



LEVERAGING SAMAGRA SHIKSHA'S 'QUALITY AND INNOVATION' SUPPORT TO NURTURE GIFTED LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF NAGALAND

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Abstract: The paper explores the possibility of the Quality and Innovation support programme of Samagra Shiksha in successfully developing gifted students in Government secondary schools of Nagaland. It is founded on the concept of achieving educational equity as has been reported in NEP 2020 of children with high intellectual potential in different areas. The paper is founded on the secondary data of literature reviews, policy documents, journals and reports. The study examines the situation with gifted programs, the problems of their realization and provides the guidelines on how to deal with them. The study came up with the conclusion that the endemic loopholes in the education of the gifted can be explained by the uneven application of differentiated instructions and huge discrepancies in the educational infrastructure. In addition to this, the lack of special education to train teachers to recognize gifted students in the institutions, lack of coordination and counselling, the rigid school curriculum and the lack of digital accessibility and use of ICT, among others, constituted issues that hinder growth among the gifted learners. The study proposes that teachers should have a capacity-building program, curriculum development based on the contextual requirements, encouraging and nurturing talents, providing funds and scholarships to encourage gifted children, and accountability system. When these recommendations are actualized, the equity gaps will ultimately be filled and, therefore, the talents of the gifted children will be achieved in Nagaland.

Keywords: Gifted learners, Samagra Shiksha, National Education Policy (NEP 2020), Secondary, Education Equity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Diversity of learning abilities is a situation that teaching staffs have been facing in their daily operations within an educational establishment; therefore, the necessity of being ready to meet the demands. Gifted children belong to other cultures and socio-economic status. They demonstrate a high degree of proficiency or a possibility in one field over another in terms of age, experience, or background (Davidson Institute, 2021). It was concluded that gifted and talented children possess superior skills and the quality of high performance and in many cases need specialized and differentiated instructional services outside the normal school curriculum to realize their potential and positively impact society (Marland as cited in Zaleski, 2023). This will address the problem of equity as it will help to meet their needs. Therefore, in order to empower children to realize their

potential, the avenues to awaken the interests of learners in learning, should be instigated by encouragement and help (Department for Children, Schools and Families [DCSF], 2007). Highly prophetic learners of a given subject should be encouraged to learn outside the school syllabus (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020). The 5+3+3+4 model of NEP 2020 assumes that the second level will involve four years of multidisciplinary education, which relies on the pedagogy of subjects and the curriculum. Secondly, it also focuses on the fact that more complexity, intellectual ability, purpose of life, greater openness, and the choice of subjects that the student should select is necessary. The rigid pedagogy and curriculum play a critical role in nurturing the gifted students. Its policy is targeting many developmental initiatives to the Samagra Shiksha, although its constant endeavour with learners whose talent is gifted is mostly omitted thus bringing an equity gap. Therefore, the policy will undergo faster quality and innovation development as soon as the curricula are revised in compliance with NEP 2020, thus, allowing the most efficient learning among children found in the government secondary schools of Nagaland.

II. THEORETICAL CONCEPT

One of the longest and oldest longitudinal studies in psychology is possibly the Genetic Studies of Genius, which was carried out by Lewis Terman. Through thorough research, he came up with the conclusion that investing in the intellectually endowed person will help achieve an imbalance in gains in the field of science, the arts and the leadership in the society (Arab Psychology, n.d.). According to Page (2006), Renzulli concept of the Three Ring Conception of Giftedness is a concept that has its foundation based on the three human characteristics including above average, a high degree of task commitment and high degree of creativity that are extensively applied in schools and other learning institutions. His theory is not based on formal education only, but also on other factors. In his presentation of the Differentiated Model of Giftedness and Talent (as cited in Talara Primary College, n.d.), Gagne describes gifted students as those whose abilities outperform average of one or more spheres, in which they include intellectual, creative and social, and physical. He also emphasizes that in order to enable children to work on their gifts to greater heights, schools should be constantly supportive. In his article, Maslo (2023) talks about the theory of multiple intelligences suggested by Gardner in the process of learning and singles out eight intelligences: verbal-linguistic intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, rhythmic-musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and personal intelligence. In his work, he concludes that all these intelligences cannot be pegged on attaining academic gains, but rather be integrated into other types of learning to encourage children to learn. He stressed that all these multiple intelligences must be used in an optimal way to create inclusive learning practice.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Reis et al. (2021) in their article, Curriculum Compacting: A Systematic Procedure to Modify the Curriculum to Students with Above average Abilities, one of the problems that is currently being encountered in the educational institutes is the un-diversity of the educational curriculum which may cater to the needs of highly intellectual students. Therefore, there is a need to employ strategies in schools that will guarantee equitable learning to everyone. The question that AM, Hadi, Istiyono, and Retnawati (2023) address in their study is as follows: Does differentiated instruction have an impact on learning outcomes? The article: a systematic review and meta-analysis found that, learning outcomes among students have differentiated instruction through critical learning approach being student-centred in the inclusive setting. The study makes an important contribution to teachers and policymakers as it is noted that the implementation of differentiated learning using consistency can have a positive implication on the value of students. Kadve and Kumar (2023) have found that although Samagra Shiksha has made efforts to enhance the educational system by making it more accessible, higher quality, and more inclusive among the students of all levels, differences in quality, lack of access by children with special needs, and the use of digital learning tools can be identified. The study further suggested that to restructure the education sector, implementing the policies that will cater to the needs of the varied children should be given the first priority in order to fix the quality and access issue in education.

Surendar and Maruthamuthu (2023) observed that the mentioned provision of gifted learners in NEP 2020 will have adverse impact on the learning outcomes of the learners. They also indicated that to realise the realisation of its initiative, it should employ school teachers to ensure that the gifted learners are identified early enough and the policies put in place appropriately by seeking the contributions of professionals in the area. In their research, Roy and Swargiary (2024) pointed out that Samagra Shiksha is doing a good job of coordinating educational programs at various levels in India, and the authors are concerned with the problem of access, quality, and inclusiveness. However, incessant challenges in terms of quality education, inclusiveness, and distance learning are major problems to students, especially students in disadvantaged societies. Thus, the need to introduce interventions, allocate more money, give teachers training, and modernize digital infrastructure and training arises.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i) To determine the position of the gifted education and support programs in the Nagaland government secondary schools.
- ii) To identify the problems for implementation of gifted education
- iii) To propose the improvement steps in order to admit gifted learners into the environment of the education system.

V. OVERVIEW OF EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED AT THE GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF NAGALAND

According to Samagra Shiksha Nagaland, 588 special children study in IX-XII courses in the state at the moment. However, not much is available concerning how the state responds to the needs of gifted children in order to guarantee their well-rounded growth. The Department of Information and Public Relations, Nagaland (DIPR Nagaland, 2025), says two Government Higher Secondary Schools students Ruzhukhrie and Chumoukedima participated in the Sakura Science High School Programme (SSHPP) as one of the exchange programmes under the INSPIRE MANAK AWARDS, which is aimed at honoring meritorious students, and the selection of which is done by the Samagra Shiksha/NBSE under the Board of the Ministry of Education (MoE) GoI. Following these programs and other actions, the State Council of Educational Research and Training, Nagaland (2020) underlines that the National Talent Search Examination is conducted among the gifted students of secondary education and the project by the State Council of Educational Research and Training and grants them scholarships.

Kala Utsav is a national initiative program under the management of the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSE&L) and the Ministry of Education (MoE) among the students of Nagaland secondary schools, as part of the multidisciplinary studies envisaged by the National Education Policy (NEP 2020). The program highlights consist of presenting exceptional talent in the music, storytelling, visual arts and crafts and drama (DIPR Nagaland, 2025).

VI. CHALLENGES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The barriers that are met in the secondary schools to harness the quality and innovation of Samagra Shiksha in building gifted education amongst the learners are as follows:

1. The infrastructural facilities required to execute the diversified activities in place are not well established in the classrooms which affects the development of children towards their holistic growth.
2. The absence of specialist teachers to recognize and meet the demands of the gifted children makes it hard to develop and realize their inherent abilities and potentialities, particularly those that belong to the marginalized members of the society.
3. Lack of the proper funds to motivate gifted learners hampers the development of the gifted learners.
4. The lack of adequate guidance and counselling usually limits the development of the gifted learners who require it most in helping them decide on their potential and make a viable career choice.

5. The absence of teacher training to recognize and make special educational plans tends to limit the growth of gifted children.
6. The persistent focus on academic performance and lack of accommodating behaviour by the teachers due to the rigid practice of the curriculum discourages gifted learners.
7. Though a lot of effort is focused towards the idea of considering Children with Special Needs (CWSN) in an inclusive environment, the measures that ought to be implemented to accommodate the needs of the gifted are not given much weight.
8. The lack of programs of the schools and the state to showcase abilities and potentialities of gifted children discourages the development.
9. Learning which could be achieved through open and distance mode becomes an issue for gifted students due to the absence of access to digital technology.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The hindrances faced in the secondary schools in the utilization of the quality and innovation of Samagra Shiksha to build the gifted education among the learners are as follows:

1. Adequate infrastructural facilities with proper laboratories and Information and Communication Technology facilities, along with facilities like sports equipment, arts and crafts, musical instruments, and an adequate library, should be utilised to develop their co-curricular aspects of learning.
2. There is a need to appoint in each school, at least one teacher who is an expert in the area of special education.
3. Gifted children should be encouraged by providing them with adequate funding and support.
4. The gifted students should be provided with proper guidance and counselling to ensure that their potential is realised by the experts and professionals.
5. Training at the state level, and district level, on the identification of gifted children, and what steps must be taken to enable them to realize their full potential, ought to be done periodically, in collaboration with the Department of Education and the Health Department.
6. The present curriculum, though well-framed and structured, often does not cater to the needs of all the students. Therefore, policymakers and the relevant department should prepare the curriculum in line with the National Education Policy (2020) and the contextual needs of society.
7. Review of literature on these studies indicates that although the government, through its numerous policies and practices, is making a commendable job towards promoting Children with Special Needs (CWSN) at the various levels, little is mentioned concerning the efforts it makes to enhance education among the gifted. As such, every stakeholder must make efforts to identify such gifted children using different programs.
8. Programmes to showcase the talents of these gifted children should be organized at the district and state level to promote their innate traits and skills.
9. Internet facilities should be linked to schools in order to offer access to students of the learnings that they can get under distance mode. This will ease the burden on teachers who lack the capacity to deal with gifted children in schools.
10. Schools should focus not only on the theoretical aspects of learning but should look into the needs of other co-curricular areas in the form of vocational education, sports education, fine arts and drama, creative writing, machine learning, fashion and designing, beauty and wellness, electronics and hardware, agriculture, automotive, etc. Measures should also be taken to link the learning they acquire at the secondary level with higher education through multidisciplinary study, as envisaged in the New Education Policy, 2020.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The analyses of various Government Secondary Schools of Nagaland on educational provisions find that, although Samagra Shiksha, according to the objectives of NEP 2020, provides a strong platform of quality and

inclusiveness, the availability of a high equity gap persists in supporting the needs of the gifted children. This paper mentions that it would take a systemic intervention to exploit the prospects of gifted education through the framework of Samagra Shiksha.

All theories introduced by famous psychologists like Terman, Renzulli, Gagne, and Gardner agree that giftedness is a complex concept that needs some educational services that are not part of the normal school curriculum. The literature review also demonstrates that various instruction (AM et al., 2023) and curriculum compacting (Reis et al., 2021) are critical strategies that are not used in the present day. Moreover, research done in our country concerning Samagra Shiksha (Kadye & Kumar, 2023; Roy and Swakiary, 2024) also revealed poor quality and lack of digital access to it and inconsistent implementation as the primary barriers to the system.

This study highlights what the state government has done in order to set up programmes of special-needs children, cultural exchange programmes, and Kala Utsav programme to foster learning in various fields. Nonetheless, current situation of secondary schools in Nagaland points out that there are issues in various sectors such as the severe lack of specialized training and the targeted training, infrastructural and ICT access, and guidance counselling and flexible curriculum are lacking to meet the demands of the gifted students.

In order to bridge the existing gap and enhance the vision of Samagra Shiksha, the given study suggests a set of recommendations, based on the adequate resource distribution, specialization of teachers, development of the curriculum in accordance with the local needs, and incorporation of ICT in schools. Not only is the nurture of gifted learners in Nagaland an educational objective but also an equity obligation because all stakeholders, including policymakers and classroom teachers, should be keen to nurture the most gifted young people in the state, in a way that they achieve their full potential and contribute positively to the growth of the country.

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