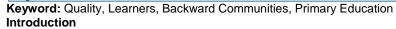
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Reflection of Quality in the Performance of the Primary School Learners **Belonging To Backward Communities – An Investigation**

Abstract

Education of today is facing too many challenges right from primary to higher levels of education. In the name of reformation lots of changes are going on in the field of education from time to time. Since 1948 when Universal Declaration of Human Rights were affirmed then the goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) has been on the International agenda. This objective was restated on many occasions by International treaties and Conferences of United Nations but, remained silent about quality of education. Qualitative improvement in education can be better perceived from the increasing rate of literacy in India and Assam i.e. 64.83% in 2001 to 74.64% in 2011 in India and 63.25% in 2001 to 73.2% in 2011 in Assam. One of the MDGs of United Nations gives importance on the Universal Primary education by 2015. Dakar agreement lists improving the quality of education as one of its EFA Goals. But national level survey done by NCERT, PRATHAM reveal a very pitiable condition of primary school learners' quality of learning. So the investigator felt the need of studying the quality of primary school learners belong to backward communities of Assam. The study was conducted in Karbi Anglong district of Assam which is a Hill district of Assam from which the samples for the study were collected. Schools where the learners of four backward communities of Assam i.e.- STH, STP, S.C & OBC were found were selected. Here descriptive survey method was used. Purposive sampling technique was applied in selection of sample. The study aims to study the class V students' quality of learning English and Mathematics. Questions were set from the text book of class IV. After analysing a low quality performance of total 168 learners selected as sample from 15 primary schools were found both in English and Mathematics.



Education of today is facing too many challenges right from primary to higher levels of education. In the name of reformation lots of changes are going on in the field of education from time to time. Since 1948 when Universal Declaration of Human Rights were affirmed then the goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) has been on the International agenda. This objective was restated on many occasions by International treaties and Conferences of United Nations but remained silent about quality of education. In April 2000 The World Education Forum at Dakar adopted the Dakar framework for action which in its agreement lists improving the quality of education as one of its EFA Goals. Accordingly it aims "Improving all aspects of the quality education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills."

Foundation of education lies on primary education that is our basic education. For this reason Millennium development goals adopted by UNO in the year 2000, apply to all countries and is based on the fundamental principles of - human rights, equality and sustainability. Out of 8 chosen Millennium Development Goals formulated in 2012-one goal



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Backward Communities etc. are regarded as the Backward communities and to uplift the quality of learners -children belong to backward communities must be given equal treatment like the General

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category children. The SSA (Sarva Siksha Abhijan) i.e. Education for All programme has been at the centre of India's education policy in recent years. SSA was launched in the year 2001-2002 with an aim to have all children to complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010 and to achieve elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life. SSA programme of India suggests the following major components to be an essential part of the effort to improve the quality of elementary education

- Vision of quality elementary education.
- 2. Curriculum renewable plan.
- 3. Teaching –Learning material including text book.
- Teacher training. 4.
- Teaching-Learning process. 5.
- Academic resource support structure. 6.
- Monitoring of quality aspects.

All these efforts suggested to be done for quality improvement of primary education is good but in reality when the success of SSA is highlighted then importance is given on numerical representation of how SSA programme is succeeding in terms of -

- Number of new school buildings.
- Number of new teachers employed.
- Additional classrooms and toilets constructed.
- Amount of money spend on teacher training.
- Amount of money spend on teaching-learning equipments etc.

So from all these mentioned above how it can be find out that the quality of education is actually improving remains indistinct to all. Quality of teachers, infrastructure facilities definitely contribute to the quality of primary education. But it is also true that all these facilities are provided to develop quality human

It is really a matter to highlight that India is

resource. **Need of the Study**

YOUNG INDIA as 65% of its population is below the age of 35 years. So the possibilities and prospects for India are more if these human resources could be properly trained and educated by providing quality education. Quality education can be measured quantitatively with the attainment level of the learners according to their age in different aims and objectives of a subject for which it is taught. For example learning English language aims at making the learner of class V standard capable to - read, write, speak and understand English language .Like this the quality of learning Mathematics is reflected in fulfilling the desired aims of the subject for the students of class V standard i.e - capable to solve problems related to four fundamental operations of Mathematics addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Both English and Mathematics are the compulsory subjects that the students are to learn from class I. For these

reasons the investigator felt the need to study on the

is -to achieve Universal Primary Education by all boys and girls within 2015. The world is facing a mounting crisis and to realize it and became self motivated to perform duties accordingly, one must have primary education. Otherwise it will be really a difficult task to motivate and make the illiterates realize the crisis and solutions of world problems. If we look back to the past of primary education in India (since independence) then we see that the Article 45 of the constitution of India formed on 26th January 1950 states clearly to provide free and compulsory primary education for all children until they reach the age of 14 years, within a period of 10 years. That was the first concern of free India towards primary education to make it free and compulsory by 1960. Then onwards many such targets passed for universalization of primary education in India and Assam and accordingly the rate of literacy in India as well as in Assam increases after independence which can be perceived below.

Table no: 1 Literacy rates in India and Assam

	2001	2011
ASSAM	63.25%	73.2%
INDIA	64.83%	74.04%

Out of 28 States and 3 Union Territories of India. Assam is one of the States situated in the North -East part of India. Assam is a beautiful land constituted with hills and plains. There are 27 districts in Assam. It has two hill districts and 25 plain districts. Although lots of problems, conflicts are there in Assam yet unity persists among the people in spite of all those diversities. It is famous for its petroleum products, minerals, coal, tea, valuable flora and fauna, forest resources, Rhinoceros (single Horn) in kaziranga National park etc.

The lower primary education of Assam is from class I to class V and the Upper primary covers the classes from VI to VIII. Combining the two is known as elementary education that covers the eight years of schooling from class I to class VIII. If one completes successfully the first four years of quality lower primary education then the learning retains throughout the life. Since independence government of India shows its concern and commitment to the cause of children through the constitutional provisions, policies, programmes, legislations etc. In spite of its progress it could not reach its goal of attaining 100% literacy up till now. India is the world's largest democracy and its estimated population is 1.2 billion. The total population of Assam is 3, 11,69,272 according to the census of 2011.

Up to India's 10th five year plan (2002-2007) truly speaking focussed heavily on -universal access and enrolment but arguably neglected the quality of education at primary level. In September 2009 finally the Government of India enacted the long awaited Right to Education Act" was passed with a commitment to provide free and compulsory primary education to all with a mandate to improve the quality of education. In India the schedule tribe (Hills), Schedule Tribe (Plains), Scheduled Caste, Other

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topic – Reflection of The Quality of Primary Education in The Performance of The Primary School Learners Belong to Backward Communities - An Investigation.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study-

- To study the quality of English learning of class V learners belong to backward communities.
- To study the quality of mathematics learning of class V learners belong to backward communities.
- To study the difference between the learning quality of the class V learners in English and Mathematics

Hypotheses

- Quality of English learning of the class V learners belong to backward communities is low.
- Quality of mathematics learning of the class V learners belong to backward communities is low.
- There is no significant difference between the learning quality of English and Mathematics of the class V learners belongs to backward communities.

Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to

- The Karbi Anglong district of Assam which is a Hill district of Assam. Although all the categories of backward communities are living in Karbi Anglong yet the most dominating category is Scheduled Tribe Hills (STH).
- The class V students of Backward Communities only.

Meaning of the Terms Used

- Scheduled tribe (hills): Tribal people who are the original residents of hills.
- Scheduled tribe (plains): Tribal people who are the original residents of plains.
- Scheduled caste: Communities belong to 16th schedule of the constitution of India. They are educationally as well as economically backward.
- Other Backward Communities (OBC): Other Backward communities of Assam identified by the Government as weaker communities.

[Government provides facility of reservation for the children of above mentioned categories to get admission, scholarship, jobs etc. in following rates –5% for STH, 10% for STP, 27 % for O.B.C and 7% for S.C.]

Quality of Learning in this Study Mean

In case of English, in this study, the quality of learning means students' ability to read, write, speak and understand English language.

In case of Mathematics in this study, the quality of learning means students' ability to- solve problems in four fundamental operations of Mathematics i.e. addition, subtraction, multiplication & division.

 Primary education: From class I to class V in primary schools

Quality of Learning is Quantitatively Determined in this Study as follows

- Below 20 % performance is regarded as very low quality.
- 20% to 40 % performance is regarded as low quality.
- 3. 40 % to 60 % performance as average quality.
- 4. 60% to 80% performance as high quality.
- 5. 80% to 100% performance as very high quality.

Facilities Provided in Assam for Qualitative and Quantitative Improvement of Primary Education

Government of Assam provides different facilities from primary level to higher level of education. Although 100% literacy is not achieved yet different plans and programmes formulated from time to time were implemented to achieve its target of universalization of primary education. Such as-

- It provides free and compulsory primary education for the children belong to the age group of 6 – 14 years.
- To motivate the people to send their children to school and to attract the children & also for the care of students' health –mid day meal is provided to the children.
- Free text book, uniform are also provided to the students to make the parents free from their financial liabilities.
- Established primary schools in one kilometre distances to solve communication problem.
- Continuous and comprehensive evaluation is done for students' quality learning & to improve their learning standard.
- District and Block Academic Core Groups were formed –for monitoring quality teaching-learning process.
- Block Accountant to monitor the School grant and accounts used for quality improvement of primary education.
- Teacher training and Pedagogy are giving importance for quality improvement of teacher, teaching method & skill. Teachers' Training Programmes are provided by –Basic Training Centre(BTC), District Institutes of Education and Training(DIET), Diploma in Elementary Education for in service teachers of primary schools provided by K. K. Handique State Open University.
- Teachers are to enrol all the 6-14 year children of their locality in primary schools by motivating the guardians and children.
- Maintaining teacher- pupil ratio as 1:30. Selection of quality teachers through TET (Teacher Eligibility Test).
- 11. Under operation black board different teaching-learning materials were provided. Gives importance in providing better infrastructure facilities. For all round development play materials were also provided for the students.
- School management committee and Mothers' group – to keep watch and aware about quality primary education through community involvement.

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- 13. Deputy Commissioner of the District is the chairperson of the monitoring committee.
- 14. Above all a toll free number is made available for all i.e., 1800 345 3525 to communicate with the head office of SSA if any problem arises that affects the quality of primary education. This helps in having community involvement to maintain quality primary education.
- 15. Implementation of innovative programmes like Bidyajyoti, Naba Pradakshep are learning assurance programmes which keep track of children's learning process in a systematic manner and extend remedial support to slow learners.

All these measures were come up for the universalization of primary education but in what specific ways do the recent reform initiatives in primary education help in the quality improvement of the learners - especially belong to backward communities need proper analysis.

Review of Related Literatures

In reviewing different literatures it has found that-

- Dakar framework for action which in its agreement lists improving the quality of education as one of its EFA Goals. Accordingly it aims "Improving all aspects of the quality education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills."
- According to Global Monitoring Report 2009 of UNESCO "progress in quantitative head count indicators has masked problems in qualitative learning achievement"
- 3. Regarding quality education NCERT focuses on child. Accordingly it reveals that –"National picture shows that only 56.2% of children in standard V are able to read a standard two level text, only 32.8% children of class V are able to do simple Subtraction, 60.9% children of Standard V are able to tell the time and 83.2% Standard V children are able to do simple currency tasks"
- 4. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of India 2010 reveals that -55% of std V cannot read std II level text (own language). 24% std VIII cannot read std II level text. 38% std V cannot solve subtraction sums and 47% std VIII children cannot read std 11 level text in India.

Annual Report and Audit Report 2013-14 ,SSA Assam reveals that- 56.8% children of std III – V can read std I text and 46.5% could do simple subtraction in Karbi Anglong.

Methodology Used in the Study Method Used

By looking into the nature of the study i.e dealing with the present quality status of the class V primary school learners in English and Mathematics - **descriptive survey** method is used in this study.

Sampling

Main intention of this study is to select the children of backward communities studying in class V so here **purposive sampling technique** is used.

Sample Collected for the Study

School sample

Only 15 Government primary schools were selected as sample where STH, STP, OBC and SC children were studying.

Student or Learner Sample

Total 168 students studying in class V and belong to backward communities are selected as sample. Here out of 168 learners or students 73 are boys and 95 are girls.

Tools Used in the Study

For the collection of data following tools were prepared by the investigator

Questionnaire 1, for teachers prepared to get the basic informations related to the school, teachers etc. and also to judge teacher's quality.

Questionnaire 2, prepared to test the quality of students' learning English.

Questionnaire 3, prepared to test the learners' quality of learning Mathematics

Observation schedule was used to collect the informations related to – infrastructure, number of teachers, teacher-pupil ratio, parental education, home guidance of the students, students' daily activity, regularity of teacher and students, how the students pass their study hours, preparation of mid day meal, toilet facility, cleanliness and hygienic conditions etc.

Learners' Quality of Learning is Measured by Evaluating their Academic Performance

Judging quality of an educational system depends on the attainment level of the learners for whom the system is made. It is not an easy task because each and every student's quality of learning must be found out to put a remark on the system. Student's performance depends on many factors such as- Infrastructure facilities, quality of teacher-qualification, teaching method, maintaining teacher-pupil ratio, home guidance, parental care and attention, providing proper environment for children's learning at home as well as in school etc .In spite of all these, an effort is made to find out the std V learners' quality of learning English and Mathematics through their performance in these two subject.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

After collecting both 2nd and 3rd questionnaires from 168 class V learners, the objective wise average performance of boys and girls in both the subjects were computed which are shown in table no 4 and 5 respectively. After this analysis was done one by one as per objectives of the study-

The 1st objective of the study i.e., to judge the quality of learners' English learning --- objective wise performances in - reading, writing, speaking and understanding English language are shown in the table no 2 given below-

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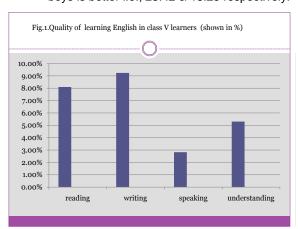
Table No: 2. English Learning Quality of the Class V Learners (Boys and Girls) Belong To Backward Communities Studying in Government Primary Schools of Karbi Anglong District of Assam.

Table no 2: Quality of Class V learners belong to B.C in English learning					
Objectives Of	Total Scores Obtained	Otal Scores Obtained	Grand Total Score	Objective Wise	
Learning	By 73 Class V Boys	By 95 Class V Girls	Secured By 168	Percentages of Quality	
English	oOf Backward Class	of Backward Class	Learners	Learning By 168	
				Learners.	
Reading	5.84	7.79	13.63	8.1	
Writing	6.57	8.93	15.50	9.23	
Speaking	2.19	2.55	4.74	2.28	
Understanding	3.65	4.75	8.40	5.30	
Total	18.25	23.42	42.27	25.2	

Source: Self study.

From the above table no 4, it can be observed that-

- Overall quality of learners in English learning is very poor i.e., only 25.2%
- Only 8.1 % class V learners of backward communities can read English of class IV standard.
- 9.23% class V learners can only write English words.
- Speaking in English language is found very poor i.e., only 2.82%
- Understanding English language is found only 5.0%.
- 6. Quality performance of girls in comparison to boys is better i.e., 23.42 & 18.25 respectively.



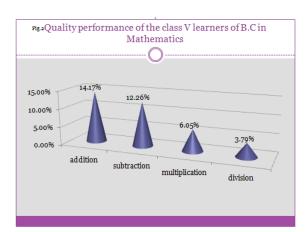
Graphical presentation given below gives a clear picture of the performance of the Learners in English objective wise.

The second objective of the study is to find out the learning quality of the class V learners belong to backward communities in Mathematics.

The main objective of learning Mathematics by the class V primary school learners is to develop their quality to solve problems related to four fundamental operations of Mathematics i.e., addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. For these purposes 3 problems related to each addition, subtraction, multiplication and division were given to the learners to solve. Accordingly in table no. 5 given below, objective wise performance quality of the class V learners are shown.

Table No: 3. Mathematics Learning Quality of the Class V Learners (Boys and Girls)
Belong To Backward Communities of Karbi Anglong, Assam.

Table no 3. Learning quality of class V learners in Mathematics					
Objectives of Mathematics learning	Total scores secured by 73 male class V learners of B.C (objective wise)	Total scores secured by 95 female class V learners of B.C (objectives wise)	Total scores secured by total 168 class V learners of B.C	Percentage of the class V learners of B.C (objective wise) in English learning.	
Addition	10.22	13.59	23.81	14.17%	
Subtraction	8.91	11.69	20.60	12.26%	
Multiplication	4.42	5.75	10.17	6.05%	
Division	2.56	3.80	6.36	3.79%	
Total 26.11 3		34.83	60.94	36.27%	



From the table no:3 and figure no 2 it is observed that -

- Overall quality of Mathematics learning of class V learners of backward communities is found only 36.27% which belong to low quality.
- Lowest quality of learners' learning Mathematics is found in solving problems related to division i.e., 3.79%.
- 3. 6.05% is the only quality performance percentage found in solving problems related to Multiplication?
- In subtraction 12.26 % quality learning is found among the class V learners of backward communities.
- 14.1 % learners could solve problems related to addition.

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The third objective of the study is to compare the learning quality of the class V learners of backward communities between the subjects — English and Mathematics. To compare the learners' quality of learning between English and Mathematics, objective wise learning quality of the learners in English and Mathematics were arranged which can be observed in Table no: 4 given below-

Table no: 4. Objective Wise Class V Learners Quality of Learning English and Mathematics in Percentage Form

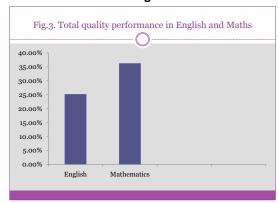
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Objectives of English Learning	Total quality learning in English in %	Objective of Mathematics Learning	Total Quality learning in Mathematics in %			
Reading	8.1%	Addition	14.17%			
Writing	9.23%	Subtraction	12.26%			
Speaking	2.82%	Multiplication	6.05%			
Understanding	5.30%	Division	3.79%			
Total	25.2%	Total	36.27%			

The percentages of learning quality in different objectives of English and mathematics t-test was done to test the significance of the difference between the quality learning of the learners in English and Mathematics. The result of t-testing is shown in a tabular form given below-

Table no; 5. t-table showing the significance of the difference between the quality learning of the class V learners in English and Mathematics

	learning of the class viearners in English and Mathematics								
Table .5. Table showing the significance of the difference of the class v learners' quality performance									
between English and Mathematics									
M(e)	M(M)	N(E)	N(M)	Pool D	D	Т	Critical Values		Result of Significance Testing
							.05	.01	
6.61	9.07	4	4	3.47	2.46	1.00	2.45	3.71	No Significant Difference is found

In the table no 5- it is observed that the computed t-value i.e., 1.00 is lower than the critical t-values both at .05 and .01 levels of significance so no significant difference is found between the quality of Fig. No:3. Comparative View of Total Learning Quality of the Learners in English and Mathematics in Percentage.



learners' learning English and Mathematics although the graphical presentation in figure no 3. shows a difference between the total learning quality of the learners in English and Mathematics.

- Graphical representation shows a difference of quality learning between English and Mathematics i.e 11.07%.
- Total quality learning of the learners in English is found as 25.2% where as in Mathematics it is 36.27%
- 3. But the significance testing indicates a low level learning quality of the leaners both in english and mathematics.

Findings of the Study

- Quality of learners in English learning was found as low as 25.2 %
- Quality of learners in learning Mathematics was found also low i.e., 36.27%
- Although percentage wise there is difference between the performance of the learners in English and Mathematics yet in significance testing no significant difference is found (Table no 7)

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- Implementation of teacher: pupil ratio, in the sampled primary schools is found defective.
 Teacher –pupil ratio is based not class wise but on the enrolment of the whole school 1:30.
- School buildings look good but inside the building students of all classes are to sit in one hall type room or two rooms mostly (table no:8)
- Drinking water facility is provided by making the tube wells but no provision of filtration of drinking water was found
- 7. Toilet facilities were found, even in most of the schools separate toilets were found for boys and girls but most of the toilets were not clean and urinating in unhygienic condition is also harmful for the health.
- Due to rain most of the schools remained close during the time of data collection. Teacher – pupil absenteeism is found for the reasons of less importance.
- Teachers were found not so skill full to teach learners by activity, self learning, integrated etc.methods.
- 10. Only 19.5% teachers were found having BTC training in the sampled schools.
- Appointment of teachers only by means of TET examination is not sufficient but their teaching skills should be tested.
- 12. Teachers are eager to take teachers' training for permanency of their job and not for applying those skills in their class room teaching. Out of 41 teachers 38 teachers expressed their views like that.
- 13. In 9 schools out of 15 i.e., in 60% sampled schools 2 teachers are to teach 5 or more than 5 classes.
- 14. 60% learners (100 out of 168) are 1st generation learners.
- 15. Only 22% learners of primary schools were spending their study hours in the morning and evening in studying but 130 learners i.e., 78% learners are to do house hold works, look after their siblings during their study hours.

Suggestions, Scope for Future Study & Conclusion

Findings of the study reveal a low level quality of learners in English learning. In mathematics also the quality of learning is not satisfactory irrespective of gender. By observing all the findings it is suggested that-

- More importance is to be given on implementation of plans and programmes. For this monitoring of each plan and programme at grass root level is urgently needed.
- There must have a co-ordination between planner and implementer. The intension of the planner must be clearly understood by the implementer.
- Special emphasis must be given on teachinglearning of grammar in case of language and number tables in case of mathematics for improvement of quality learning in learners.

- Class-wise appointment of teachers is necessary.
- Teacher- Pupil ratio should be maintained classwise.
- Separate classroom must be made for separate classes.
- For community mobilization parent teacher meet must be organized frequently in presence of government officials.
- Training of teacher should not end on attaining a certificate, diploma or degree and to fulfil the criteria of their appointment but proper monitoring is needed whether they apply the skills in their classroom teaching or not.
- In service training for the teacher must be made compulsory.
- Courses and course contents must be prepared according to the age specific objectives of the subject.
- Regarding method of teaching-learning- self learning should be given importance and teacher should act as a facilitator to them.
- 12. Students must be encouraged for their participation in keeping their environment clean.
- 13. Class V students' are in pre-adolescence stage so they should get guidance related to health and hygiene, attainment of puberty, food habit, HIV-AIDS etc. And for this teachers should be specially trained.
- 14. More female teachers should be appointed to take care of the learners of primary classes.
- 15. Infrastructure facility for storing of play materials is needed at school so that it can be easily accessible to the students. Each student should be motivated to participate for their all round development
- 16. To ensure regularity of teachers and students regular monitoring is required. If teacher can be made regular then students also will be regular.
- Besides this frequent parent –teacher meet will help in this regard. Toll free number and its utilization must be known by all parents and community members.
- 18. Class wise teacher when appointed then head master should be excluded and he should be entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the programmes and policies, cleanliness of surroundings, toilets etc. and if anomalies found then the Head master will be held responsible and answerable for that.
- 19. Mid —day meal is found provided in each sampled school and it is observed that in the preparation process, curiosity of learners,- all create an atmosphere that diverts the students' attention from classroom learning. Head master of the school should inspect the process to control its quality and cleanliness. One kitchen is required for each school.
- Head master is to observe teaching method of the teachers, class work- home work copies evaluated by the teachers and arrangement of

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remedial classes for students by class teachers

21. Adult Education system should be implemented and the illiterate parents are to be motivated to attend.

Regarding Scope for future study it is to say that-Further investigations will be required to test the quality performance of learners in other areas of Assam and in each subject taught to the learners of Primary schools. Large sample- representatives of each area of the districts of Assam will help in generalizing the findings. Besides this the causes of low standard quality learning of the class V learners need to be investigated properly which will help to eradicate such problems.

In conclusion it is to say that this type of study is laborious and time consuming but not impossible because plans and programmes and also financial support provided in our country for elementary education is really good but government alone cannot solve the problems and being the conscious citizens we all should extend our support voluntarily. Learners of elementary level need special care and attention, because this is the most formative period of human life and base of quality human resource development.

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