.5	1211	39.4
60 and above	286	9.3	190	6.2
No response	8	0.3	-	-
Total	3078	100	3076	100

In Hyderabad around 29.3 per cent children were in the age group of 6-14 years and 7.2 per cent were in 15-17 years of age

group whereas in Ludhiana around 39 per cent of children were of age 6-14 years and around 6.8 per cent children were in the age group of 15-17 which implies that in Hyderabad around 36 per cent children were of school going age till the secondary level of education and for Ludhiana these figures stand to be around 46 per cent.

4.2 Occupation of Father

It is well known that children’s educational outcomes vary sharply with their parents’ socio-economic background. Differences in outcomes with parental background emerge early at the pre-school level and are reinforced in childhood, teenage years through tertiary education. Socio-economic status depends on a combination of variables including occupation, education, income, wealth and place of residence. Occupation of father and mother affects both the income coming to the family and the time devoted to children’s development. It was found that the parents of the select households are generally engaged in informal sector with irregular income which also influences the participation of children in school. Figure 1 provides information on the occupation of the father.

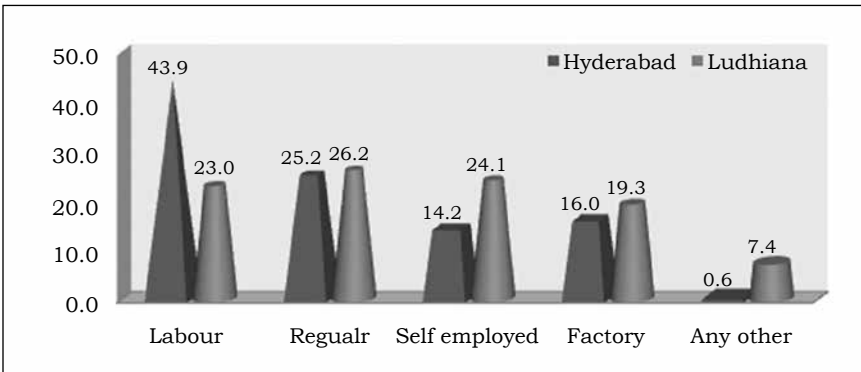


Figure 1: Occupation of the Father of Sample Children (in percentage)

Data in the above figure reveals that around 23 per cent of the fathers in Ludhiana and around 44 per cent in Hyderabad were working as a labourer in construction sites and around 26 per cent in Ludhiana and around 25 per cent in Hyderabad were occupied in regular jobs which include clerks, sweepers, peons, mali in government or private sector. Around 16 per cent of fathers in Hyderabad and 19 per cent of fathers in Ludhiana were employed

in factories. In Ludhiana they were engaged in hosiery factories and in Hyderabad in the pearl polishing and embroidery work. Around 24 per cent of the fathers in Ludhiana and 14 per cent of fathers in Hyderabad were self employed as rickshaw puller, auto-rickshaw driver, shop owners like cigarette, beetle selling. Around 8 per cent of fathers in Ludhiana were engaged in other activities such as rag picker, carpenter.

4.3 Monthly Income of the Sample Households

Household income is one of the important factors to determine the educational status of children as the parents bear the education related expenditure like stationery though the uniform, textbooks are provided by the state at the elementary level, whereas at the secondary level the household incurs expenditure towards the payment of fees, stationery, uniform and books. In addition the parents may have to pay for the private tuition fees. The income level of the households is calculated by including the total monthly income of all members of the family. The household income of the sampled households is given in Table 2.

Table 2
Monthly Income of the Sample Households

Income Range (Rupees)	Hyderabad		Ludhiana	
	Households	%	Households	%
No Response	2	0.3	3	0.5
<1000	23	3.3	37	5.9
1001-2000	43	6.1	248	39.9
2001-3000	81	11.5	106	17.0
3001-4000	363	51.4	99	15.9
4001-5000	101	14.3	37	5.9
5001-7000	75	10.6	82	13.2
7001-10000	11	1.6	8	1.3
>10000	7	1.0	2	0.3
Total	706	100	622	100

The monthly household income in Hyderabad was found to be higher in comparison to that of Ludhiana. Around 57 per cent of the households in Ludhiana were having monthly income in the range of Rs.1000- 3000 whereas in Hyderabad around only 18 per cent of the households were having monthly income in the same range. Around 51 per cent of households in Hyderabad were having

income ranging Rs. 3000-4000 per month whereas around 16 per cent of households in Ludhiana were having income in this range. Nearly 80-90 per cent of the income is spent on food items especially by the residents of Ludhiana slums. Only a small amount remains available for meeting other requirements of shelter, clothing and medicines etc. This statistics needs to be interpreted in the context of the size of the household which usually varies from 5-8 members. The figures from the field area reveal that the families find it difficult to meet the cost of education of their children with this low household income.

4.4 Educational Status of Children from Sample Households

Educational status of children (6-14) is measured in terms of whether the child is going to school, or dropped out or never attended. Data collected from the select slums of Hyderabad and Ludhiana not surprisingly indicates that not all children are in school. One can also discern patterns in participation of children in school education by socio-economic background and also between Hyderabad and Ludhiana. The proportion of children not in school (that includes both dropped out and never enrolled children) is small in Hyderabad and very high in Ludhiana. Data on educational status of children of 6-17 years is presented in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Table 3
Educational Status of Children of Sample Household

Educational Status	Hyderabad		Ludhiana	
	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
School Going	871	77.5	697	49.5
Drop-Out	157	14.0	202	14.3
Never - Enrolled	96	8.5	509	36.2
Total	1124	100	1408	100

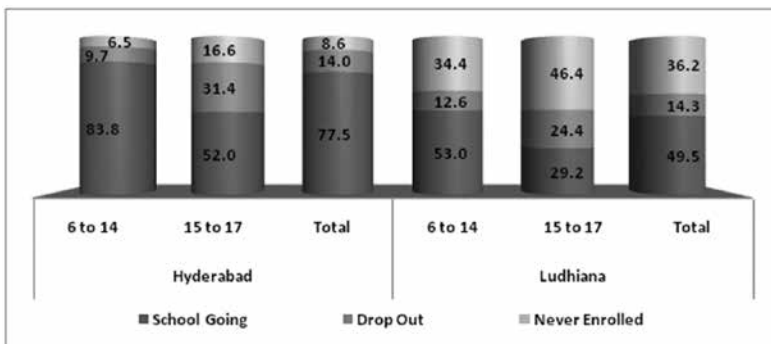


Figure 2: Educational Status of Children by Age Group (in percentage)

In Hyderabad, around 78 per cent children are attending school compared to just about 50 per cent in Ludhiana. An overwhelming proportion of children, 36 per cent are never enrolled in Ludhiana. Less than 9 per cent children have never been enrolled in Hyderabad. Educational status of children by age groups 6-14 years and 15-17 years is also given. The figures clearly reflect that percentage of children of 15-17 years attending school is very low in comparison to children of age 6-14 years. Dropout rate is also very high among children of age 15-17 years. In Hyderabad around 84 per cent children of 6-14 years of age are attending school compared to only 52 per cent children of age 15-17 years. In Ludhiana around 53 percent of children of 6-14 years of age are attending school but only 29 per cent children of age 15-17 years are attending school (Fig. 2). If we look at the dropout rate, it is found that in Hyderabad the dropout rate for the children of 6-14 years of age is around 10 percent and in Ludhiana it is around 13 per cent. The dropout rate for 15-17 years of age group in Hyderabad is as high as around 31 per cent and the figure for Ludhiana is around 24 per cent. In Ludhiana a large number of children have never been enrolled in schools even among young age cohorts.

Attendance of children in private and public school

The nature of schooling provision in urban areas is undergoing major transformation in the recent years. The public provision is declining drastically and private sector is increasing. A large proportion of urban children who attend schools are claimed to be attending private schools; both recognised as well as unrecognised. The claim that a significant proportion of children attending private schools turns out to be true only in case of Hyderabad where household income is relatively higher than Ludhiana. Further, the field experience suggests that parents could not tell whether a school is private aided or unaided or even unrecognised. But they are clear that the school is a private school and not a government school. In Ludhiana very few children were attending private school and they were all attending the school which was up to eighth standard. In Hyderabad, private schools had linkages with the government schools therefore transition to the government school was not a major problem as stated by the respondents. The detail on the nature of school attended by children is given in Table 4.

Table 4
Kind of Schools Attended: Age and Gender wise

Kind of School	Age Group of Children				Gender of the children				Total	
	6-14	%	15-17	%	Boys	%	Girls	%	Number	%
Hyderabad										
Government	534	70.7	94	81.1	332	82.8	296	71.5	628	72.2
Private	221	29.3	22	18.9	125	27.2	118	28.5	242	27.8
Total	755	100	116	100	457	100	414	100	871	100
Ludhiana										
Government	541	85.1	58	95.1	301	77.6	297	96.4	598	85.9
Private	95	14.9	3	4.9	87	22.4	11	3.6	98	14.1
Total	636	100	61	100	388	100	308	100	696	100

The proportion of children attending private school is higher in Hyderabad in comparison to Ludhiana. About 29 per cent children of age 6-14 years in Hyderabad are attending private schools while in Ludhiana around 14 per cent children from the sample households are attending the private school. Similarly around 19 percent children of 15-17 years of age group are attending private school in Hyderabad and in Ludhiana only around 5 per cent children in the corresponding age are going to private school.

It is widely reported in research studies that the gender bias exists in education, expressed in the differentiated access to public and private schools by gender. The present study hints that gender bias at least at primary level is also confounded by other factors including location. Gender differential in access to public and private schooling could not be found in Hyderabad. But in Ludhiana large gender differential could be discerned. In Ludhiana, around 22 per cent of boys compared to only 4 per cent of girls were found to be attending private schools. The variation in gender bias could be attributed to socio-cultural factors and positive attitude of families towards girls' education in Hyderabad.

Educational Attainment level of Parents and Educational Status of Children

Education of the parents, economic conditions and environment are inter linked and jointly affect participation of the children in education. Research evidence suggests that parental education exerts strong influence on education of offspring. Further mother's education is found to be a stronger determinant of her children's

education than the father's, especially with male children. Mother's schooling could reflect as an advantage more in early childhood and the probability of the child attending school increases. The present study affirms these findings. The educational attainment level of father and mother was analysed separately juxtaposed with attendance status of children and presented in Table 5 and 6.

Table 5
Education of Father and Educational status of Children

Father's Education	Educational Status of the Children							
	School Going	%	Drop out	%	Never Enrolled	%	Total	%
Hyderabad								
Illiterate	341	70.9	92	19	48	10	481	100
Primary	92	74.2	22	18	10	8.1	124	100
Upper Primary	109	90.1	8	6.6	4	3.3	121	100
Secondary & above	162	91.0	6	3.4	10	5.6	178	100
Total	704	77.9	128	14	72	8	904	100
Ludhiana								
Illiterate	447	42.8	167	16	431	41	1045	100
Primary	117	72.2	14	8.6	31	19	162	100
Upper Primary	56	72.7	6	7.8	15	20	77	100
Secondary & above	50	64.1	9	12	19	24	78	100
Total	670	49.2	196	14	496	36	1362	100

Table 6
Educational Level of Mothers and Educational Status of Children

Mothers' Education	Educational Status of Children							
	School Going	%	Drop out	%	Never Enrolled	%	Total	%
Hyderabad								
Illiterate	422	72	106	18.1	58	9.9	586	100
Primary	84	80	18	17.1	3	2.9	105	100
Upper Primary	84	85.7	5	5.1	9	9.2	98	100
Secondary & above	145	92.9	5	3.2	6	3.8	156	100
Total	735	77.8	134	14.2	76	8	945	100

Ludhiana								
Illiterate	576	46.6	186	15	474	38.3	1236	100
Primary	81	74.3	7	6.4	21	19.3	109	100
Upper Primary	21	75	3	10.7	4	14.3	28	100
Secondary & above	6	66.7	1	11.1	2	22.2	9	100
Total	684	49.5	197	14.3	501	36.3	1382	100

Data in Table 5 reveal that both in Hyderabad and Ludhiana, the percentage of children attending school was low when the father is illiterate. There is progressive increase in the proportion of children attending school as educational level of father increases to primary and upper primary education level. However patterns in Ludhiana in respect of parental education of secondary and above are counter intuitive. As per the data presented in Table 5 and 6, it appears that participation of children in education reduced if parental education increased to secondary and above from primary and upper primary education. This means the impact of parental education confounds with context specific factors which need to be taken into account to make parental education to have positive impact. Notwithstanding this anomaly, overall picture clearly demonstrates that the parental education indeed has a positive impact on participation of children of slums in schooling. This analysis has implications for educational planners and administrators as they need to focus on the adult literacy programmes as well as awareness programme on the significance of education if the participation of children is to increase. Figures in Table 6 further re-emphasise the role of mother's education in increasing the participation of children in schooling.

Income of the Household and Education of Sample Children

Income and wealth can affect children's education in several ways. In fact, increase in the household income can have a positive effect on the educational outcomes of children. Income of the household determines the access and ability to afford educational services for the children. The study confirms these general perceptions. Table 7 presents the income of the households as related to the educational status of children.

Table 7
Income of the Household and Education of Sample Children

Income year wise (in Rs.)	Educational Status of the Children							
	School Going	%	Drop out	%	Never Enrolled	%	Total	%
Hyderabad								
36000 & below	294	71.8	86	20.8	34	8.2	414	100
36001-60000	333	81.0	44	10.7	34	8.3	411	100
60001& above	244	81.6	27	9.0	28	9.4	299	100
Total	871	77.5	157	14.0	96	8.5	1124	100
Ludhiana								
36000 & below	296	42.6	70	10.1	329	47.3	695	100
36001-60000	197	51.2	75	19.5	113	29.4	385	100
60001& above	204	62.4	57	17.4	66	20.2	327	100
Total	697	49.5	202	14.4	508	36.1	1407	100

Figures in Table 7 indicate that the household income of the sample households is lower in Ludhiana in comparison to Hyderabad and it is also observed that the percentage of non-enrolled and dropout children are much higher in Ludhiana. With the increase in income, the probability of children attending school increases. In Ludhiana 62.4 per cent children of families having income more than Rs.5000 per month (Rs.60,000 per annum) are attending school compared to about 43 per cent of children with household incomes below Rs. 3000. The corresponding figures in Hyderabad are 81.6 per cent and 72 per cent respectively. This affirms unambiguously the impact of economic status of the household on the educational status of the children.

Duration of Stay in the Area

It is often said that the educational status of the children more often than not, especially in case of migrant children, is determined by the duration of stay of these families in a particular location. It is generally presumed that the families who have been staying for a longer duration have more stability in terms of employment, job and income therefore the chances of their children in school are more in comparison to those who have settled recently. An attempt has been made in this study to map this relationship by collecting relevant data. Table 8 presents data on this aspect.

Table 8
Duration of Stay and Status of Education of Children

Duration of Stay	Status of Education of the Children							
	School Going	%	Drop out	%	Never Enrolled	%	Total	%
Hyderabad								
Less than 5 years	120	73.2	25	15.2	19	11.6	164	100
5-10 years	122	70.1	35	20.1	17	9.8	174	100
10-15 years	158	74.9	33	15.6	20	9.5	211	100
More than 15 years	412	81.9	53	10.5	38	7.6	503	100
Total	812	77.2	146	13.9	94	8.9	1052	100
Ludhiana								
Less than 5 years	6	75.0	1	12.5	1	12.5	8	100
5-10 years	6	21.4	5	17.9	17	60.7	28	100
10-15 years	15	23.1	3	4.6	47	72.3	65	100
More than 15 years	670	51.4	193	14.8	441	33.8	1304	100
Total	697	49.6	202	14.2	506	36	1405	100

Some interesting patterns emerge from the data from Table 8. In both Ludhiana and Hyderabad majority of households and children have been staying in the same place for the last more than 15 years. In Hyderabad however people appear to be continually flocking in. But in Ludhiana the proportion of people staying in the slum for duration of 5 to 10 years is very less. In Hyderabad, with the increase in the duration of stay the propensity of children to attend school is also increasing. Around 82 per cent children are attending schools whose families are staying in the select slums for more than 15 years. In contrast to this, in Ludhiana, no particular patterns could be observed. Though majority of the residents are staying in the select slums for more than 15 years, but only around 51 per cent children are attending school. Slums in Ludhiana depict the complete neglect of these areas by the urban local authority as the slums are devoid of basic physical facility like water, electricity. No government school is available within the radius of 1 km in Ludhiana from the selected slums. The state has not recognised these slums though they have been existing for more

than 15 years. The residents do not get the benefit of social welfare schemes. Moreover the residents are migrants from different states and though they are staying in the slum but they visit their native place once in a year and many a times the children accompany them which results into either non enrolment or long absence from school leading to dropping out.

Private Expenditure on education of children

The educational consciousness, concerns among the parents and the desire to somehow educate their children is expressed in the expenditure incurred on education against several odds. It might sound a bit odd that education is largely free and compulsory up to elementary level of schooling in India. Yet, the fact remains that households including families from disadvantaged socio-economic background feel compelled to spend some amount on the education of their children. Important items of expenditure include stationery items, bag, shoes etc. But here substantial difference exists in household expenditure on education due to the type of schools the children are admitted to viz. government schools, government aided schools and private schools. The private expenditure incurred by sample households by nature of school attending is given in Table 9.

**Table 9
Annual Household Expenditure on Education**

Expenditure on Education	Hyderabad						Ludhiana					
	Govt.	%	Private	%	Total	%	Govt.	%	Private	%	Total	%
Below 500	66	11.1	3	1.4	69	8.5	53	16.4	0	0.0	53	14.4
501 - 1000	87	14.7	10	4.6	97	12.0	114	35.3	18	40.9	132	36.0
1001 - 2000	112	18.9	20	9.2	132	16.3	77	23.8	14	31.8	91	24.8
2001 - 5000	177	29.8	78	35.8	255	31.4	64	19.8	9	20.5	73	19.9
5001 - 10000	127	21.4	92	42.2	219	27.0	14	4.3	3	6.8	17	4.6
Above 10000	24	4.0	15	6.9	39	4.8	1	0.3	0	0.0	1	0.3
Total	593	100	218	100	811	100	323	100	44	100	367	100

Figures in Table 9 reveal that around 35 per cent families reported to be spending on education of their children in the range of 501 to 1000 Rupees in Government school whereas in Hyderabad around 16 per cent children’s families are spending in this range. In Hyderabad around 35 per cent parents are spending annually in the range of Rs 5000-10,000 and around 7 per cent are spending

more than 10,000 rupees. As more and more children are attending private schools in Hyderabad, the educational expenditure is higher than that of Ludhiana. As far as average expenditure on education per child per year is concerned, it was estimated to be Rs 1686 in Ludhiana and Rs 4004 in Hyderabad which indicates that as income level of household increases there is a corresponding rise in the expenditure on education of the child.

Time taken to reach school

Distance and time taken to reach the school has impact on children's education. As the parents in the selected households could not tell the distance, time taken to reach school was taken as a proxy indicator to measure the distance. Information on this aspect is presented in Table 10. The percentage distribution calculated for students according to time of travel from home to school indicates that around 44 per cent children in Hyderabad could reach school within 10 minutes whereas in Ludhiana around 59 per cent children were taking as much as half an hour or little more to reach school. In one of the slums, children were taking around 45 minutes to reach the school. Among those who were living farther away from school, around 15 per cent children in Hyderabad were taking around 25 to 30 minutes to reach to school. Around 8 per cent children in Hyderabad were spending 45 minutes to an hour travelling to and from school because some children were attending private school and for others the government secondary school of their choice was available at a greater distance. In Ludhiana, to reach the school, children were travelling a long distance out of compulsion as school was not available in the immediate neighbourhood.

Table 10
Time taken to reach school

Particulars Time taken	Hyderabad		Ludhiana	
	Number	%	Number	%
Up to 10 minutes	381	43.7	-	-
10-20 minutes	294	33.8	-	-
20-30 minutes	128	14.7	409	58.6
More than 30 minutes	68	7.8	188	31.4

Medium of Instruction

Various research studies advocate that the children especially at the elementary stage should be taught in their mother tongue. Fluency

and literacy in the mother tongue lay a cognitive and linguistic foundation for learning additional languages. In Punjab, the government schools are having Punjabi as a medium of instruction and in Hyderabad, most of the schools are having Telugu as a medium of instruction but few schools have one section in each grade where the medium of instruction is English.

Table 11
Children participation in schools with medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Hyderabad		Ludhiana	
	Number	%	Number	%
English	249	28.6	13	1.9
Hindi	18	2.0	155	22.2
Regional	592	68	524	75.2
No response	12	1.4	5	0.7
Total	871	100	697	100

Figures in Table 10 show that in Ludhiana, majority (75.2%) of the children are studying in the Punjabi medium schools because the official language of Ludhiana is Punjabi. However the most serious problem the children studying in these schools face is that they do not understand Punjabi as majority of the children are migrants from UP and Bihar whose home language is different and this was found to be one of the major constraints for these children to comprehend what is taught in the school. Parents and children reported that Hindi should be the medium of instruction for them. In Hyderabad around 68 per cent children were having Telugu as their medium of instruction, therefore, they did not face much of cultural and language difference. Further in Hyderabad nearly 30 per cent of children are actually studying in English medium schools. This clearly hints at their income levels and also aspiration levels.

Dropout and Non Enrolment

It has been noted that dropout is a universal phenomenon of education system in India, spread over all levels of education, in all parts of the country. However the dropout varies across different states and it also differs for different social groups. Dropout rate is lower for the general category of children in comparison to children belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe children. The dropout rate is not only related to the social and caste factor but

also is influenced by the economic factors. Children from the poor households tends to dropout more easily and children living in slum areas belong to the families having low income and irregular jobs, therefore the dropout tends to be higher for these children. Failure to complete school education not only produces negative outcome for the individuals, but also widens the existing social and economic inequalities. In order to reduce wastage and improve the efficiency of education system, the educational planners need to understand and identify the social groups that are more susceptible to dropout and the reasons for their dropping out (Chugh, 2011).

Table 12
Dropout reasons of the sample children

Reasons	Ludhiana		Hyderabad	
	Number	%	Number	%
To look after the younger siblings	19	9.4	13	8.3
Financial constraints	123	60.9	68	43.3
Security of the child	13	6.4	3	1.9
Fear of rape of girl child	-	-	-	-
No help in studies at home	-	-	34	21.7
Lack of interest in studies	47	23.3	39	24.8
Total	202	100	157	100

The major reason behind the drop out is cited as financial constraint. For 43 per cent of the children from Hyderabad and 61 per cent of children from Ludhiana, inability to afford the education expenses emerged as the main reason. In Hyderabad it was specifically mentioned that the children needed private tuition and it was not possible for them to bear that expenditure. Around 9 per cent children in Ludhiana and around 8 per cent children dropped out as they were to look after the younger siblings. Another reason cited by the children and the family is lack of academic support at home. Since most of the parents are either illiterate or less educated, they could not help their children in studies. In school they could not understand as to what was taught and at home neither support nor any interest shown by the parents led to the disinterest in attending school which finally led to dropping out. Around 23 per cent children in Ludhiana and around 25 per cent children in Hyderabad reported that they could not understand what was being taught in the classroom. The children generally found mathematics as a difficult subject.

Concluding remarks

The study examined participation of children living in slums in Hyderabad and Ludhiana. The contrast between Hyderabad and Ludhiana is revealing. The slums in Hyderabad populated mostly local population and migrants from nearby districts within the state. This has not created any problems with regard to culture, language, etc. Further, slums in Hyderabad were provided some basic public services like drinking water, electricity connection, sewerage systems, etc. including education. The households in slums in Hyderabad also enjoyed higher incomes and parental educational levels are usually higher than those children living in slums in Ludhiana. On the other hand slums in Ludhiana are mostly populated by migrants principally from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. This creates problems relating to culture, language, etc. affecting their day-to-day relations with the local community. Slums in Ludhiana are deprived of basic public amenities like drinking water, electricity, sewerage system, making their day-to-day life difficult. Most of the migrants work in small manufacturing units at very low salaries with no social protection. These manufacturing units, principally hosiery units, are functioning at cutting edge competition forcing them to cut costs wherever possible usually leading to low and stagnant wages for labour. As people from outside migrants have very weak voice to demand basic public amenities. The slums also do not have schools in their close vicinity. Consequently they do not have access to school as per norms. Children living in Ludhiana slums have to walk long distances to access school. This contrast can be seen in the difference in participation levels in education between slums of these two cities as mentioned above. Not only participation level in education in slums of Hyderabad is much higher but also the share accounted by private sector is higher. Around half of the children living in sample slums in Ludhiana are out-of-school compared to less than a quarter of children in Hyderabad. Nearly a third of children in Hyderabad slums are studying in English medium compared to negligible figures in Ludhiana. Majority of households in Ludhiana have been living there for more than 15 years but remain as outsiders. Even among those who have been living for more than 15 years the participation rates in education continue to be very low. Though children living in Ludhiana slums are principally from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh only a fifth of them are able to study in Hindi Medium. Nearly 70 per cent of them are pursuing their

studies in Punjabi Medium with which they are unlikely to have familiarity in their neighbourhood. Therefore children attending schools in slums of Ludhiana could not cope in the school owing to cultural and language differences. As a result many children in Ludhiana are dropping out from school and their learning levels tend to be low.

The contrast between Hyderabad and Ludhiana should not overshadow the overall low participation and high dropout rate. Even in Hyderabad nearly a quarter of children are out of school. Many children are attending private schools ostensibly because of poor quality of public schooling. Further achievement levels are low across both the cities as demonstrated by other studies (Baseline Survey, NCERT, Aggarwal 2000).

From the findings of the field survey the following suggestions can be made for priority action. Access to public schooling is critical to improve participation in schooling. Both establishment of government schools and improving the quality of government schools needs priority. Secondly, addressing the diversity of slum population through appropriate measures like sensitising local teachers about cultural diversity, making provisions for teachers in various languages, etc. goes a long way in improving the education of children living in slums.

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