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**RESEARCH NOTES**

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## Dual Enrolment in Elementary Schools of Jharkhand

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### ABSTRACT

*Dual enrolment refers to double entry of the same student in two separate school enrolment registers. The study was conducted in a tribal district of Jharkhand state. It was a multi-layered sample covering both the government as well as the private unrecognised schools of one cluster selected on the basis of U-DISE report (2014). 23 schools (15 governments and 8 private schools) were taken into consideration for the study. Altogether 166 dual enrolments out of 4743 enrolments were evident in the admission register of the government schools constituting about 3.5 per cent inflation in the total enrolment. Only 95 cases of dual enrolments out of 955 enrolments were recorded in the unrecognised private schools sharing about 10 per cent inflation in the total admission. Primary schools experienced more cases of dual enrolment followed by middle schools. Highest concentration of dual enrolment was recorded in Class IV (7.64) followed by Class III (7.29). Minimum cases were observed in Class VIII (2.47) and Class VII (3.80). An overall per cent of dual enrolment was 5.42 substantiating the inflation in the volume of enrolment of the government schools. The study discussed possible dynamics of dual enrolment.*

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**Keywords:** dual enrolment, admission, RTE, incentives, community

### Introduction

Of late, elementary schools under *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) have witnessed a phenomenon of dual enrolment. When a student

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gets enrolled in two separate schools to take advantage of the government-sponsored schemes, the phenomenon is known as dual enrolment. A section of the society grinds the education system to take twin advantages of enrolment programme causing dual enrolment in the government schools and challenging the effectiveness of on-going quality improvement programme. It has resulted in a doubt over the community involvement in attendance improvement measures and has also posed a threat on the internal efficiency of the government schools. It may be either in two separate government schools, primary to primary and primary to middle or the government schools (primary and middle) to private schools. Students get double benefits in both cases in terms of dress, textbooks, scholarship, etc. They get incentives as well as better inputs of learning, if enrolled separately in the government as well as the private schools. Further, they attend private schools regularly while ignoring the government schools in the form of temporary absence. A notional presence in the government schools for getting other facilities remains on the record. The government schools accommodate some fake enrolments to maintain the pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) as well as deployment of para teaching forces without any strain.

A snap shot study conducted by the District Level Office (DLO) of SSA at Dumka (Jharkhand) in 2008 captured about 12–15 per cent cases of dual enrolment in the government elementary schools. By the same token, Bihar Education Project Council, Patna (2007) noted about 8 per cent cases of enrolment in elementary schools of Kisanganj district. Many students of Madarsa (minority schools) were enrolled in the government schools. Similar trend was noted in two separate studies funded by Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi (2012–13) and Bihar Education Project Council, Patna (2013–14).

Under the *Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009* (RTE) no documents other than birth certificate is required for admission in elementary schools. No child shall be denied admission in a school for lack of age proof. It is more convenient to cushion the education system and manage the required papers for admission. Even teachers facilitate the process of cushioning. It is a bidirectional processes, catering to the needs of both the community and teachers. In some cases, it is difficult to trace even temporary absentees as teachers manage their attendance in the register. Parents of such temporary absentees

make functional linkage to the teachers for getting benefits from the schools. This tacit understanding between the parents and teachers need not demand any justification. The social psychology of schools and some local dynamics of dual enrolment need to be probed. In case the ground reality is captured through an empirical study, the dilution in enrolment figure can be properly estimated. A good number of researches on students' attendance have been conducted across state (MHRD, 2012–13). By the same token, some prominent reasons of students' absenteeism have come into the orbit of discussion (BEPC, 2013–14). The subliminal threshold of dual enrolment remains unnoticed because of some local reasons. Remarkably, a good number of the unrecognised private schools have made their presence felt even in rural area, offering semi-english medium teaching. They are professional in delivering learning contents which is usually not found in the government schools. Their positioning in selling the education as commodity has attracted the society at large. The study was designed to capture some ground realities of dual enrolment. A few issues of dual enrolment need to be addressed.

- How does dual enrolment work in the schooling system?
- Can the volume of dual enrolment be measured?
- Which factors are accountable for dual enrolment?

## **Design of Study**

### ***The Setting and Coverage***

The study was conducted in a tribal district of Jharkhand state. It was a multi-layered sample covering both the government as well as private unrecognised schools of one cluster selected on the basis of the Unified-District Information of School Education (U-DISE) report (2014). Altogether 23 schools were taken into consideration for the study. Of them, 15 were the government schools (9 primary and 6 middle) and the remaining 8 were the unrecognised private schools. All headmasters/principals (n=23) were selected for the study. Thus, 25 teachers, 114 parents and 115 dual enrolled children across grades participated in the study.

### ***Tools Used***

A set of interview schedules separately prepared for headmaster/principal, teacher, parents, and students were employed in the study.

### **Field Strategy**

It was decided to identify grade-wise students who were absent for the last one month from both the government and private schools. Their names and other details were taken from the admission record and attendance register. A few absentees attended the classes once or twice in a month. This was not a consistent pattern across school. After completion the first phase, it was decided to approach other schools (either the public or private) in the adjacent feeder area to verify whether the same student was enrolled. Presumption was that she/he could be enrolled either in the same grade or different grade in another school. In some cases a slight variation in the name of the student was observed without altering father's name or home address. A few cases of manipulation (overwriting, erasing, leaving dots, etc.) in the attendance register were also noted. All such suspicious cases of dual enrolment were recorded for further investigation. Parents and teachers were interviewed with the help of interview schedules. There could be at least twin movements for dual enrolment-primary to primary schools and middle to middle schools. School-wise there could be unidirectional movement-government to government schools and government to private schools. The study collected grade-wise dual enrolment figures of the sampled schools. The data was collected in the middle of 2015 with the help of a set of investigators.

### **Results**

#### **Volume of Absentees**

Altogether 4743 enrolments from the government schools (n=15) were on record. Of them, 836 were found absent for the last one month. Grade-wise percentage of absentees is displayed in Table 1. With the increase in grade lower volume of absentee was recorded. About 17 per cent students across grades were found absent. As compared to the government Schools, absentees in the private schools (n=8) were only 4 per cent (absolute figure 38 out of 955). About 27 per cent students were absent in Grade II (highest). These figures were further analysed to find out the phenomenon of dual enrolment.

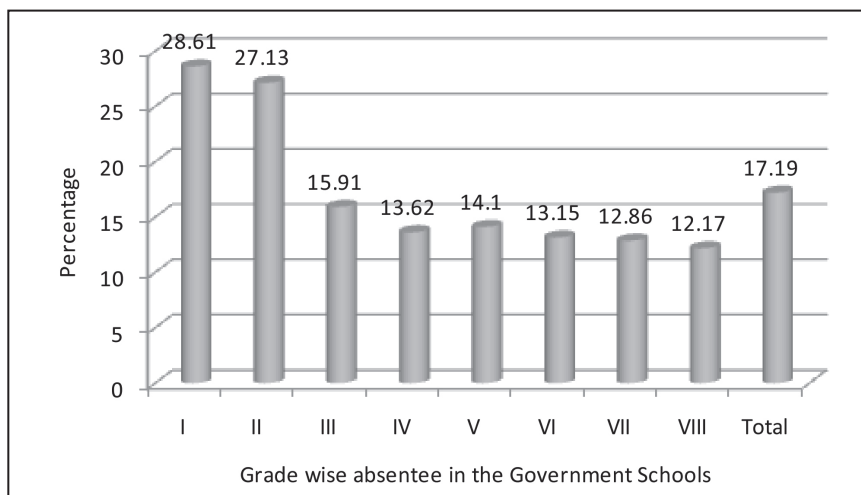
**Table 1**  
**Grade wise absentee in the government schools**

Grade	Government Schools (n=15)		
	Enrolment	Absentees	Percentage
I	671	192	28.61

Dual Enrolment in Elementary Schools of Jharkhand

II	645	175	27.13
III	616	98	15.91
IV	602	82	13.62
V	553	78	14.10
VI	578	76	13.15
VII	552	71	12.86
VIII	526	64	12.17
Total	4743	836	17.19

**Note:** Absentee for the last one month; a few sporadic attendance was visible; it could also be considered under absenteeism.



**Figure 1**

**Dual Enrolment within the Government and Private Schools**

Table 2 shows two sets of dual enrolment: the government schools and private schools. There could be a movement in two direction—primary to primary schools and middle to middle schools. Altogether 166 dual enrolments out of 4743 were evident in the admission register of the government schools constituting about 3.5 per cent inflation in the total enrolment. At the both primary (84) and middle (82) schools levels, the number of dual enrolment was almost same. Only 95 cases of dual enrolments, out of 955, were recorded in the unrecognised private schools sharing about 10 per cent inflation in the total admission. The study also witnessed evidences of dual enrolment in the private schools. Students

enrolled in the government schools also moved to the unrecognised private schools for some reasons. They were admitted in all grades of the unrecognised schools. A large chunk of them (76) were enrolled at the primary level and the remaining (19) at the middle level. About 11.48 per cent cases of dual enrolment at the primary level and 6.48 per cent cases at the middle level were noted in the private unrecognised schools.

**Table 2**  
**Grade wise dual enrolment within the government schools and government to private schools**

Grade	Primary to primary (govt. to govt.)	Middle to middle (govt. to govt.)	Total enrolment (4743)	Primary to primary (govt. to private) total enrolment-662	Middle to middle (govt. to private) total enrolment-293	Total enrolment (955)
I	17	7	24	11	-	11
II	22	8	30	17	-	17
III	14	11	25	18	-	18
IV	19	9	28	18	-	18
V	10	8	18	12	-	12
VI	-	18	18	-	8	8
VII	-	14	14	-	7	7
VIII	-	9	9	-	4	4
Total	82	84	166	76	19	95

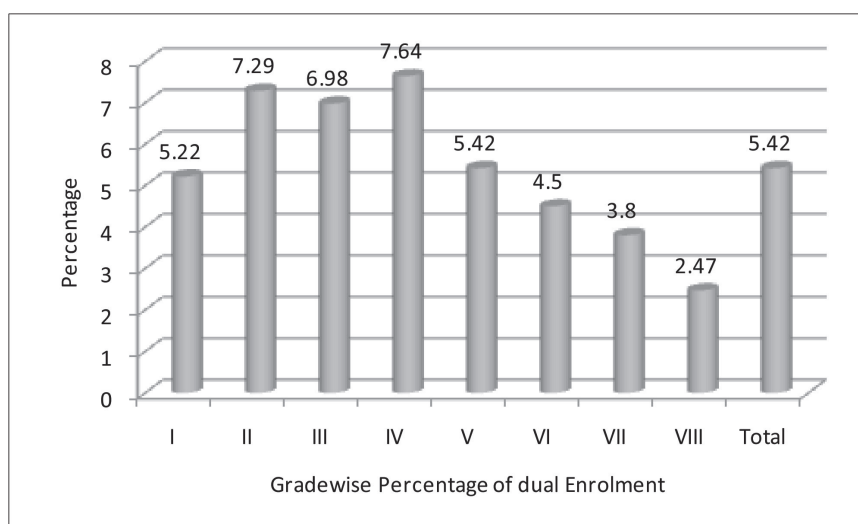
**Note :** P = primary, M = middle

### **Grade wise Enrolment of Dual Enrolment**

The study attempted to map out the grade-wise dual enrolment. It included the movement of students both in the government as well as private schools. Grade-wise dual enrolment cases were calculated from the total enrolment of the government schools. Table 3 displays the pattern of dual enrolment. Highest concentration of dual enrolment was recorded in Grade IV (7.64), followed by Grade III (7.29). Minimum cases were observed in Grade VIII (2.47) and Grade VII (3.80). An overall per cent of dual enrolment was 5.42 substantiating the inflation in the volume of enrolment of the government schools.

**Table 3**  
**Grade wise percentage of dual enrolment**

Grade	Total Enrolment in Government Schools	Dual Enrolment in %	
		Both in the Govt. and Private Schools	
		Total Dual Enrolment (absolute fig.)	%
I	671	35	5.22
II	645	47	7.29
III	616	43	6.98
IV	602	46	7.64
V	553	30	5.42
VI	578	26	4.50
VII	552	21	3.80
VIII	526	13	2.47
Total	4743	261	5.42



**Figure 2**

### Discussion

The study attempted to estimate grade-wise volume of dual enrolment in proportion to admission and absentees. In the

government schools about 17 per cent cases of absentees were on record as compared to the private schools (4 per cent). About 4 per cent cases of dual enrolment were noted in the government schools. When added to the cases of private schools it contributed about 5.42 per cent to the total enrolment. Primary schools experienced more cases of dual enrolment followed by middle schools. The analysis further revealed that dual enrolment was more evident in Grade IV and Grade III of the government schools. At the terminal point of elementary education the volume of dual enrolment got reduced. How does the dual enrolment work in the elementary school system? Why had highest concentration of dual enrolment in Grade IV and Grade III? Was it a case of simply extraction of incentives provided by the State Government or some other motives that led to dual enrolment? Had some schools better teaching which attracted students for admission? Can this practice be checked without violating the spirit of RTE Act, 2010? The study attempted to address such issues.

Teachers and community are said to be important stakeholders of the school management programme. The community is expected to ensure both enrolment and attendance of students. At the same time, teachers are instrumental to make the schooling system live. Enrolment drive, demand for parateachers, teaching-aids, incentives to students and other academic and non-academic exercises are to be managed by the teachers. In many cases, both the community and teachers breed the phenomenon of dual enrolment. Of late, the distance and timing of the school does not matter. Students can be enrolled anywhere beyond the feeder area. In Jharkhand all schools had to follow the same timing. Hence, hardly any space to attend two schools at the same time was possible. A sudden upsurge in the percentage of attendance (83 per cent which was more than the national average-76 per cent and 78 per cent for primary and upper primary stage respectively) was noted in Jharkhand. The State Government implemented quality mid-day meal thrice in a week under Mid Day Meal programme. Despite 69 per cent teachers admitted that it did not improve the quality of education. Students showed their inclination to the quality meal instead of contents of learning. Even 57 per cent teachers admitted about the better quality of teaching in private schools. Surprisingly, 32 per cent teachers of the government schools suggested the parents for admission in private schools. They (28 per cent) advised parents to get their ward admitted in a



nearby school for some other reasons. The community was equally answerable to it. Parents (56 per cent) calculated some intrinsic benefits of dual enrolment in terms of getting incentives already defined by the State Government. It was to note that other than scholarship all other incentives for all grades in Jharkhand were equivalent. Dual enrolment ensured double scholarship and other incentives. The community took advantages of various schemes by admitting their ward in two government schools. Dual enrolment was also observed in the unrecognised private schools resulting in twin advantages of incentives provided by the State Government and content of learning from the other sources. It was obvious from the study that incentives and scholarship were not sole reasons of dual enrolment. Better teaching either in the government or private schools attributed to dual enrolment. Forty seven per cent parents explained the reasons of dual enrolment to better quality of teaching and denied twin advantages of incentives and scholarship from the other schools. Another question of highest concentration of dual enrolment in Grade IV could be answered by the cross-examination of the parents. They adopted pro-active strategy to get their ward admitted in Navodaya Vidyalaya. They were looking for better teaching facilities and hence, moved to either the government or private schools where quality teaching was ensured. In many cases they shifted to another feeder area for admission and managed to extract incentives from two different schools. Remarkably parents or guardians did not accept the reality despite substantive evidences of dual enrolment shown to them. They flatly denied it. In a few cases, they admitted it with an assurance from the investigators that it would not be disclosed to anyone. Teachers (77 per cent) and headmasters (86 per cent) showed ignorance of it. In a few cases (about 20 per cent) they admitted children in the schools under the local pressure or a fear of threat. About 8 per cent teachers did the same under the influence of personalised relationships. By and large, teachers attributed it to the community and the community had a fair logic of social comparison. The unfair game kept running without any strain.

When delivery mechanism is not satisfactory and classroom transaction non-interactive, students are bound to stay away from the school. They find some alternative arrangement. Private schools cater to their needs by offering the differentiated instructional method of teaching. Their delivery mechanisms and inputs of learning often attract students to stay in the schools. Despite the

fact that private schools are not equipped with the well-trained teaching forces, their management to take care of learners lends support to cognitive constructive approach to learning. At least they make students presentable and smart. The private schools serve as the community desires. An upsurge of missionary as well as prototype schools in tribal district of Jharkhand state reveals the fact that the government schools are not serious about ensuring the quality of teaching. Valence and vector of the government schools and private schools stand for two different approaches to schooling. On qualitative parameters the government schools compromise with the issues of inclusive education while the private schools track performance. Though classroom transaction in the private schools is far away from deep learning, at least their management style and the differentiated instructional teaching make the valence attractive. Vector represents direction by which the students move to attain the goals. Prevailing dual enrolment in the schooling system serves two different purposes. First, the volume of enrolment is increased and pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) maintained. It is a dividend to the government schools. And second, a particular section of the society is satisfied with private schools. Right now, there is no mechanism to curb this practice unless it is declared as serious offence and persons accountable for it are punished. The state government is now deriously considering to introduce Aadhar card for admission in the schools.

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