Chapter-5

Differential Educational Attainment of the Blocks of Uttar Dinajpur District
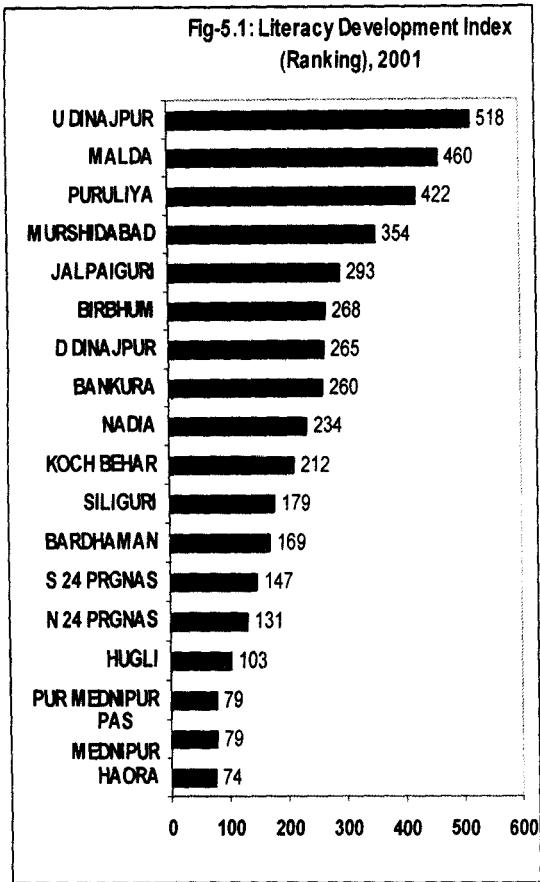
5. Introduction: Educational Perspective

The review of educational development in India and the analysis of state level literacy trend and educational development, undertaken in the previous chapters, identifies West Bengal as one of the educationally backward states in India. Again, in order to identify the educationally deprived area of West Bengal, an inter-district analysis has been carried out in the previous chapter. West Bengal was ranked at 32nd and 33rd as per the Educational Development Index (EDI) constructed by the NUEPA for the year 2005-06 and 2006-07 respectively (NUEPA 2007, 2008). The district wise EDI also brings forth a painful picture for the state. All the 19 districts of West Bengal have been ranked as lowly performed district. Malda being at the bottom-most position among the districts in this respect is closely followed by Murshidabad and Uttar Dinajpur respectively. The Literacy Development Index (LDI) presented earlier also shows that none of the districts in West Bengal could maintain the high LDI category. Nine out of 17 districts remain as lowly performed districts while the others show average performance as per the selected literacy characters of 2001.
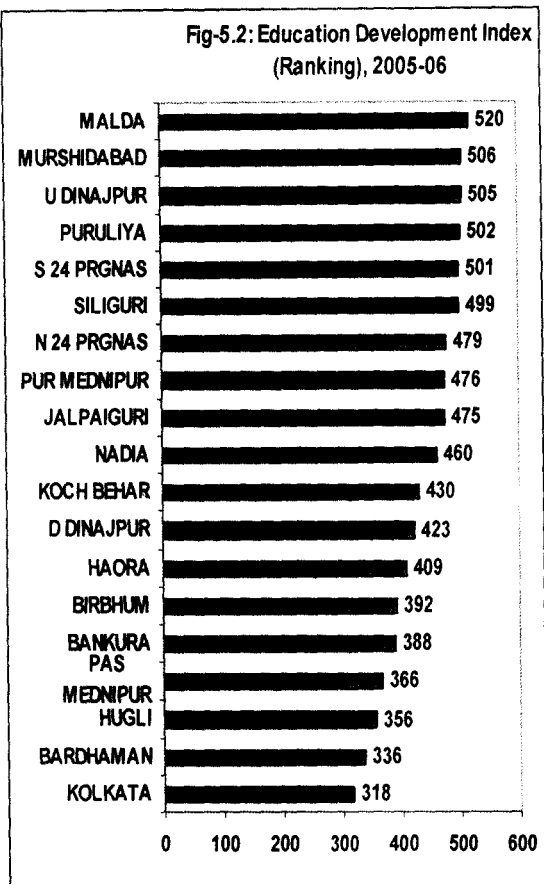
Besides this average deprivation, district level variation is also very high in the state. The performance of the district as per the indicators related to elementary education in the state and the literacy characters is detailed out in Figures 5.1 & 5.2. Considering Figures 5.1 & 5.2, the districts of Malda, Murshidabad, Uttar Dinajpur and Puruliya have been found to occupy the lowest ranks as per both the LDI and the EDI. The standard deviation of the ranks related with LDI (133.8) is much higher than EDI (59.2). This signifies that district wise variation in literacy attainment in the state is much more dominant than variations in educational development at elementary level.

The present chapter focuses on the district of Uttar Dinajpur, the least literate district in the state and ranked at 518 out of 593 districts in India in terms of literacy rate. At the same time, it is placed at the rank 505 out of 569 districts for which EDI has been calculated. Moreover, the Government of India has identified some districts that need special focus on the basis of the number of out-of-school children and districts with a higher concentration of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes population. Uttar Dinajpur has been found as one such district that has high concentration of Scheduled Castes and having more than 50000 out of school children in the year 2005-06 (http//www.educationforallinindia.com/special-focus-districts.htm).

Apart from this, the report of the Sachar Committee (GOI, 2006) has identified top 100 districts (by size of Muslim Population, 2001 Census) amongst which Uttar Dinajpur occupied 16th position as per its size of Muslim population (absolute). Short-listing the top 20 districts among which 09 districts are present in West Bengal, the socio-economic indicators of the Muslim population like, dependency on agriculture (80% of the total worker), Female literacy rate (25.5%), size of the urban population (2.1%) etc., are mostly staggering in this particular district.

Fig-5.1: Literacy Development Index (Ranking), 2001

District	Index
U DINAJPUR	518
MALDA	460
PURULIYA	422
MURSHIDABAD	354
JALPAIGURI	293
BIRBHUM	268
D DINAJPUR	265
BANKURA	260
NADIA	234
KOCH BEHAR	212
SILIGURI	179
BARDHAMAN	169
S 24 PRGNAS	147
N 24 PRGNAS	131
HUGLI	103
PUR MEDNIPUR PAS	79
MEDNIPUR	79
HAORA	74

Source: Calculated from the Census Data 2001.

Fig-5.2: Education Development Index (Ranking), 2005-06

District	Index
MALDA	520
MURSHIDABAD	506
U DINAJPUR	505
PURULIYA	502
S 24 PRGNAS	501
SILIGURI	499
N 24 PRGNAS	479
PUR MEDNIPUR	476
JALPAIGURI	475
NADIA	460
KOCH BEHAR	430
D DINAJPUR	423
HAORA	409
BIRBHUM	392
BANKURA PAS	388
MEDNIPUR	366
HUGLI	356
BARDHAMAN	336
KOLKATA	318

Source: Calculated from NUEPA, 2007

5.1 An Outline of the District

The origin of this district bears connection with the partition of India at the dawn of independence in 1947. The Dinajpur district of undivided Bengal had been split into two parts subsequent to this partition, one part being named West Dinajpur which was incorporated in the province of West Bengal in India and the other part as Dinajpur in East Bengal of Pakistan. Since then, the district West Dinajpur was an undivided district until 1992. In order to facilitate the administrative setup, the West Dinajpur district was again divided into two districts, namely, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur w.e.f. 1st day of April, 1992. Thus Uttar Dinajpur is a newly bifurcated district of West Bengal since 1992. The district is situated in the northern part of the state of West Bengal having borders with the neighboring country Bangladesh on the east, the state of Bihar on the west and by three other districts of West Bengal namely Darjeeling, Malda and Dakshin Dinajpur, on the north and south.

The area of the district is 3140 square km. Road transport is the primary means of communication of this district. A small part of the district is connected by the Northern Frontier Railways. The National High Way No 34 and 31 passes through the district and connects the greater area of the district.

The district is purely agrarian in nature. However, after the partition of the district in 1947, the less fertile lands have come over to the Indian state. The principal crops are Aman (winter rice), Bhadoi (autumn rice), jute, rape, mustard, and sugarcane. The district is the main producer of jute in the state. Islampur Subdivision plays a significant role in this respect. It may be noted here that the district has two subdivisions, namely Raiganj and Islampur. In recent times, Boro is extensively cultivated by using irrigated water. Among all the districts, it is one of the most backward districts so far as industrialisation is concerned. Some small rice mills and mini oil mills are scattered in the district. Recently, two cold storages have been

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established under private entrepreneurship at Islampur sub-division. This has helped the vegetable growers to store their commodities.

Source: Office of the District Magistrate, Uttar Dinajpur, http://uttardinajpur.nic.in/
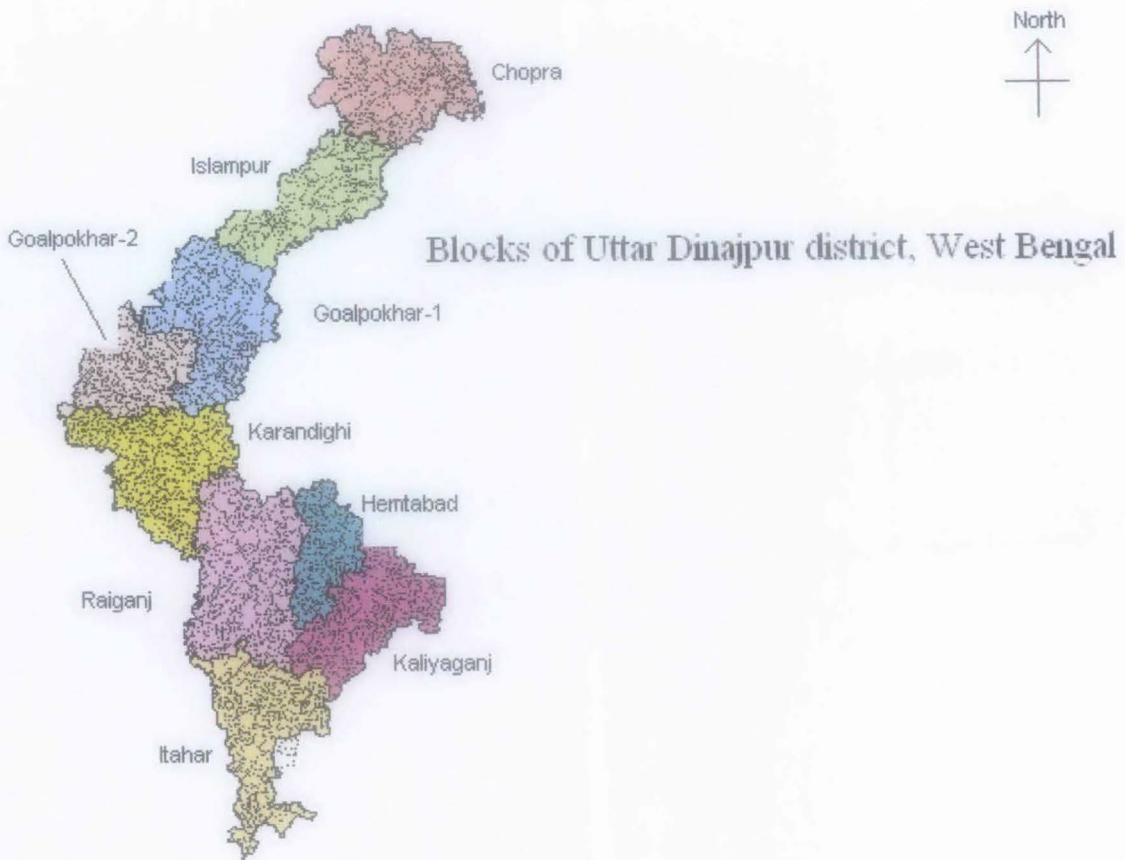
Two communities dominate the religious pattern of the district population. Hindus are 51.72 and the Muslims comprise 47.86% as per the 2001 census. It has substantial proportion of Schedule Caste population (27.7%) and 5.1% Schedule Tribe population. Two important rivers run through the district. Among these, the Mahananda forms the north-west boundary of the district and it segregates the district from Darjeeling district. The second, Nagar, almost follows the boundary line between Raiganj and Islampur subdivisions. Two major languages are spoken in this district- Bengali and Urdu. The people of Raiganj subdivision speak mainly Bengali and Islampur subdivision usually speak Hindi, Urdu, Bengali and some local language which is a mixture of Hindi, Urdu and Bengali. Apart from this, Hindi speaking population is also found in the district.

Despite the fact that the undivided West Dinajpur was a low literate district in the state, yet subsequently after the partition, educationally more backward areas came under Uttar Dinajpur district. The census data of 2001 shows that the decadal (1991-01) variation in literacy rate is 26% in Dakshin Dinajpur but it is only 13% in Uttar Dinajpur. The district is also the least literate district in the state. With respect to female literacy rate, both Uttar Dinajpur and Puruliya are placed at the bottom of the list with around 30% of the females in rural areas of the districts found to be literate (Census, 2001).

The district population is about 24.5 lakhs of which 21.5 lakhs (88%) are rural and the remaining 12% (state average- 28%) are in the urban areas. This indicates that the rural scenario dominates the status of all development indicators in this particular district. Irrespective of the fact that most of the population is rural in nature, the average literacy achievement in rural areas (42.86%) is much below than the urban literacy rate (80.50%). At

the same time, the district level rural literacy rate is far below than any other districts of the state along with a large variation with the state average rate (63.4%).

The Census of India (2001) published data for five major religious groups (viz.Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain). The district wise data reveals that the Muslim population in this district (47.36%) is much higher than the State average (25.2%) while the literacy level of the Muslims in the district (36%) is much below the State average (57.47%) of that particular religious group. Again, there is a large variation in literacy rate between muslims (36%) and non-muslims (58%) in this particular district. The survey of out of school children conducted by SRI-IMRB in 2005 has indicated that the proportion of out of school children is the highest within the Muslim community (9.97%) followed by 9.54% of Scheduled Tribes (STs), 8.17% of Scheduled Castes (SCs), and 6.97% of Other Backward Class (OBC) children (GOI, 2008) Social Sector, p.p.20). The majority (68.7%) of out of school children has been overwhelmingly concentrated in five States [Bihar 23.6%), UP (22.2%), West Bengal (9%), MP (8%), and Rajasthan (5.9%)].

The Sachar Committee's report has also highlighted several dimensions of the lower educational status of Muslim children (GOI, 2006). The Ministry of Minority Affairs has identified 103 districts as minority concentrated districts, where the population of religious minorities exceeds 25%. In this respect, the district is Muslim minority concentrated district and the overall district literacy rate and the very poor literacy rate of the minority section require serious attention for analyzing the educational backwardness of this district. Out of 10 least literate blocks of West Bengal (2001), 5 were found in Uttar Dinajpur district. Again as per the Census 2001, there are as many as 37, 956 inhabited villages/census mouzas in West Bengal. The villages under the 17 districts have been arranged by their literacy rates and by calculating the literacy rate (person) of each of the villages in West Bengal, we have identified the villages with a literacy rate below 25% and the identified villages are educationally deprived villages in the state. The state has 843 villages showing this minimum 25% literacy rate. Uttar Dinajpur with 207 villages in this category tops the list, which apparently suggests that the educational deprivation is mostly concentrated in this particular district.

In view of the socio-economic background of the district and the depressing state of educational attainment, the chapter provides a detailed analysis of the educational drawbacks of this district. It also attempts to assess the socio-economic and enabling attributes related to the educational development in general and in particular to investigate the nature and causes of such educational deprivation in this particular district.
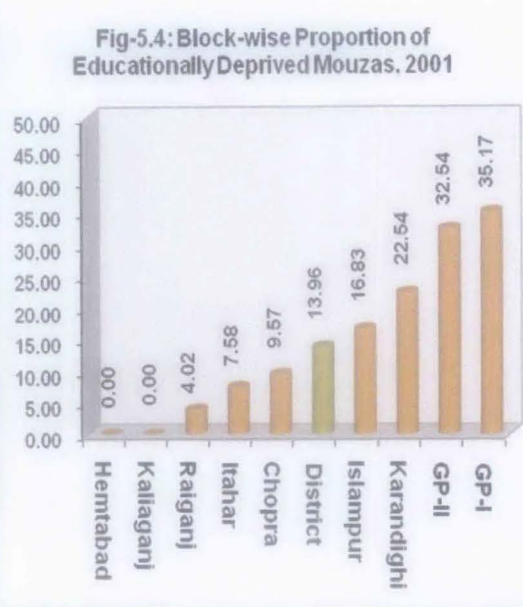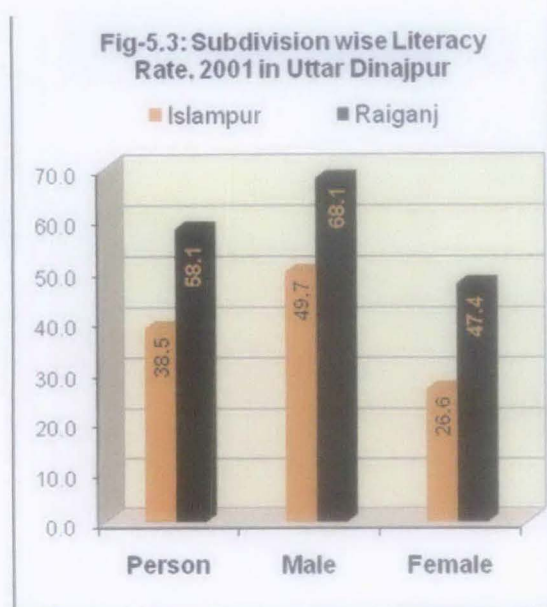
5.2 Literacy Profile of Uttar Dinajpur

As stated earlier, after bifurcation in 1992, the district of Uttar Dinajpur inherited the educationally backward area defined in terms of blocks at sub-district level. A detailed portrayal of literacy status of the district is presented in Table-5.1. There is a large gap (37.64) between the rural and urban literacy rate in the district. The literacy rate in the urban frame of the district is almost equal to the state average while there is a large gap in literacy rate (21%) within the rural area of the district and State. The proportion of urban population is moderately high in this district (around 13%) compared to certain other districts where total literacy rate is much higher than this very particular district. Therefore, the problem of educational backwardness appears to be mostly associated with the rural areas in this district.

The administrative setup of the district is comprises 09 CD Blocks, 04 Municipalities and 02 Census Towns distributed across two subdivisions, namely, Islampur and Raiganj. A cursory look at Table-5.1 reveals some important literacy facts on the blocks including municipal areas of this district. The literacy rate of each of the CD Blocks in Islampur subdivision is much lower than the literacy rate of the blocks under Raiganj subdivision. Similar divergence is noticeable in the urban areas of the two subdivisions. An extensive gap in literacy achievement (around 20%) is found in the two subdivisions within the district (Fig-5.3).

Table-5.1: Literacy rate in the Blocks and Municipalities of Uttar Dinajpur District as per Census, 2001

CD Block/Town	% 6y+ Literacy 2001	% Male Literacy 2001	% Female Literacy 2001	Gender Gap in Literacy Rate, 2001	% 6y+ Literacy 1991	% Literacy Increase 1991-2001	No. of Villages with Literacy Rate <25%
Chopra	43.3	55.9	29.7	26.2	28.8	14.5	11
Islampur	38.4	50.3	25.7	24.6	23.2	15.2	17
Goalpokhar-1	31.6	42.6	19.8	22.9	17.6	14.0	51
Goalpokhar-2	34.1	44.0	23.6	20.5	18.4	15.7	55
Karandighi	37.6	48.9	25.5	23.3	23.3	14.3	48
Raiganj	51.5	63.0	39.1	23.9	35.4	16.1	9
Hemtabad	56.7	67.1	45.7	21.4	41.7	15.0	0
Kaliaganj	54.1	66.4	41.1	25.3	38.8	15.3	0
Itahar	47.4	57.8	36.5	21.4	32.1	15.3	16
Uttar Dinajpur (R)	42.9	54.2	30.8	23.4	27.8	15.1	207
Islampur Municipality	72.6	78.2	66	12.3	65.4	7.1	-
Dalkola Municipality	68.9	76.6	60	16.6	57.7	11.1	-
Raiganj Municipality	84.6	88.7	80	8.8	78.7	5.9	-
Nachhratpur	63.3	70.2	55.5	14.6	-	-	-
Kasba CT	82.5	89.2	74.8	14.4	69.6	12.9	-
Kaliaganj	79.2	85.5	72.5	13.0	73.6	5.6	-
Uttar Dinajpur (U)	80.5	85.5	74.8	10.7	74.5	6.0	-
Uttar Dinajpur (T)	47.9	58.5	36.5	22.0	34.6	13.3	207

Source: Calculated from Census, 1991 & 2001

Fig-5.3: Subdivision wise Literacy Rate, 2001 in Uttar Dinajpur

Fig-5.4: Block-wise Proportion of Educationally Deprived Mouzas, 2001

Source: Calculated from Census, 2001

Apart from this subdivisional disparity, block level variation is also very high. Goalpokhar-I with 31.6% literacy rate and Hemtabad with 57% has been positioned as the least and highest literate block in this district. The literacy rate in each of the block of Islampur subdivision is lower than the district average (rural) except Chopra. However, in case of the blocks lying in Raiganj subdivision, literacy rates are above the district average. The gender gap in literacy rates is the highest in Chopra block compared to the rest of the blocks in this district, while the female literacy rate is lowest in Goalpokhar-I Block. This point to the fact that the females are not included in the development process compared to the male in this block.

Out of 10 least literate blocks of West Bengal (2001), 5 exists in Uttar Dinajpur district and all these 5 blocks are in Islampur subdivision of the district. Goalpukur-I, Goalpokhar-II, Karandighi and Islampur are the 4 blocks in respect of low magnitude of literacy rate as depicted in 2001 Census. In all the above 4 blocks, around three-fourth of the total number of females are illiterate. Again, in the previous chapter, mention has been made of 843 educationally deprived villages in the state, of which it is seen that 207 mouzas (around 25%) belong to the district of Uttar Dinajpur. The 207 deprived mouzas across the blocks of the district have been arranged in Table 5.1. It is seen from the Table that out of 207 deprived mouzas, 182 mouzas (88% of the total deprived mouzas) fall under the Islampur subdivision. The focus is therefore becoming more fine-tuned and educational backwardness appears to be more challenging in Islampur subdivision of the district. Figure-5.4 graphically depicts the block-wise proportion of educationally deprived mouzas in which it is seen that Goalpokhar-I includes highest proportion of such deprived mouzas and Chopra has the least among the blocks of Islampur.

Assessing the decadal variation (1991 – 2001) in literacy rate, it is found that almost all the CD Blocks along with the district as a whole achieved a 14-16% literacy jump. This however is not in consonance with experiences of most of the other blocks and districts of the state where low literate areas of 1991 achieved higher literacy jump in 2001, than the high literate regions/district. Thus it appears that the socioeconomic background of this district may have some distinct characteristics that disturb the process of educational development in this area. To identify such characteristics responsible for the educational backwardness of the district, an extensive survey based study of the district is required and has been undertaken in the subsequent chapter. However, prior to that, a multiple regression analysis is attempted using the secondary data at mouza level to identify socio-economic factors that are responsible for variations in literacy rates in this district.

Table-5.2: Literacy Rate among the Social Groups

Block/District	% of SC Population	% of ST Population	Literacy Rate (%)		
			TOTAL	SC	ST
CHOPRA	18.5	7.1	43.29	52.7	28.9
ISLAMPUR	17.6	2.4	38.39	54.8	27.4
GOALPOKHAR-1	14.3	3.8	31.60	50.7	17.9
GOALPOKHAR-2	23.2	6.2	34.11	44.8	26.1
KARANDIGHI	30.7	7.3	37.56	43.7	23.1
RAIGANJ	38.4	5.8	51.46	49.2	35.3
HEMTABAD	34.6	3.8	56.72	51.4	28.7
KALIAGANJ	60.5	4.6	54.13	48.6	38.7
ITAHAR	26.7	7.9	47.37	45.2	26.1
UTTAR DINAJPUR (Total)	27.7	5.1	47.89	50.1	28.7

Source: Calculated from Census, 2001

Table-5.2 computed from Census 2001, shows the literacy rate of the marginalized segments of the population of the blocks in the district of Uttar Dinajpur. Literacy rate among the Scheduled Castes is marginally higher than the total literacy rate of the district while the same is far below the district average for the Scheduled Tribe. Significantly, the blocks under Islampur subdivision display an edge over the blocks under Raiganj subdivision in literacy achievement of the SCs, although it is a fact that the proportion of this backward segment of the population is significantly lower in Islampur subdivision compared to Raiganj subdivision.

5.3 Regional Variation in Performance and Enabling Economic Attributes: A Multiple Regression Analysis at Mouza Level

The presentation of educational scenario in the earlier section reveals that the educational backwardness of this district is mostly associated with the rural areas along with a substantial variation across the blocks and also across the villages of a particular block. In order to have a handle on the nature of variation at more disaggregated level, the mouza level literacy rate of this district is calculated from the census data. All the mouzas having a population size of more than 200 are included in the analysis and as such 1403 mouzas qualify in this category out of a total 1477 mouzas in this district. The literacy distribution of these 1403 mouzas across the blocks is tabulated below in Table 5.3. The mouzas are classified as per their literacy rate and grouped into four categories depending on the range of literacy rate 0% to 20%, >20% to 40%, >40% to 60% and More than 60%. In all the blocks of Islampur Subdivision, more than 65% of the mouzas are lying in the lower two literacy range categories (L1, L2; Table-5.3) except Chopra where the proportion of such mouzas is closer to 47%. In all, 68% of the mouzas of Islampur subdivision are having literacy rate below 40% while the same is only 19% in Raiganj Sub Division. Significantly, almost all the mouzas (102 out of 105) of Hemtabad Block are in the two higher literacy ranges (H-1, H-2). On the other hand in Goalpokhar-I, more than 80% of the mouzas lie in the two lowest literacy range categories (L-1, L-2). This again categorically exhibits the poor literacy development of Islampur subdivision compared to the other subdivision of this district. None of the blocks of Islampur subdivision are found to be more advanced than the other blocks of the district in the above categories. This makes it imperative to focus on Islampur subdivision for in depth study of literacy achievement and educational attainment in the district. However, in order to have a priori knowledge of literacy achievement of the blocks, a multiple regression analysis has been attempted with mouzas as unit of observation.

Table-5.3: Block wise distribution of Mouzas as per the literacy range

| Name of the Block | Number of Mouzas having the Literacy Range | | | | |
	Less than 20% L-2	>20% to 40% L-1	>40% to 60% H-1	More than 60% H-2	Total No. of Mouzas
CHOPRA	3	47	50	7	107
ISLAMPUR	8	57	30	4	99
GOALPOKHAR-1	23	88	21	5	137
GOALPOKHAR-2	32	80	43	8	163
KARANDIGHI	23	120	50	7	200
Islampur Sub Division	89	392	194	31	706
RAIGANJ	4	46	118	47	215
HEMTABAD	0	3	62	40	105
KALIYAGANJ	0	17	124	40	181
ITAHAR	4	60	110	22	196
Raiganj Sub Division	8	126	414	149	697
District	97	518	608	180	1403

Source: Calculated from Census, 2001

5.3.1 The Model

Two regression equations for each of the nine CD blocks in this district have been estimated to determine the impact of several social and economic indicators on the two significant dependent variables, viz., male literacy rate and female literacy rate. The functional relation between the variables is specified below as linear combination of different explanatory variables:

MLR = a + b1DEPRATIO + b2WFPRF + b3CULT + b4AGRWRKR + b5FERTRT + b16SC + b7ST+U -----(1)

FLR = a + b1DEPRATIO + b2WFPRF + b3CULT + b4AGRWRKR + b5FERTRT + b16SC + b7ST+U ------(2)

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Where 'a' is the intercept term, bis are the coefficients to be estimated and U is the error term of the regression equation. MLR & FLR stand for the male and female literacy rates of the mouzas and are the dependent variables in the equation.

As explanatory variables, DEPRATIO is a ratio of non-worker to total worker within all the households of a particular mouza. This may be assumed as a surrogate of population dependency ratio as because the economic burden of the non-workers are generally shouldered by the earning members. WFPRF is female work force participation rate. Proportion of cultivator (main & marginal) in total workforce (main & marginal) and similarly proportion of agriculture labourer in total work force have been represented by CULT and AGRWRKR respectively. It is of special interest to see whether there is any effect of the family size (HHSIZE) on literacy attainment. As a surrogate of fertility rate, the proportion of 0-6 year age group population has been used and it is designated as FERTRT. Proportion of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) population are also incorporated to capture the impact of social backwardness in this district. School level enabling factors as explanatory variables are not used here owing to the non-availability of data at mouza level. This is the limitation of the present exercise. However, in an analysis (Reddy and Rao,2003), based on the data collected from 3000 households in 12 villages of Andhra Pradesh, it has been concluded that demand side factors (poverty, economic activity, irrigation, work participation rate, etc.) show a significant impact on literacy and dropout rates. Supply or access related factors (coverage of school, pupil-teacher ratio, % of female teacher etc.), on the other hand, do exert their influences on both but very significantly on enrolment rates.

The regression analysis has been carried out at district and block level (for each blocks separately) taking mouzas as unit of observation in both the cases. Intra-block comparisons are also undertaken to capture the specific socio-educational characteristics of the blocks separately.

The study thus explores the effects of some socio-economic factors on literacy attainment of male and female separately which will facilitate to categorically identify the factors responsible for differential literacy attainment. Secondly, an analysis by taking the mouza as a unit of analysis is unique in nature. Finally, regression analysis for each block along with a district analysis helps to identify the regional issues within the district, which is the prime objective of the whole econometric exercise.

5.3.2 Analysis of Regression Results

The Regression Result of 09 blocks along with the district as whole has been presented in Table-5.4.

Table- 5.4: Result of the Regression

CD Block Chopra								
	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	98.801	15.223	6.490	0.000	79.227	13.144	6.028	0.000
DEPRATIO	-1.023	4.414	-0.232	0.817	1.406	3.811	0.369	0.713
WFPRF	0.031	0.232	0.133	0.894	0.065	0.200	0.326	0.745
CULT	0.019	0.090	0.206	0.837	-0.005	0.078	-0.064	0.949
AGRWRKR	-0.108	0.066	-1.621	0.108	-0.052	0.057	-0.905	0.368
SC	0.015	0.046	0.335	0.738	-0.057	0.040	-1.434	0.155
ST	-0.165**	0.081	-2.038	0.044	-0.149**	0.070	-2.139	0.035
FERTRT	-1.627***	0.426	-3.819	0.000	-2.145***	0.368	-5.830	0.000
R2	0.307				R2	0.349		
Adj. R2	0.258				Adj. R2	0.303		
N	108				N	108		

CD Block Islampur

	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Variables
(Constant)	94.765	15.204	6.233	0.000	66.055	12.272	5.383	0.000
DEPRATIO	-5.348	4.233	-1.263	0.210	-3.500	3.417	-1.024	0.308
WFPRF	-0.365	0.232	-1.570	0.120	-0.216	0.188	-1.150	0.253
CULT	-0.314**	0.113	-2.777	0.007	-0.270**	0.091	-2.963	0.004
AGRWRKR	-0.332***	0.100	-3.307	0.001	-0.352***	0.081	-4.345	0.000
SC	0.168**	0.064	2.630	0.010	0.096*	0.052	1.854	0.067
ST	-0.205	0.171	-1.199	0.234	-0.097	0.138	-0.702	0.485
FERTRT	-0.290	0.360	-0.806	0.422	-0.377	0.291	-1.296	0.198
R2	0.313				R2	0.329		
Adj. R2	0.260				Adj. R2	0.278		
N	98				N	98		

CD Block Goalpokhar-1

	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	63.966	16.212	3.945	0.000	37.689	12.435	3.031	0.003
DEPRATIO	-9.394*	5.223	-1.799	0.074	-5.651	4.006	-1.411	0.161
WFPRF	-0.404**	0.170	-2.374	0.019	-0.248*	0.131	-1.900	0.060
CULT	-0.055	0.083	-0.665	0.507	-0.120*	0.064	-1.892	0.061
AGRWRKR	-0.079	0.082	-0.967	0.335	-0.150**	0.063	-2.387	0.018
SC	0.387***	0.043	8.950	0.000	0.295***	0.033	8.896	0.000
ST	-0.343**	0.165	-2.085	0.039	-0.158	0.126	-1.253	0.213
FERTRT	0.191	0.263	0.725	0.470	0.185	0.202	0.918	0.360
R2	0.415				R2	0.438		
Adj. R2	0.384				Adj. R2	0.408		
N	163				N	163		

CD Block Goalpokhar-2

	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	80.134	11.307	7.087	0.000	51.661	8.717	5.926	0.000
DEPRATIO	-1.237	2.506	-0.494	0.622	1.126	1.932	0.583	0.561
WFPRF	-0.103	0.139	-0.736	0.463	-0.002	0.108	-0.019	0.985
CULT	-0.347***	0.086	-4.049	0.000	-0.372***	0.066	-5.628	0.000
AGRWRKR	-0.506***	0.076	-6.614	0.000	-0.461***	0.059	-7.815	0.000
SC	0.246***	0.044	5.612	0.000	0.175***	0.034	5.195	0.000
ST	0.071	0.062	1.152	0.251	0.131**	0.048	2.745	0.007
FERTRT	-0.080	0.280	-0.286	0.775	-0.054	0.216	-0.249	0.803
R2	0.420				R2	0.446		
Adj. R2	0.394				Adj. R2	0.421		
N	200				N	200		

CD Block Karandighi

	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	64.768	10.725	6.039	0.000	47.468	8.426	5.633	0.000
DEPRATIO	-4.270	3.184	-1.341	0.181	-1.636	2.501	-0.654	0.514
WFPRF	-0.222*	0.129	-1.720	0.087	-0.162	0.101	-1.599	0.111
CULT	-0.030	0.072	-0.411	0.682	-0.114**	0.056	-2.022	0.045
AGRWRKR	-0.437***	0.059	-7.454	0.000	-0.420***	0.046	-9.126	0.000
SC	0.383***	0.034	11.314	0.000	0.225***	0.027	8.445	0.000
ST	0.113**	0.045	2.497	0.013	0.089**	0.036	2.494	0.013
FERTRT	0.090	0.232	0.389	0.697	-0.147	0.182	-0.809	0.420
R2	0.487				R2	0.418		
Adj. R2	0.468				Adj. R2	0.397		
N	138				N	138		

CD Block Raiganj

Variables	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	122.526	11.396	10.752	0.000	101.801	10.759	9.462	0.000
DEPRATIO	-12.907**	4.572	-2.823	0.005	-9.986**	4.317	-2.313	0.022
WFPRF	-0.431**	0.164	-2.632	0.009	-0.415**	0.154	-2.683	0.008
CULT	0.028	0.062	0.450	0.653	-0.114*	0.059	-1.930	0.055
AGRWRKR	-0.261***	0.062	-4.241	0.000	-0.343***	0.058	-5.892	0.000
SC	0.098**	0.030	3.250	0.001	0.024	0.028	0.848	0.398
ST	-0.041	0.080	-0.507	0.612	-0.035	0.076	-0.460	0.646
FERTRT	-0.993***	0.225	-4.415	0.000	-0.905***	0.212	-4.264	0.000
R2	0.285				R2	0.349		
Adj. R2	0.261				Adj. R2	0.327		
N	215				N	215		

CD Block Hemtabad

Variables	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	54.176	12.755	4.247	0.000	48.979	11.570	4.233	0.000
DEPRATIO	6.295	3.880	1.622	0.108	3.792	3.520	1.077	0.284
WFPRF	0.146	0.140	1.037	0.302	0.017	0.127	0.136	0.892
CULT	0.159**	0.074	2.129	0.036	0.075	0.068	1.109	0.270
AGRWRKR	-0.228**	0.075	-3.059	0.003	-0.200**	0.068	-2.959	0.004
SC	0.052*	0.029	1.828	0.071	-0.090**	0.026	-3.475	0.001
ST	-0.299**	0.138	-2.159	0.033	-0.240*	0.126	-1.914	0.059
FERTRT	0.246	0.313	0.788	0.432	0.075	0.284	0.266	0.791
R2	0.274				R2	0.320		
Adj. R2	0.221				Adj. R2	0.271		
N	106				N	106		

CD Block Kaliyaganj

Variables	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	77.070	11.870	6.493	0.000	60.189	12.381	4.861	0.000
DEPRATIO	2.573	4.820	0.534	0.594	0.750	5.027	0.149	0.882
WFPRF	0.014	0.142	0.095	0.924	-0.038	0.149	-0.253	0.801
CULT	-0.062	0.060	-1.039	0.300	-0.079	0.063	-1.254	0.212
AGRWRKR	-0.127*	0.065	-1.962	0.051	-0.043	0.068	-0.639	0.524
SC	-0.101***	0.024	-4.155	0.000	-0.221***	0.025	-8.736	0.000
ST	-0.263**	0.076	-3.473	0.001	-0.375***	0.079	-4.750	0.000
FERTRT	0.021**	0.252	0.084	0.933	0.045	0.263	0.173	0.863
R2	0.192				R2	0.384		
Adj. R2	0.160				Adj. R2	0.359		
N	181				N	181		

CD Block Itahar

Variables	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't' value	Sig.
(Constant)	102.978	13.478	7.640	0.000	85.234	12.027	7.087	0.000
DEPRATIO	-6.013	4.982	-1.207	0.229	-7.206	4.446	-1.621	0.107
WFPRF	-0.213	0.153	-1.388	0.167	-0.336**	0.137	-2.458	0.015
CULT	-0.263***	0.073	-3.611	0.000	-0.200**	0.065	-3.067	0.002
AGRWRKR	-0.453***	0.068	-6.698	0.000	-0.392***	0.060	-6.491	0.000
SC	0.010	0.028	0.373	0.710	-0.133***	0.025	-5.299	0.000
ST	-0.041	0.051	-0.804	0.422	-0.119**	0.045	-2.641	0.009
FERTRT	0.000	0.236	-0.001	0.999	0.087	0.211	0.411	0.681
R2	0.271				R2	0.402		
Adj. R2	0.243				Adj. R2	0.380		
N	196				N	196		

District Uttar Dinajpur

	Model-1 MLR				Model-2 FLR			
Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	't'	Sig.	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std.	't'	Sig.
(Constant)	102.796	4.162	24.696	0.000	86.776	3.879	22.372	0.000
DEPRATIO	-9.044***	1.280	-7.066	0.000	-9.190***	1.193	-7.705	0.000
WFPRF	-0.398***	0.052	-7.651	0.000	-0.421***	0.048	-8.679	0.000
CULT	-0.041	0.026	-1.551	0.121	-0.056**	0.025	-2.256	0.024
AGRWRKR	-0.195***	0.024	-8.250	0.000	-0.164***	0.022	-7.459	0.000
SC	0.170***	0.013	13.502	0.000	0.061***	0.012	5.165	0.000
ST	-0.070**	0.025	-2.755	0.006	-0.086***	0.024	-3.628	0.000
FERTRT	-0.829***	0.101	-8.194	0.000	-1.008***	0.094	-	0.000
R2	0.292				R2	0.229		
Adj. R2	0.288				Adj. R2	0.225		
N	1403				N	1403		

*Significant at 1%, **Significant at 5%, *Significant at 10%

5.3.2a Economic Dependency and Literacy Attainment

The DEPRATIO (Non-worker/Worker) is calculated as a ratio of non-worker to total worker at the district, block and mouza levels. The overall dependency ratio for the district is 1.61. The non-workers are the remaining part of the population who are not in the workforce (main & marginal). As such, a lion's share of them is either children or old age members along with other non-working males and females. The variable is found to be significant and inversely related to literacy attainment of both the genders at district level. This implies that with an increase in the ratio, i.e., with increase in the number of non-workers in a village, the literacy rate will decline and this depressing effect is more prominent for the female literacy rate than male and vice-versa. Considering the various segments of population in the non-workers category, one can arrive at several explanations of how each component can impact the literacy rates. However, the variable is not found to be significant at block level in most of the blocks of the district. In the blocks of Islampur subdivision, it is insignificant except in Goalpokhar-I, while the ratio appears to be significant with strong negative impact on literacy rate in the blocks of Raiganj subdivision except Kaliyaganj.

5.3.2b Female Work Participation and Literacy Attainment

Most of the Indian studies (Pandey, 1990; Jeejeebhoy, 1993; Krishnaji, 2001 and Mukhopadhaya, 1994) have established the negative impact of WFPRF on literacy and enrolment. This is partly because the daughters have to shoulder the responsibilities of household chores and sibling care and partly because the lack of maternal attention and supervision discouraging girl children's schooling. The WFPRF, which is measured as the proportion of total female workers to total female population, is inversely related to literacy rates of both males and females, supporting the earlier numerous studies. This holds true for inter-mouza analysis but at sub-district level that is at the block level, the result is not uniform. Only in two blocks (Goalpokhar-I and Raiganj) it is found to be statistically significant with negative impact on both male and female literacy rate. In Karandighi, it is found to be significant in influencing male literacy rate and in Itahar, the female literacy rate. In the five blocks of Chopra, Islampur, Goalpokhar-II, Kaliyaganj and Hemtabad) the female workforce participation rate does not bear any significant statistical relation with the literacy development of those areas. It may be due to the fact that the additional resources from mothers'earnings have overshadowed the negative impact of mothers' absence from home (Psacharpoulos et al, 1989; Tansel, 1997). An important result in this respect has been found in a village level study in West Bengal (Sengupta et al; 2002). While the study found a significant negative effect of mothers' work participation rate on daughters' school enrolment, however it had a negative but not significant impact on grade completion. The factor does not appear to have a significant impact on the probability of dropout or retention

in school. Thus it appears that the negative impact of WFPRF on educational attainment is not universally acceptable.

5.3.2c Agricultural Dependency and Literacy Attainment

Agricultural dependency of any region can be measured by the proportion of workforce engaged in agricultural activities either as a cultivator or as agricultural labourer. Both the indicators have been included in the present analysis as explanatory variables with a priori knowledge of their negative impacts on literacy attainment so far as the earlier literature is concerned. It has been mentioned earlier that nearly 80% of the Muslim population depends on agriculture in this district. The census data shows that 76.5% of the total work force is engaged in agriculture in the rural area of which 32.7% are cultivators (main & marginal) and 43.77% are agricultural labourers (main & marginal). Thus, this economic variable is expected to play a significant role in determining any social variable in the rural areas of the district.

The review of the regression results so far show that at district level, an increase in the proportion of agricultural worker (AGRWRKR) exerts a significant negative impact on both male and female literacy rate with a marginally lesser depressing effect on female literacy rate. It may be worthy to note here that, 07 out of 09 blocks have more than 75% of workers (except Chopra and Karandighi) depending on agriculture. During the paddy plantation season (mid of June to mid July), a large number of agricultural worker is in demand in the rural areas of the district. The opportunity to work as an agricultural worker at an early age (schooling age) is more lucrative for the boys than girls. Most of the rural schools, especially the upper primary and high schools are used to the paddy plantation leave instead of summer vacation. (The researcher himself is a headmaster of a rural co-educational higher secondary school under Chopra block but the said school used to remain open during the paddy plantation season. It has been an experience that during the month of June-July, the absenteeism among the boys significantly decreases. The similar experience has been shared from the adjacent schools too.) Thus an increase in the agricultural worker decreases the chance of males to be literate. On the other hand, the regression result at district level shows that proportion of cultivator (CULT) has its negative impact on female literacy only. The negative influence of these two occupational variables has been observed more or less in all the remaining blocks with a few exceptions.

It is only in the Chopra block where both AGRWRKR and CULT have remained insignificant in affecting any of the literacy variables. It may be noted here that after 1990, a large percentage of agricultural land has been transferred to tea producing land in this block and the agricultural labourers and small cultivators have become tea producers and do not come under the agricultural labourer or cultivator category of workers. This may be one of the reasons for such a non-responsive result so far.

An interesting result has also been observed in the mouza level analysis. In Hemtabad, although the AGRWRKR has its negative effect, CULT exerts its positive significant impact for enhancing the male literacy rate. However, it remains insignificant for affecting the female literacy rate. On the other hand in Kaliyaganj, AGRWRKR does exert its negative impact (the coefficient of the estimate is -0.122) on male literacy only. Proportion of cultivators in total workforce remains insignificant in affecting the literacy character irrespective of gender. This result should be an example as because the above two blocks are the first and second highest literate blocks in the district, both of them being endowed with more than 80% of rural earners dependent on agriculture. This makes it a compulsion to review some other related economic indicators. It has been seen that in Hemtabad, half of the villages have electricity for agricultural use, which is the highest in the district. Kaliyaganj too have the figure at 43.12%. Again, 28% of the total villages of this block have road connectivity within the village which again is the highest among the blocks. Considering all these, it may be said that illiteracy is not necessarily associated with the predominantly agricultural family. Rather,

by modernizing agriculture and by providing better basic infrastructural facilities to the people, the scenario can be changed in favour of literacy and educational attainment.

5.3.2d Social Backwardness and Literacy Attainment

There are several studies (Devi, 2001, Acharya, 2001, Sengupta et al., 2002) regarding disparities in school enrolment and dropout rates among the social groups (between general, SCs, STs). In a study of 1991 district level census data, Saldanha (1996) had noted that districts with higher than average SC/ST population will tend to have lower than average literacy rates. Anuradha Pande (2001) in her analysis has noted that among the SC children, a girl child is more likely to attend to young siblings and take care of old members in the family than a boy child. In general, it is often said that the social backwardness has a close positive relation with educational backwardness too.

In the present analysis, at district level, the proportion of Scheduled Tribe population characteristically has exerted its negative impact on literacy rates with a substantially more depressing effect on overall female literacy rate. The same result is found in most of the blocks except Karandighi where the proportion of ST population bears a positive influence on the literacy attainment both for the males and females.

However, the comparatively higher proportion of Scheduled Caste population in the district has a significant positive influence on the overall literacy rates with an exception in Kaliyaganj block. This is substantiated by the data presented in Table 5.2 where it is seen that the literacy attainment of the Scheduled Caste population in the district is comparatively better than the overall literacy rate. Thus summarily it may be stated that illiteracy is not necessarily a leading problem associated with the Scheduled Caste population.

5.3.2e Fertility Change and Literacy Attainment

There are several studies in India where it is found that there exists a strong negative relationship between fertility levels and the adult female literacy rates. The study by Srinivasan (1991) demonstrated that female literacy correlates highly with fertility at state level and by repeating the same exercise in the states of Kerala and Uttar Pradesh, similar results were arrived at. Agnihotri (2002) examines the relationship between rural female literacy and the size of the child population (0-6 year) using block level data from the population Census of 1991 for West Bengal. He finds that a threshold level of female literacy is associated with a continuous decline in child population (0-6 year) as the female literacy levels go up. Amongst international studies a study in Ghana by Llyod and Brandon (1994) has emphasized the complementary inhibiting effect of sustained high fertility on girls' educational progress. They conclude that high fertility appears to have a negative impact on education of girls. But it is also true that some other international studies differ from the above. Jejeebhoy (1995) has pointed out that the relationship between women's schooling and fertility – and particularly the effect of a modest level of schooling – is highly context-specific, varying by regions of the world, level of development and time.

However, in the present analysis, regressing the 0-6 population group on male and female literacy rate, the following results were found. At district level, the variable shows stronger negative impact on both male and female literacy rate. But the same is found to be insignificant in all the blocks except Raiganj. On observing such a paradoxical result, it was necessary to segregate the mouzas according to their average size of child population. The methodology applied here is detailed below.

The size of child population is 17.94% of total population in India, while it is 16.98% in West Bengal. The Uttar Dinajpur district in the state has 20.49% in this respect. The decadal (1991-2001) growth rate of population (28.7%) and the fertility rate (4.0%) are both higher in this district compared to the other districts in West Bengal. Considering such an observation, segregation of the mouzas under the district was done accordingly – those with above the average district size of child population and those maintaining less than or equal to the average district size. As such it was found that there were 1271 mouzas under the first

category and the remaining 132 as the second category. Although, such segregation is completely a special interest of the study to observe the literacy variation in such two segregated groups characterized by child population. After the segregation of mouzas, regression has been run separately for each category. In case of child population size above the district average the variable significantly influences the literacy attainment of both the males and females. However it remains insignificant where the mouzas are endowed with comparatively lower proportion of child population. It apparently signifies that below a considerable proportion of child population, it has negligible influence on literacy attainment.

What is apparent from the above secondary data analysis is that there is large variation in the nature and causes of literacy attainment even within a district. This in turns implies that a uniform policy even at a district level may not be fruitful. Planning at more disaggregated level is very much necessary and may bring some positive changes to literacy attainment.

5.4 Review of Elementary Education in Uttar Dinajpur District

It has been seen in the previous chapter that the school level enabling attributes play a significant role in affecting the school level achievement indicators, especially, the quality related outcomes such as gender parity index in enrolment, successful students with high secured marks etc. It is thus necessary to look into the institutional structure of Uttar Dinajpur district and explore whether the above outcomes hold true for the district too.

5.4.1 Institutional Structure of Education in Uttar Dinajpur

Literacy rate as calculated by the Indian Census, includes all the population of age group 7 years and above. Over this vast range, a substantial proportion of the population belongs to the schooling age group. In order to capture the extent of variation in educational development, school education scenario is thus a meaningful and important matter to understand. The following section illustrates the state of affairs in school education at district and sub-district level.

The institutional structure of education in Uttar Dinajpur district (2006-07) as reflected in Table-5.5 comprises category wise number of institutions, students enrolled and teachers in position.

**Table-5.5: Basic information on Elementary Education (2006-07) in Uttar Dinajpur District**

Category of the School	No. of Institutions		Total Enrolment		No. of Teachers in Position	
	Govt.	Private	Govt.	Private	Govt.	Private
Primary only	1430	120	304914	21187	4522	0
Primary with Upper Primary	0	7	0	2129	0	0
Primary with U. Primary & Secondary/Higher Sec.	0	10	0	5965	0	51
Upper Primary only	0	41	0	16729	0	284
U. Primary with Sec./ Higher Sec.	0	148	0	122305	0	2412
No response	1	3	0	0	0	0
Total	1,431	329	304,914	168,315	4,522	2,747

Source; District Report Card: 2006-07 NUEPA, 2008

Almost 88% of the total schools, 70% of the total students enrolled and 67% of the total teachers engaged, are constituents of primary education in the district. It is seen that primary education occupies an important status in education ambit. This is not a unique trait of this district, rather it is common to all the districts of West Bengal and the country as a whole. The

remaining part of the school education system (middle, high and higher secondary) is constituted by 12% of schools, 30% of total enrolled students and 33% of the total teachers in position. The district has a very weak base in tertiary level of education. Only six general degree colleges and six Professional & Technical institutions are the total subset in the educational inventory of the district (NCERT, 2005). A trend analysis of institutional structure is shown in Fig-5.5 below.

Fig- 5.5: Trend Analysis Elementary Schooling 2001-02 to 2006-07
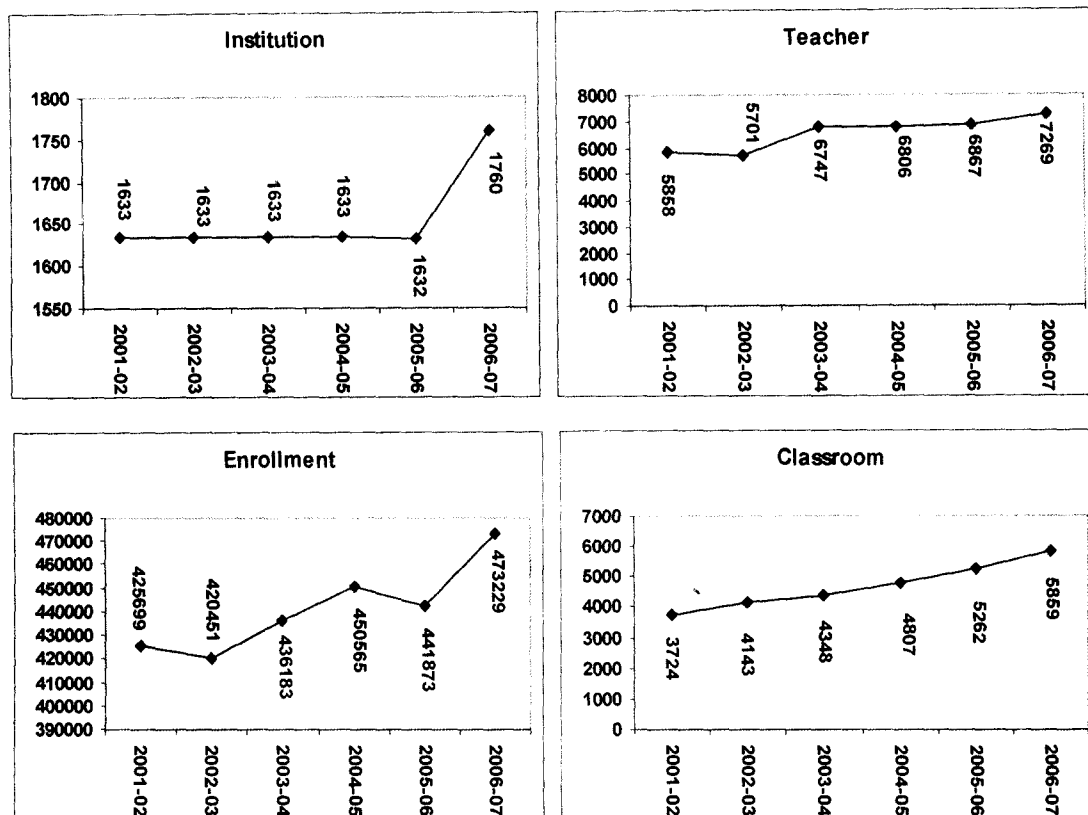
Source: District Report Card, NUEPA different years

The reference period is from 2001-02 to 2006-07. It is observed that there is a steady growth in enrolment, teachers in position and number of available classrooms. Two basic indicators - pupil teacher ratio (PTR) and student classroom ratio (SCR) are also found to have a decreasing trend over the period. The PTR has come down to 65 in 2007-08 from 73 in 2001-02 and the SCR declined to 81 from 114 over the same period. But to cope with such an increase in enrolment, there was no addition to the number of schools till 2005-06. It is only in the year 2006-07, an additional establishment of new schools was undertaken in the district. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Siksha Mission thus stressed on providing more teachers and sanctioning additional financial resources for constructing new classrooms in the existing schools along with establishing new schools in this district. An additional sanctioning of teacher strength and classrooms was expected to cause a further decrease in the above ratios, but accessibility was not considered under such policy. This appears to be a shortcoming so far as the district level planning is concerned.

5.4.2 Madrasah Education

'Madrasah' is an Arabic word meaning an institution of education which is free from any caste, creed or religion, both on the part of learners and teachers. In West Bengal, two types of Madrasahs exist - Senior Madrasah (old pattern) and Junior/High Madrasah. In the Junior/High Madrasah the subjects taught are almost similar to that of High Schools, but Arabic as an advanced paper is also taught in these institutions. After graduating from 10th class examination from junior/High Madrasah, the students can enter the main stream of education. In Senior Madrasah the 10th level examination is known as the 'Alem

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Examination' and after graduating from this stage, the students can enroll in class-XI only in the Arts stream, thereby having no chance to be acquainted with the modern techno-based world. Apart from these recognized Madrasahs, a substantial number of Moqutab type unrecognized Madrsahs also functions in the district. However, no authenticated report could be collected on them for the present research. (Unconfirmed reports say that there are as many as 56 Moqutab type unrecognized Madrsahs in Goalpokhar-I block where only religious education is being imparted). Most of the learners from such Moqutubs do not get themselves enrolled in the formal education system after completing their education in these Moqutabs.

The district has only 9 Juniour High Madrasahs, 6 High Madrasahs and 5 Seniour Madrasahs and it ranks 11th in this respect (GOWB, 2002-03). The district is thus, not sufficiently provided by such institutions in spite of a substantial proportion of Muslims in the total population of the district. Additional establishment of modern Madrasah may contribute to the increase in literacy rates of this ethnic minority.

5.4.3 Accessibility of Rural Schools in Uttar Dinajpur District

Accessibility of school is a powerful attribute that has a strong influence on educational outcomes as elaborated earlier. To provide for a primary school within walking distance from home is the primary responsibility of the government. But the district has only 71% (74.3% State average) mouzas that are covered by primary schooling and remaining 29% are not served by any primary school (Census, 2001). The situation is more pathetic in case of accessibility of upper primary schools. Only 9.14% (14.6% state average) of the villages were served as per the Census 2001 report. National Council of Applied Economics and Research (NCAER) noted that geographical proximity of primary schools and enrolment ratio together explains more than 60 per cent variation in literacy rates (NCAER, 2003). The PROBE report (1999) noted that the positive association between school facilities and pupil achievements is stronger in the educationally backward region (e.g. MP, Orissa). It is however, not significant in Kerala and weak in other educationally advanced states. Being the least literate district of the state, accessibility is expected to have much significance and better accessibility may enhance the literacy growth of the district. Apart from this poor institutional setting in the district, the distribution pattern of schools across the blocks is presented in Table- 5.6 for a better understanding of the problem.

Accessibility of primary school in three blocks of Islampur subdivision, namely, Goalpokhar-I, Goalpokhar-II and Karandighi is far below the state and district average. The block-wise location of middle (Class 5-8) school shows a strong rural urban disparity. Two subdivisional blocks - Islampur and Raiganj- include highest proportion of villages covered by the middle school. Interestingly, only 68.4% of the villages in Hemtabad block have primary schools within the village perimeter. This is much lower than Raiganj (88.2%) or Islampur (81.2%) blocks. Nevertheless, Hemtabad still maintained a literacy rate of 56.7% which is considerably higher than Islampur (31.6%) or Raiganj block (51.46%). What seems to be more important to note is that more than 12 % of villages in Hemtabad has access to an upper primary school within a village and this coverage is second highest in the district after Islampur (18.8%). The advantage in accessibility of both primary and upper primary schools within larger number of villages may have manifested in comparatively higher educational development in this block.

The earlier discussion on accessibility ascertained that provision of school within the specified distance (5 km) in the district is considerably low for both primary and upper primary institutions, with high concentration of primary schools in Raiganj subdivision and upper primary schools in Islampur and Raiganj blocks. It is important at this point to note the progress of accessibility over the decade 1991-2001. The distribution of schools within the census villages is taken into account as a standard of measure irrespective of category of schools in this respect.

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Table- 5.6: Accessibility of Rural Schools in Uttar Dinajpur District 2001

State/ District/ Blocks	Inhibited (Total)	Villages having Primary School			Villages having U. Primary School		
		within the village	withinn 5 kms	> 5kms	within the village	withinn 5 kms	> 5kms
W/ BENGAL	37956	74.3	22	3.7	14.6	49.1	36.3
U/ DINAJPUR	1477	70.7	22.3	7	9.1	50.3	40.6
CHOPRA	115	73.9	17.4	8.7	7.8	19.1	73
ISLAMPUR	101	81.2	16.8	2	18.8	43.6	37.6
GOALPOKHAR - I	145	62.8	28.3	9	7.6	26.2	66.2
GOALPOKHAR - II	169	56.8	36.7	6.5	6.5	56.2	37.3
KARANDIGHI	211	61.6	23.7	14.7	5.7	44.1	50.2
RAIGANJ	220	88.2	6.8	5	10.5	54.1	35.5
HEMTABAD	114	68.4	16.7	14.9	12.3	44.7	43
KALIAGANJ	191	72.8	23.6	3.7	8.4	69.1	22.5
ITAHAR	211	70.6	28.4	0.9	9.5	70.6	19.9

Calculated from Census of India, 2001

The Census data shows that in 1991, 1089 mouzas in the district was covered by primary school within the village but the same declined to 1044 in 2001. However, the coverage of mouzas by upper primary and secondary school recorded a higher increase over the decade. The block wise progress in this respect is shown in Figures 5.6 & 5.7.

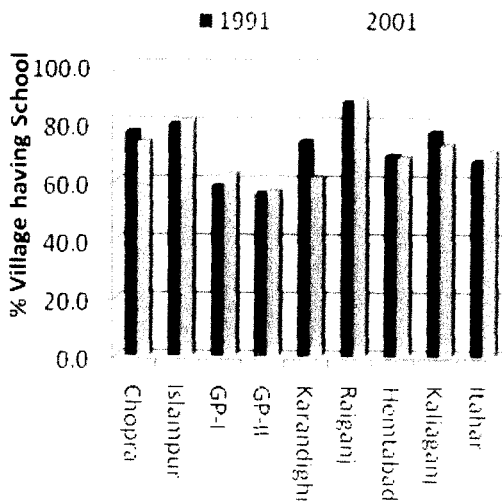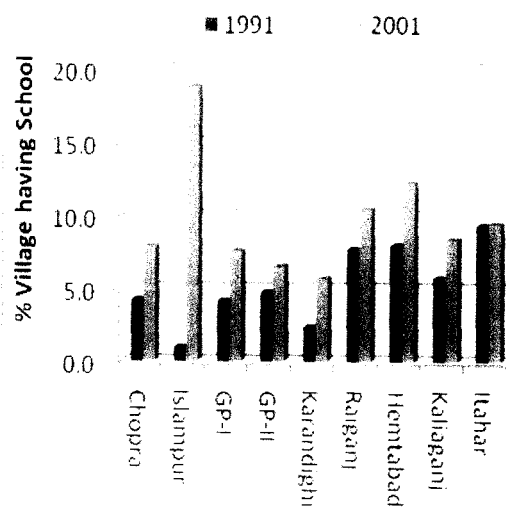Fig-5.6: Progress in Accessibility of Primary School

Fig-5.7: Progress in accessibility of U/Primary School

Calculated from Census of India, 2001

It is apparent from Figure 5.6 that there has been a more than moderate escalation in the numbers of both middle and secondary schools in Islampur block followed by Raiganj block. Minimal increase in post primary schools are recorded in three blocks of Islampur subdivision- Goalpokhar-I, Goalpokhar-II and Karandighi. It has been found in the last census (Census, 2001) that there are 207 Mouzas in the district where only less than one-fourth of the total population is literate. Out of this 207 Mouzas, 182 are in the Islampur subdivision and significantly 154 were in the above three blocks. Thus the slow progress in establishing upper primary and secondary institutions accessible to primary school students may be responsible for the educational backwardness in the Islampur subdivision especially in the above three blocks.

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Fig-5.8: Proportion of Unserved Gram Sansad in Uttar Dinajpur. 2006-07
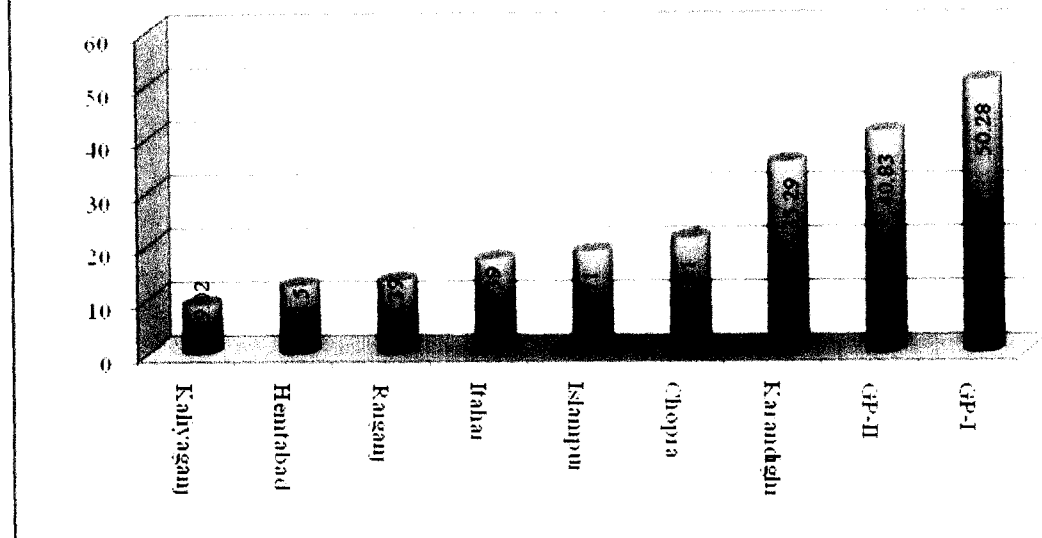
Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission,
Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

Considering the poor literacy rate of the district, availability of the school appears to be a very important issue that may influence the schooling pattern of this area. Thus providing new schools in this district deserves special attention for educational development. The recently launched programmes of the government (e.g. DPEP, SSA etc) do not confirm much achievement in this respect. The 2006-2007 data of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as obtained from the office of the District Project Officer, Raiganj, Uttar Dinajpur does not display any considerable increase in school facility in the district as per its need. Till date, 362 Gram Sansads out of 1422 (25.53%) in the rural areas of the district are uncovered by any type of schools (primary or upper primary). Block wise distribution of unserved gram sansads is shown in the following Figure-5.8. The blocks of Raiganj subdivision again have the benefit of better accessibility of school, compared to Islampur subdivision. Goalpokhar-I, the least literate block out of 341 CD blocks in West Bengal has no school in 50% of its Gram Sansads followed by Goalpokhar-II and Karandighi. Thus the three educationally backward blocks in the district require focused attention at the district level planning.

5.4.4. State of School-related Educational Infrastructure

The above exploration affirms the poor accessibility along with lower growth rate of accessibility of school in the district. It also draws attention to the three blocks of Islampur subdivision (Goalpukur-I, Goalpukur-II and Karandighi) that are in need of urgent attention to improve on their literacy rates and educational development. However, accessibility is not always sufficient to speak for all the school facilities that also contribute to enabling environment for education. Considering the supplementary school related infrastructures, building facility takes the primary seat so far as the positive impact on teaching-learning environment of a school is concerned. The educational infrastructure that is mirrored by the structural quality and type of building of the institutions is presented below.

The 7th All India School Education survey (2002) as tabulated in Table- 5.7, reveals that in Hemtabad block, 24 primary schools (28.2% of total primary schools) were running under open sky, yet it attained the highest literacy rate in 2001 census. While being endowed with better school building, Goalpokhar-I & II lagged behind with respect to literacy rates. More than 90% of the schools were either pucca or semipucca in all the blocks except Hemtabad. The survey also reveals that all the High and Higher Secondary schools in the district are either pucca or semi-pucca thereby showing almost equal building facilities at this level of

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school education. So it appears that the status of school building in this district has very minimal relation with the educational attainment measured in terms of literacy rate.

Table- 5.7: School (Primary & U/Primary) Infrastructure in Uttar Dinajpur District by Building-Types 2002

| CD Block.Town | Total | Primary | | | | U/Primary | | | | |
		Pucca	Semi-Pucca	Kuchcha	Open sky	Schools	Pucca	Semi-Pucca	Kuchcha	Open sky
Chopra	136	41	91	4	-	6	4	2	-	-
Islampur	151	127	19	3	2	10	6	2	2	-
GP-1	112	104	7	1	-	9	5	-	3	1
GP-2	120	100	16	-	4	6	5	-	1	-
Karandighi	136	74	56	6	-	8	-	7	1	-
Raiganj	244	154	83	4	3	7	1	2	4	-
Hemtabad	85	18	43	-	24	3	-	2	1	-
Kaliaganj	162	151	9	1	1	5	4	1	-	-
Itahar	167	74	76	8	9	9	3	4	2	-
U Dinajpur Rural	1313	843	400	27	43	63	28	20	14	1
U Dinajpur Rural (%)	92.01	64.2	30.5	2.1	3.3	88.73	44.4	31.7	22.2	1.6
Islampur M	25	17	8	-	-	2	-	1	-	1
Dalkola M	10	10		-	-	1	-	1	-	-
Raiganj M	43	21	20	1	1	4	3	1	-	-
Nachhratpur Katabari CT	5		5	-	-	1	-	-	1	-
Kasba CT	6	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kaliaganj M	25	23	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
U Dinajpur Urban	114	73	39	1	1	8	3	3	1	1
U Dinajpur (Total)	1427	916	439	28	44	71	31	23	15	2

Source: - Seventh All-India School Education Survey: 2002

Further, observing the State of Educational Infrastructure as enumerated in the Report of Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur, 2006-07, it is a matter of satisfaction that the district has no primary school that runs under open air as per 2006-07 estimates. So in order to discuss the building status/type of the Primary Schools in the district it is desirable to discuss it as per the availability of the classrooms under different structural forms.

Table-5.8:Type of Class Rooms of Schools in Uttar Dinajpur 2006-07

| Block* | Total Class Rooms | | % good | | % needs minor repairing | | % needs major repairing | |
	Primary	U/primary	Primary	U/primary	Primary	U/primary	Primary	U/primary
CHOPRA	374	175	60.2	67.4	21.1	21.7	18.7	10.9
ISLAMPUR	457	239	60.8	49.8	16.4	28.9	22.8	21.3
GOALPUKUR-I	273	112	43.6	67.9	19	20.5	37.4	11.6
GOALPUKUR -II	278	204	52.5	41.2	24.5	21.1	23	37.7
KARANDIGHI	402	210	55.7	62.9	21.4	19.5	22.9	17.6
RAIGANJ	779	524	53.5	60.2	22.1	21	24.4	18.8
HEMTABAD	218	150	49.5	52	12.8	30	37.6	18
KALIYAGANJ	486	277	58	56.7	21	19.1	21	24.2
ITAHAR	468	233	59	53.6	17.5	22.3	23.5	24
District	3735	2124	55.6	56.7	19.9	22.3	24.5	21

- includes both rural and urban area

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

The data as collected from the SSM, Uttar Dinajpur for the year 2006-07 categorically classifies the classrooms into - good condition, needs minor repairing and needs major

repairing. On that basis, the performance of the district reveals a blend of both satisfactory and unsatisfactory result. It has been found that 55.6% of the total classrooms (3735) of the primary schools and 56.7% of total classrooms (2124) of the upper primary schools (V-XII) are in good condition (Table-5.8). The block level data shows that Chopra occupies the top position preceded by the blocks of Raiganj subdivision. Goalpokhar-I &II are placed once again at the bottom of the list in this respect. In spite of being an educationally advanced block in the district, Hemtabad block lies well below the district average. Thus it may well be concluded that infrastructural deficiencies may not be the only factor that can seriously affect child schooling. It is thus important to delve into other factors other than institutional deficiencies responsible for the educational backwardness of the district. It is also reflected in the data of Sarva Siksha Mission that there are nearly one-fourth of the total class rooms of the schools that needs major repairing. It may be noted here that a major portion of funding under SSM is being expended on construction and thereby it may be expected to meet the gap in the near future.

5.4.5 System Performance and System Load in Elementary Education

"Brick and mortar do not make a school efficient or useful, nor are books in the library or appliances in the laboratory so essential. Teachers make the school or mar it".

The district has 12% of population living in the urban areas and remaining 88% in rural areas. Because of the rural nature of the district, 93% of primary school, 92% of the teacher and 96% of the students are from the rural areas of the district. But the distribution of schools along with the teachers in post-primary system is comparatively better in the urban areas of the district. Thus, for 90% of the students, only 84% of total schools and 83% of total teacher strength are provisioned for the rural areas of this district (Table-5.9). As such, migration of students to the urban area is a common feature in the district for obtaining better educational access.

Table-5.9: Pattern of Basic Education in Uttar Dinajpur District: 2006-07

Block/Municipality	Primary Schools	U/Primary Schools	Primary Teachers		U/Primary Teachers		Primary Student	U/Primary Student
			Male	Female	Male	Female	Total	Total
CHOPRA	137	17	371	34	183	60	39710	15436
ISLAMPUR	157	15	408	48	124	37	39728	9094
GOALPOKHAR-1	112	14	269	16	111	26	27837	8353
GOALPOKHAR-2	119	18	278	29	171	35	31603	12270
KARANDIGHI	134	17	346	64	202	49	35847	14816
RAIGANJ	255	28	629	289	338	121	44010	24020
HEMTABAD	85	14	241	60	172	44	15564	11051
KALIYAGANJ	162	18	421	168	202	61	25732	14145
ITAHAR	171	21	461	112	190	71	30849	16328
Rural	1332	162	3424	820	1693	504	290880	125513
KALIYAGANJ	25	5	30	70	67	57	3129	3781
RAIGANJ	43	14	44	87	124`	116	4088	6755
ISLAMPUR	18	7	58	50	105	48	2858	4442
KARANDIGHI	12	4	30	8	19	16	3117	2691
Urban	98	30	162	215	315	237	13192	17669
DISTRICT	1430	192	3586	1035	2008	741	304072	143182

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

This trend is mostly seen in the periphery of Raiganj and Islampur municipal towns. It is seen from the enrollment figures that the upper primary students in the municipal areas are higher than the primary school students. Migration of students from rural area to urban area for

better post primary schooling facility is seen to be the highest in Raiganj Municipality where 65% of students is added to the primary enrolment figure followed by Islampur Municipality (53%). However, unlike these two municipalities, Karandighi municipal area shows lower enrollment in the upper primary level than its primary enrollment figure. The causes of enrollment jump at upper primary level in the municipal area may be due to the better access, locational advantage and importantly for the existence of private primary school which are concentrated mostly in such area. All the rural blocks in this district show a huge cut in enrollment between primary and upper primary level (Table-5.9). The rural area of Islampur block and Goalpokhar-I show a noticeably high differential in the number of scholars studying in primary and upper primary level.

One of the positive enabling attributes of educational system is the proportion of female teachers in the schools, especially in the primary schools. Studies have shown that the presence of female teachers can enhance enrollment, retention rate and thereby can lower the drop out rate. Some micro level studies in this respect clearly indicate that female teachers represent better teacher attendance and better quality of education, thus exerting its positive impact on literacy attainment (Bhatty, 1998; Devi, 2001; Pratichi Education Report, 2002 Rao and Reddy, 2003; Thind and Jaswal, 2004).

The data on proportion of female teachers in the district again consistently shows a positive bias in favour of the blocks of Raiganj subdivision and in favour of the urban areas too. Goalpokhar-I has the lowest proportion of female teachers while it is the highest in Raiganj block followed by Kaliyaganj, Hemtabad and Itahar. The gender disadvantage is not so significant in case of upper primary teachers of the blocks.

5.4.6 System Load in Basic Education

It will be unreasonable to appraise the educational system at its very base in terms of numerical enumeration of indicators. The totality needs to be weighted by appropriate indicators. The system performance may be described by attaching weights to indicators and it is found that the system structure can be best understood in terms of the system load.

If we consider the school distribution vis-à-vis the population, it is seen that the Kaliyaganj block has the highest proportion of primary school followed by Raiganj, Hemtabad and Itahar. In order to reflect the scenario of school distribution vis-à-vis the population, a simple graphical presentation is sketched below (Fig-5.9). A similar trend is also seen in case upper primary school too. It is also seen from the diagram that population wise teacher distribution is also concentrated mostly in the blocks of Raiganj subdivision.

Again, the load of population on teacher maintains a favourable trend for all the blocks of Raiganj subdivision. The three least literate blocks (Goalpukur-I, Goalpukur-II and Karandighi) have also been ranked in the least three position in this respect. The load on a school and on a teacher (both at primary and upper primary level) is more than double in these blocks compared to the best performing blocks (Hemtabad and Kailyaganj) in these terms. Thus, the three blocks of Goalpukur-I, Goalpukur-II and Karandighi deserve immediate attention for lowering the system load to enhance educational development.

Differential system load - in terms of population per primary/upperprimary school, population per teacher in primary/upper primary school - of the educational structure of the blocks of Uttar Dinajpur are presented in Table 5.10. The state average student load per primary school was 179.9 as against the district average of 200, as on 01.04.2003. For the upper primary section, the state average student load was 578.3 which is substantially lower compared to the district average (700.5). Recent data available from Sarva Siksha Mission for the district shows a noticeable jump in average student load per primary school from 200 to 230 thereby implying either a considerable increase in the number of students in the existing primary schools causing institutional deficiency in providing primary school. However it may be said that establishment of new primary school is highly in need because of the overflow of a huge

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number of first generation primary students into the formal schooling system. Presently the district average student load in upper primary section has become 746 which once again is a pointer to a substantial increase in student flow to upper primary vis-à-vis the addition to the number of upper primary schools in the district.

Fig- 5.9: System Load in Basic Education (2006-07)
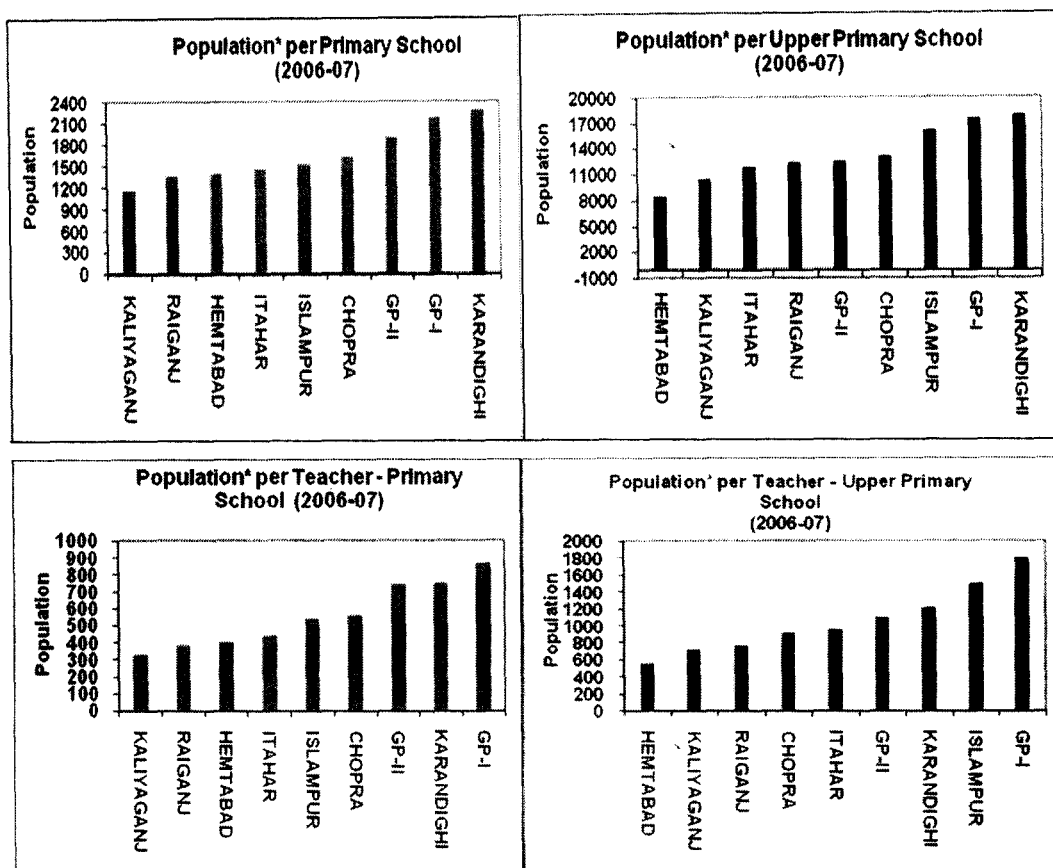
Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur (calculated)
* Population as per census, 2001

Apart from this, the block level variation is also worth looking into. All the urban areas, except newly formed Karandighi municipality, have sufficiently lower load of students on school (primary and upper primary). Block wise data shows that Chopra has the highest load of students both at primary and upper primary schools. Amongst all the blocks, this load appears to be the least in Raiganj block and also in the Raiganj municipal area within the urban frame of the district.

Average number of teacher per school (teacher-school ratio) at primary level in the state was 3.2 compared to 3.5 in the district and the same was 7.26 upper primary level in the state against 9.50 of the district, as on 01.04.2003. The difference in the ratio at primary level between the state and the district was negligible while it was comparatively higher in this district at the upper primary level, showing an edge in providing teacher in the upper primary schools in this district. Although the distribution of teachers per primary school remains almost equal between the period 2002-03 and 2006-07, the same has been increased from 9.5 to 14.3. It may be noted here that the total number of teacher which was 2081 in 2002-3 has become 3065. This claims an extra credit.

Looking at the recent data (2006-07) on spatial distribution of teachers in the district, it is evident that more than three teachers have been provided on an average in the primary schools of all the blocks of Raiganj while the same is less than three in the blocks of Islampur subdivision except Karandighi block. In providing teachers at upper primary level, there is also seen a clear bias in favour of Raiganj subdivision except Itahar block. The Karandighi block of Islampur subdivision has the higher number of teachers than Itahar and it is the

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highest among the blocks of Islampur subdivision. Goalpokhar-I and II are provided with fewer number of teachers at both primary and upper primary level. Here it may be noted that Karandighi, in spite of having almost equal ratio of teacher per school both at primary and upper primary level compared to the district average, could barely manage 7th position in respect of literacy rate among the 9 CD blocks, in this respect. While Hemtabad, with having almost equal number of teacher per school as of Karandighi, has the highest literacy rate in the district. This in a sense is paradoxical and therefore needs further attention, to make a difference to educational attainment.

Table - 5.10: System Load in Basic Education in Uttar Dinajpur District: 2006-2007 (Ratio Analysis)

Block/ Municipality	Students/ Primary School	Students/ U/Primary School	Teachers/ Primary School	Teachers/ U.Primary School	Students/ Primary Teacher	Students/ U.Primary Teacher	Primary School/ U.Primary School	Primary Teacher/ U.Primary Teacher
CHOPRA	290	908	2.96	14.3	98.0	63.5	8.1	1.67
ISLAMPUR	253	606	2.90	10.7	87.1	56.5	10.5	2.83
GOALPOKHAR-1	249	597	2.54	9.8	97.7	61.0	8.0	2.08
GOALPOKHAR-2	266	682	2.58	11.4	102.9	59.6	6.6	1.49
KARANDIGHI	268	872	3.06	14.8	87.4	59.0	7.9	1.63
RAIGANJ	173	858	3.60	16.4	47.9	52.3	9.1	2.00
HEMTABAD	183	789	3.54	15.4	51.7	51.2	6.1	1.39
KALIYAGANJ	159	786	3.64	14.6	43.7	53.8	9.0	2.24
ITAHAR	180	778	3.35	12.4	53.8	62.6	8.1	2.20
Rural Frame	**218**	**775**	**3.19**	**13.6**	**68.5**	**57.1**	**8.2**	**1.93**
KALIYAGANJ	125	756	4.00	24.8	31.3	30.5	5.0	0.81
RAIGANJ	95	483	3.05	17.1	31.2	28.1	3.1	0.55
ISLAMPUR	159	635	6.00	21.9	26.5	29.0	2.6	0.71
KARANDIGHI	260	673	3.17	8.8	82.0	76.9	3.0	1.09
Urban Frame	**135**	**589**	**3.85**	**18.4**	**35.0**	**32.0**	**3.3**	**0.68**
DISTRICT (Total)	*213*	*746*	*3.23*	*14.3*	*65.8*	*52.1*	*7.4*	*1.68*

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

The student load per teacher or pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is a powerful enabling attribute that has close relation with the achievement attributes of educational development. Against the policy norm of 40 students per teacher at primary level, the state average was 56.8 while the district average was 57 in 2002-03. For the upper primary stage, this ratio was 79.1 at state level and 73.7 at district level. The PTR at district level is therefore, very similar to the state average. Considering the base year of 2002-03, the PTR at primary level in the district presently has risen considerably from 57 to 65.8 (2006-07). On the other hand, the PTR in upper primary section has decreased from 73.7 to 52.1 possibly due to the drive to recruit more teachers or due to the decrease in student flow at upper primary level which however is not supported in the previous analysis. The number of teachers in upper primary level increased to 3065 from 2081 in 2002-03. (The recruitment of teacher at primary level in the district has remained stagnant owing to the legal order and it has been reported by a member of the primary council that a number of cases are pending before the Hon'ble High Court of the state in this respect).

The student load per teacher is substantially lower at both primary and upper primary levels in the urban frame compared to the rural areas. So the rural teachers, especially, of primary section, have to shoulder the burden of more number of students. The PTR at primary level across the blocks is found to be the lowest in Kaliyaganj of Raiganj subdivision and highest in Goalpokhar-I of Islampur subdivision. The ratio at primary level is more than double in each

block of the Islampur subdivision compared to Kaliyaganj block. Thus there is a need to consider student load per teacher while deciding on recruitment of teachers in the district. Apart from other socio-economic reasons, the absurdly high PTR at primary level in the blocks of Islampur sub-division may be one of the school related reasons that is responsible for slower growth of this sub-division compare to the other sub-division within the district. The PTR at upper primary level across the blocks shows little variation. But notably the ratio of PTR in the municipal area of Raiganj, Kaliyaganj and Islampur is almost half when compared to the rural blocks.

The comparison of ratio analysis across the blocks of the district shows a substantial variation with of course, a rural-urban disparity in every respect. In brief, certain specific suggestions may be placed as outcomes of the foregoing analysis which have policy implications for the district. They are as follows -

i) While recruiting new teachers for primary schools, focus should on the deprived blocks of the district which have persistently higher system load and significantly higher pupil-teacher ratio.

ii) More number of female teachers at primary level need to be inducted (like SSK) in the blocks where enrollment and retention are lower and is an hindrance to literacy achievement.

iii) Student load in the primary schools of Islampur subdivision need to be decreased by establishing more schools in this subdivision with special focus on Goalpokhar-I and II blocks.

iv) In the process of providing new teachers in the upper-primary schools, focus is required for the blocks and urban areas other than the schools of two municipal areas of Raiganj and Islampur urban areas where teacher per school and student per teacher is remarkably low compared to the other areas of the district. School specific data may be more fruitful in this respect.

5.4.7 Availability of School Amenities

Ensured accessibility and adequate staffing are the two most enabling attributes that can encourage the acceptance of the schooling system in any area. Besides this, there are other basic amenities, the facility of which also operates as enabling attributes. These amenities are drinking water (DW) facilities, toilet facility, electricity facility, computer facility, etc.

Non-availability of safe drinking water can pose health hazards for the population. The basic amenity of providing safe drinking water in primary schools of the district is adequate, for the district. Only 7% of the schools were not covered till 2006-07. With very positive drives towards this provision from the government in recent times, it is expected that all primary schools of the district will have been provided with safe drinking water facility (Figure - 5.10) in a few years since 2006-07. Toilet facility in the primary schools appears to be a challenging job in this district. The primary schools are coeducational and thus separate toilet facility for the girl students is a necessity. Computerization is beyond the expectation of most schools since 97% of the primary schools are not yet electrified. Thus, school amenities are still inadequate in the district at primary level, except drinking water facility.

At upper primary level, drinking water facility is not a problem, as the coverage is near completion. Electricity facility in the upper primary schools is still an issue that requires immediate attention. Because of the establishment of new schools in remote areas, the remote villages require electrification so that the electrification in the schools may be realized. Computer is now being used as a device of learning. It is the gateway through which a student can cross the threshold to a modern world. So computerization in the post primary schools is also a challenging task in this district. One of every five school or around 20% of the schools is covered by this facility. Also, these schools are either urban or semi-urban block schools. It appears that computerisation is still a dream to the village learners. The detail of the facilities being provided to the schools in the district is shown in Figures - 5.10 & 5.11

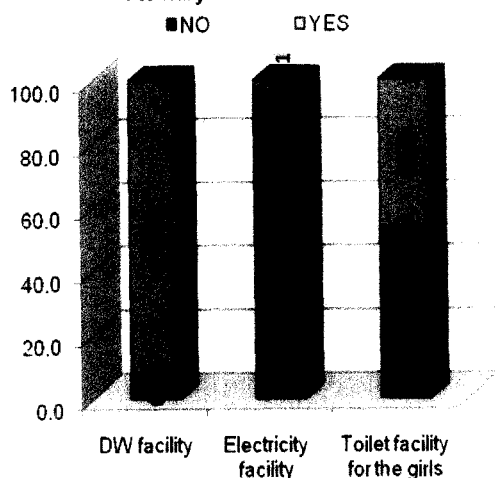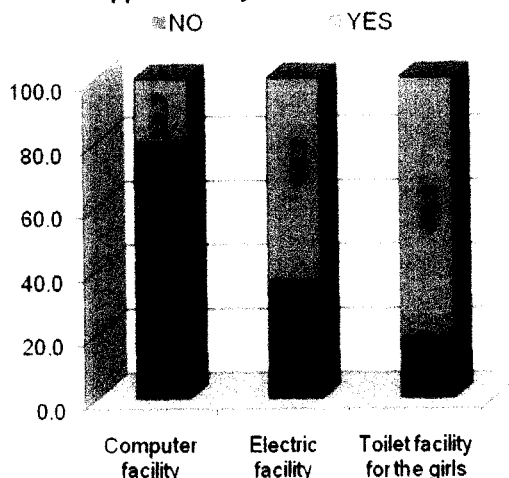Fig-5.10: Basic Amenities (in %) in the Primary School 2006-07

Fig-5.11: Basic Amenities (in %) in the Upper Primary School 2006-07

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur

5.5 School Enrolment & Dropout Trends in Elementary Education System
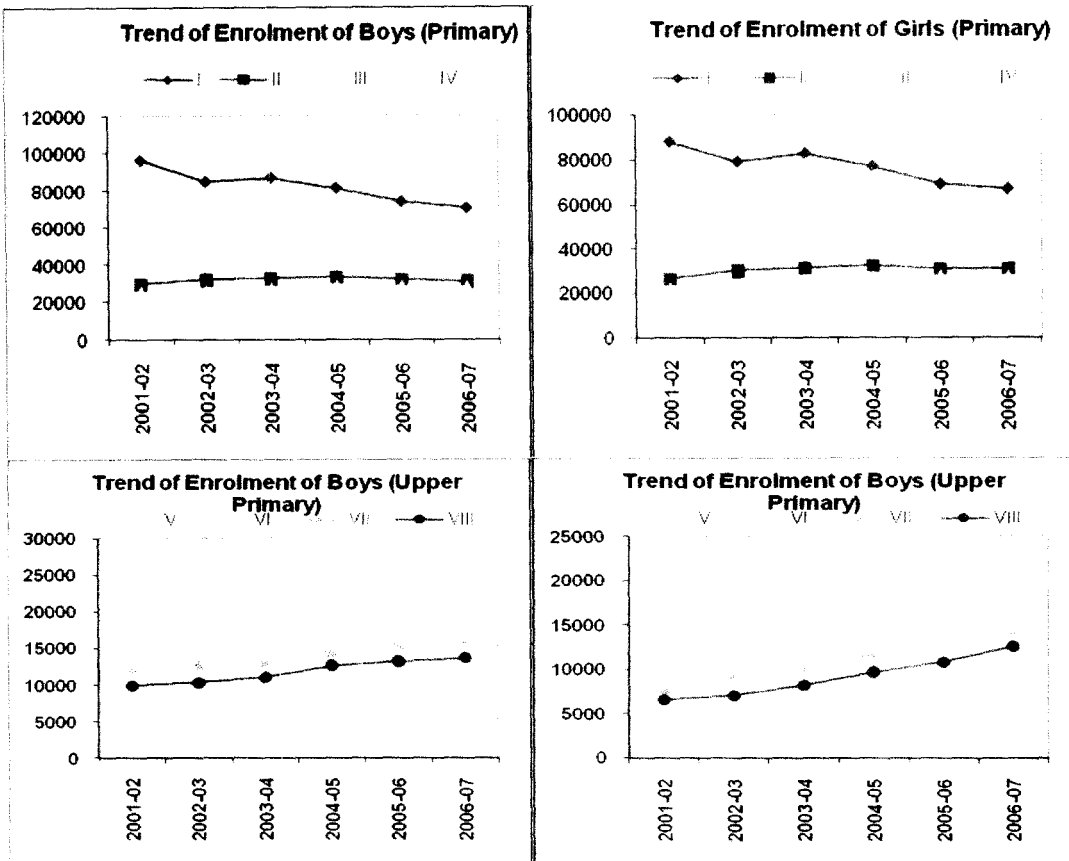
After the declaration of the Millennium Development Goals and the goal of Education For All, special efforts to achieve the goals were undertaken by the state of West Bengal with the introduction of DPEP and thereafter through SSA and SSM. Special attention was given to enroll all the children belonging to the school age group. By maintaining the child register and door to door campaigning, it was expected that universalisation of primary education could be achieved by 2007 and elementary education by 2010. In this light, it is necessary to examine the trend of total enrollment at elementary level for different years. The following diagrams (Figure 5.12) picture the trend of year-wise school enrollment from 2001 to 2007.

Enrollment of students in class-I for both boys and girls has been steadily decreasing since 2001-02. The actual figures show that between the periods 2001-02 to 2006-07 boys' enrolment decreased by 22% and girls' by 19%. Here it may be said that the reference period excludes the SSK's enrollment. The enrollment figure of SSKs is however not available for the year 2001-02, but available for the year 2006-07. Even when the enrollment figure of SSK is added, the decreasing trend remains prominent (15% for boys and 12 % for girls). This indicates that the decreasing trend including primary schools and SSK still show very little change in the trend from the earlier exposition. This decrease in enrolment may be due to the decrease in child population over the years or may be due to the non-enrolment of children. But so far the data on out of school children is concerned, it appears that the former is more feasible explanation. On the other hand, the trend in enrollment at other classes of primary education shows a negligible increase. But at upper primary level a distinctive increasing trend is discernible for all the classes irrespective of gender.

The gender difference in enrollment can be better explained following the concept of sex ratio (number of girls/1000 boys at any stage/class of education) in enrollment. This is shown in the bar diagram below. In a brief comparison, all the blocks in Raiganj subdivision maintain a higher ratio than the district average so far as the primary level of education is concerned.

However, at upper primary level, blockwise variation in sex ratio in school enrolment is quite noticeable. It varies from a minimum of 789 in Chopra to a maximum of 1072 in Itahar. The ratio at district level (rural) is found be much lower at upper primary level (908) compared to the primary level of enrolment (968). This trend is seen in all the blocks except Goalpokhar-I and Kaliyaganj. This implies that it is the girls who usually drop out of schools at primary level in comparison to the boys. The sex ratio (Fig-5.13 & 5.14), especially at upper primary level, in Chopra block is consistently low for all the classes I to VIII, demanding special attention.

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Fig-5.12: Recent Trends in Enrollment at Primary & Upper Primary Schools

Trend of Enrolment of Boys (Primary)

I   II   III   IV

(Chart: values on Y-axis 0 to 120000; X-axis years 2001-02 to 2006-07)

Trend of Enrolment of Girls (Primary)

I   I   ii   IV

(Chart: values on Y-axis 0 to 100000; X-axis years 2001-02 to 2006-07)

Trend of Enrolment of Boys (Upper Primary)

V   VI   VII   VIII

(Chart: values on Y-axis 0 to 30000; X-axis years 2001-02 to 2006-07)

Trend of Enrolment of Boys (Upper Primary)

V   VI   VII   VIII

(Chart: values on Y-axis 0 to 25000; X-axis years 2001-02 to 2006-07)

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

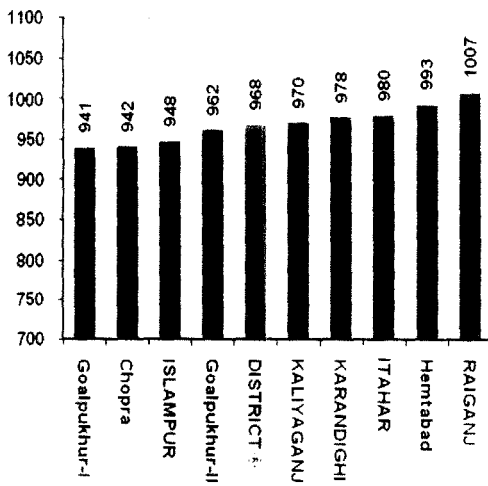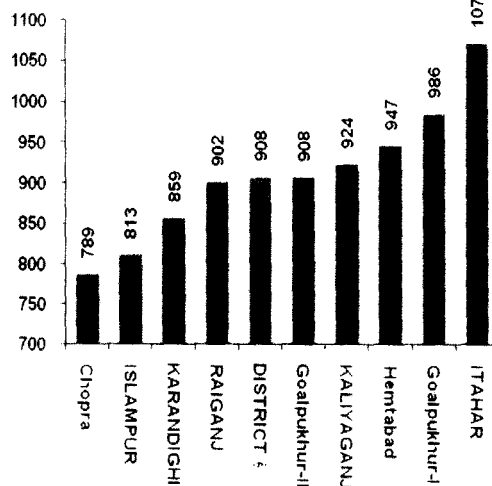**Fig-5.13: Sex Ratio in Enrolment: Primary level (2006-07)**

(Bar chart, Y-axis 700 to 1100)
- Goalpukhur-I: 941
- Chopra: 942
- ISLAMPUR: 948
- Goalpukhur-II: 962
- DISTRICT ®: 968
- KALIYAGANJ: 970
- KARANDIGHI: 978
- ITAHAR: 980
- Hemtabad: 993
- RAIGANJ: 1007

Fig-5.14: Sex Ratio in Enrolment: Upper Primary level (2006-07)

(Bar chart, Y-axis 700 to 1100)
- Chopra: 789
- ISLAMPUR: 813
- KARANDIGHI: 859
- RAIGANJ: 902
- DISTRICT ®: 908
- Goalpukhur-II: 908
- KALIYAGANJ: 924
- Hemtabad: 947
- Goalpukhur-I: 986
- ITAHAR: 1072

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur.
DISTRICT®= District Rural

5.5.1 Dropout Rate

A departmental survey of school was undertaken by the SSM in the district and it was conducted in 2005-06 in order to calculate the dropout rate at the primary stage. The survey covers 1288 schools out of 1437 schools. The remaining schools, because of the non-availability of record, were not covered by the survey. On the basis of students' attendance register for different years, the students of different classes were identified who could not be

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promoted to the next higher class. Deducting the number of migrated students and repeaters from the unsuccessful students, the extent of dropout children was calculated. Following this methodology, the block level dropout rate had been calculated. The result is tabulated in Table-5.11 below.The district level dropout rate is around 35% with very little difference in case of the girl children. Chopra, in spite of being the highest literate block in Islampur subdivision, is in the worst position with regard to the dropout rate.

Table - 5.11: Block wise Dropout & Grade Completion Rate 2005-06

District/Blocks/ Municipality	Dropout Rate at Primary Level : 2005-06			Completion Rate of Primary Education:2005-06		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
CHOPRA	63.5	63.3	63.4	25.4	23.8	24.7
ISLAMPUR	37.1	37.8	37.4	24.9	22.4	23.8
GOALPOKHAR-1	44.4	43.8	44.1	33.3	33.9	33.6
GOALPOKHAR-2	53.4	53.0	53.2	30.2	28.6	29.5
KARANDIGHI	20.6	20.6	20.6	43.2	45.1	44.0
RAIGANJ	17.0	15.8	16.4	45.8	46.3	46.1
HEMTABAD	16.9	14.0	15.5	38.3	38.5	38.4
KALIYAGANJ	22.5	22.3	22.4	4.0	25.2	24.6
ITAHAR	29.3	28.7	29.0	60.6	60.7	60.6
KALIYAGANJ (M)	20.8	15.8	18.4	48.4	50.7	49.5
RAIGANJ (M)	27.5	24.4	26.0	44.6	50.9	47.7
ISLAMPUR (M)	40.0	37.4	38.7	46.1	49.3	47.6
KARANDIGHI (M)	17.5	18.0	17.7	56.6	56.9	56.7
DISTRICT (TOTAL)	35.2	34.2	34.8	37.3	37.6	37.5

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur. Academic Year- 2006-07

Most of the enrolled children in Chopra dropped out of the school system before completing primary education. Consequently, the completion rate of primary education is very low (25%) in this block. This implies that although the literacy rate in Chopra block is comparatively higher, the level of education among the literate person is low. The dropout rate across the blocks varies as low as 15.5% in Hemtabad to a high of 63.4% in Chopra block. Traditionally, Goalpokhar-I sand II are in the position of higher dropout rate and lower completion rate that manifest in their low educational attainment. Quite unexpectedly the Karandighi block, with a considerably low literacy rate in the district, shows better position where the dropout rate is only 20.6% and a moderately higher primary completion rate of 44%. This again may be due to the fact that the level of education among the literate persons is higher in this block. Literacy campaign in this block seems to have lower success rate unlike in Chopra and other blocks. The review of literacy campaign supports this logic and is presented below. However, socio-economic and school related factors are also responsible for such paradoxical findings and it needs further research based study.

In order to minimize the dropout rate and also to improve on the transition rate, the SSM of this district has conducted a Child Census in 2007. A scheme of enrolling all children (5-14years) in the education system (both formal and non-formal) has been launched under a comprehensive programme named Bhartikaran Karmasuchi. The census mainly collected the data on out of school children (OOSC) and their present status. A comprehensive picture as obtained from the survey is being presented here.

Table - 5.12: Out of School children 2007 in Uttar Dinajpur District

Reference Period	Out of School Children (Primary)			Out of School Children (Upper Primary)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Total number as on 31.12.06	16326	18900	35226	18073	13633	31706
Enrolled up to 30.09.07	12674	14412	27086	2610	2921	5531
Remaining	3652	4488	8140	15463	10712	26175

Source: - Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur

It has been found that a total number of 66,932 children were out of school in the age group 5+ to 14 years as on 31.12.2006 (Table-5.12). The actual child population belonging to the reference age group was 6,98,892 (in 2001). Considering this figure, it appears that less than 10% of the children in this group had been out of school as on 31.12.2006. Again after the Karmasuchi was implemented, a considerable number of OOSC were brought under the schooling system, especially at primary level and presently on an average only 5% of the children are being left from the schooling arena. This finding of the concerned department seems to be confusing as because, the same source finds a 35% dropout rate and 38% completion rate at primary level of education. However, the survey of Bhartikaran Karmasuchi reveals that out of school children is found to be highest in Karandighi block followed by Goalpukur-I, Islampur, Itahar and Chopra. Apart from the municipal areas, Hemtabad block has the lowest number of out of school children in the district. So the task in this respect is again challenging in the three blocks of Islampur subdivision which were earlier identified as the blocks with special need on the basis of differential achievement and enabling attributes.
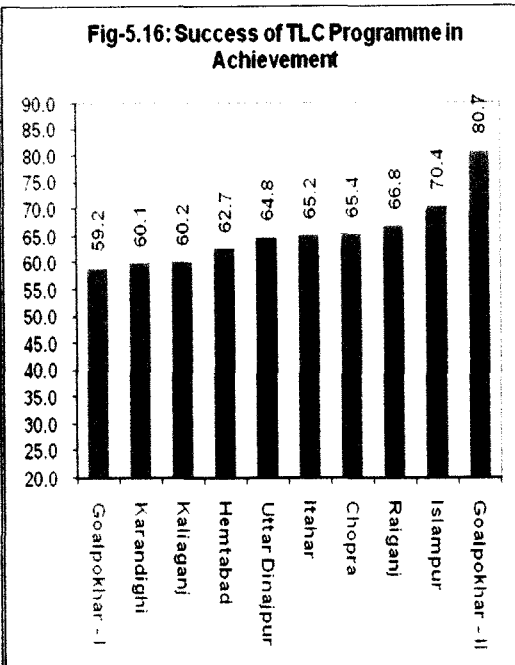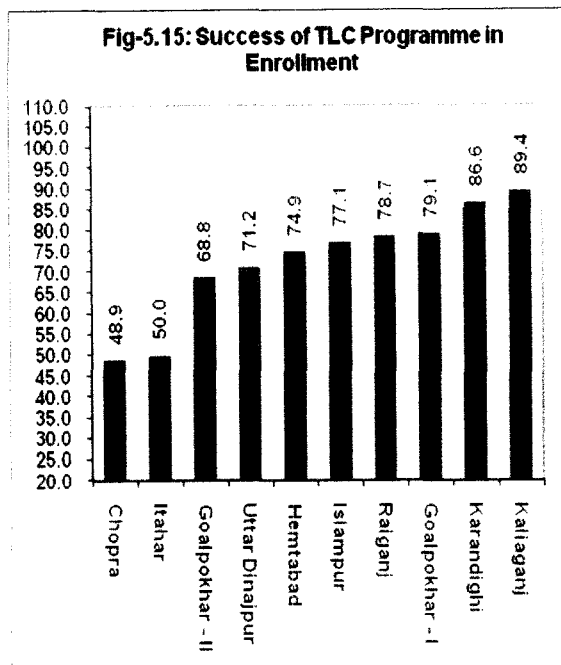
The Bhartikaran Karmasuchi succeeded to enroll around 50% of this targeted out of school children. The success rate was higher for the girls (53.3%) while it was 44.4% for the boys. Presently there are 34,315 children who have to be brought under the scheme and to be enrolled in the education system. The accommodation of the remaining out of school children, as planned by the SSM, will be made under the alternative schooling system such as residential and non-residential bridge course, NGO-run alternative education centre, Rabindra Mukta Vidyalay (RMV), national child labour project, etc., the result of which is awaited.

Apart from such enrollment drive, a number of programmes have been undertaken by the SSA/SSM in this district. The involvement of the mothers of the students in Ma-O-Meye Mela is such a programme which can enhance girls' education. Financial assistance for constructing adequate classroom has been released continuously in different schools both for primary and upper primary schools.

5.5.2 Non-formal Education in Uttar Dinajpur

Burdened with the high proportion of illiterates in the country since independence, Literacy Campaigns was initiated in the country in 1989 under the overall coordination of National Literacy Mission (NLM). It was envisaged to address the issues of illiteracy of the country. After receiving the proposal of the desire to take up literacy campaign in this district, NLM extended their sanctioning to start campaigning for illiteracy eradication programme in 1995-96 which is termed as Total Literacy Campaign (TLC). By conducting a fresh survey in 1998, the number of illiterates identified and targeted was 5.6 lakh. With such large number of illiterates, the TLC programme in this district has been initiated. The success was quite satisfactory at the initial stages. Around 4.0 lakh (71.2%) illiterates) were actually enrolled as the learners in the TLC programme. Again, out of this 4.0 lakh enrolled non-literates, 2.6 lakh (64.8%) achieved the norm of NLM in the first phase. Among them 54.7% were male and 45.3% were female which shows considerable gender parity in literacy campaign in this district.

A detail block level scenario of the NLM programme in Uttar Dinajpur district is graphically represented by the following bar diagrams (Fig-5.15 & 5.16). There is much variation in enrolling the targeted non-literate. The success rate in enrolling the targeted illiterates was as low as 49% in Chopra block to highest in Kaliyaganj block where around 90% of the total targeted non-literates were enrolled. The success rate of the non-literate learners in achieving the norm of NLM was also asymmetric across the blocks. For example, Goalpokhar-I block with a high rate of success in enrollment (79.1% of the targeted non-literate) was ranked in the lowest position in achieving the norm of NLM.

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Fig-5.15: Success of TLC Programme in Enrollment

Values (left to right): Chopra 48.9, Itahar 50.0, Goalpokhar-II 68.8, Uttar Dinajpur 71.2, Hemtabad 74.9, Islampur 77.1, Raiganj 78.7, Goalpokhar-I 79.1, Karandighi 86.6, Kaliaganj 89.4

Fig-5.16: Success of TLC Programme in Achievement

Values (left to right): Goalpokhar-I 59.2, Karandighi 60.1, Kaliaganj 60.2, Hemtabad 62.7, Uttar Dinajpur 64.8, Itahar 65.2, Chopra 65.4, Raiganj 66.8, Islampur 70.4, Goalpokhar-II 80.7

Source: District Literacy Cell; Office of the District Magistrate, Uttar Dinajpur

The learners, who achieved the norm of NLM in the first phase of TLC Programme, were brought under the post literacy programme to continue their further development in literacy achievement. By excluding the learners in the age group 5-14 years, the remaining (15 years and above) around 2.00 lakh neo-literate were targeted for PLP Programme. Out of this target, the actual enrolment figure of the learners was 1.86 lakh (92.43%) which was sufficiently high in comparison to the TLC target. This was a great success achieved by the Zila Saksharata Samity of this district and also around 61% of the total enrolled learners (1.13 lakh) in PLP programme already achieved the NLM norms. Currently, the Continuing Education Programme (CEP) has been working in the district and executing the liyeracy programme through out the blocks.

Table- 5.13: Block/Municipality wise Distribution of CECs & NCECs

Name of the Block	Population/ Ward	CEC	NCEC	Total
Chopra	223022	88	6	94
Islampur	241951	86	7	93
GP-I	245430	97	7	104
GP-II	226472	87	6	93
Karandighi	290081	113	9	122
Raiganj	362056	142	10	152
Hemtabad	118822	47	3	50
Kaliyaganj	190019	74	6	80
Itahar	249541	98	7	105
Islampur (M)	14	13	1	14
Raiganj (M)	26	25	1	26
Kaliyaganj (M)	17	16	1	17
Dalkhola (M)	14	13	1	14
Uttar Dinajpur		**899**	**65**	**964**

Source: District Literacy Cell; Office of the District Magistrate, Uttar Dinajpur

The main objective of CEP is to use the knowledge of achieved literacy in further education and for the development of livelihood standard. The sphere of CEP is much broader than TLC or PLP. In lieu of traditional concept of Learning to Read it has been given importance to

Reading to Learn. Presently 899 Continuing Education Centres (CEC) and 65 Nodal CECs are functioning in this district. The block/municipal wise breakup of the centres is shown in Table-5.13.

The process of TLC was started with all-round participation of administration as well as local Panchayats along with political mobilization. Local involvement of the unemployed educated youth was incredible and their voluntary participation as a trainer was commendable. Community participation in this respect was more significant in mobilising the whole process.

5.5.3 Institutional Structure of SSK & MSK in Uttar Dinajpur 2006-07

A teacher of the soil is well aquatinted with the socio-cultural scenario of the area and with the learners, which is much more important for a teacher to be successful in the sphere of any teaching-learning process. Keeping this concept in mind, along with the cost management criteria and above all the growing demand for education, a parallel system of school education (Non-formal) under the Ministry of Panchayat & Rural Development has been introduced in West Bengal. Two types of Siksha Kendra namely Sishu Siksha Kendras (SSKs) and Madhyamik Siksha Kendras (MSKs) are being established to impart the primary and upper primary education in these non-formal institutions. A total of 907 SSKs (38.9 % of total schools imparting primary education) with 2890 teacher (44.6%) covers 1.19 lakh primary learner (28.1% of total primary learners) as per the data for the academic year 2006-07. It thus signifies that the primary education in the district is considerably dependent on such type of parallel system of education. Here it may be noted that in SSKs, 100% teachers are female and they are designated as Sahayika and the teachers of MSK are as Samprasarak and Samprasarika. A quantitative comparison along with the comparison of system load in the formal and non-formal schooling in the district is plotted in Figures 5.17 & 5.18. Two qualitative aspects of school level enabling attribute are compared in this district at its formal and non-formal structure. It is seen that student load on school and teacher both at primary and upper primary level is much lower in the non-formal institutions (MSKs & SSKs).

A similar comparison across the blocks of the district shows the analogous dependency pattern towards the SSKs and MSKs (Table 5.14). Here it is seen that the dependency on these institutions is considerably lower in the blocks of Raiganj. However, in all the blocks, SSR or PTR is much lower in the non-formal institutions than the formal schools. This demands a better infrastructure in the non-formal schools which may lead to a better performance too.

Table-5.14: Institutional Structure of SSK & MSK in Uttar Dinajpur 2006-07

Block	Student School Ratio (SSR)				Student Teacher Ratio (PTR)			
	Primary	SSK	U/primary	MSK	Primary	SSK	U/primary	MSK
CHOPRA	290	124	908	293	98	73	64	50
ISLAMPUR	253	167	606	182	87	38	57	45
GP-I	249	155	597	240	98	41	61	45
GP-II	266	180	682	196	103	53	60	49
KARANDIGHI	268	143	872	166	87	44	59	47
RAIGANJ	173	106	858	189	48	60	52	35
HEMTABAD	183	99	789	183	52	37	51	30
KALIYAGANJ	159	91	786	212	44	37	54	32
ITAHAR	180	111	778	216	54	39	63	33

Source:- Uttar Dinajpur Zilla Parishad

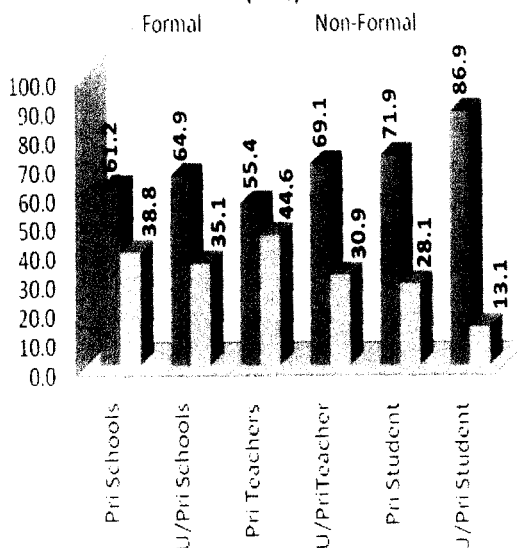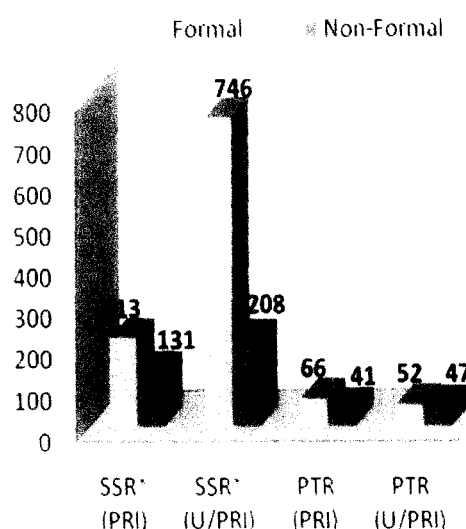Fig-5.17: Comparison of Institutional Structure (in %) 2006-07

Fig-5.18: Comparison of System Load 2006-07

Note: SSR* student per school; PTR student per teacher.
Source:- Uttar Dinajpur Zilla Parishad; Office of the District Project Officer, Sarva Siksha Mission, Uttar Dinajpur

At present about 39% of the primary level institutions and 28% of the upper primary level institutions has been covered by such non-formal system in this district. In these schools (SSKs and MSKs) around 29% of the total teachers are engaged with an enrollment share about 16% of the students reading at elementary stage. Thus it appears that the access to education in respect of teacher and school is largely managed by the non-formal system of education. This dependency is much more vivid in case of primary education. But the non-formal institutions are a temporary concept and the salary of the teachers in these Kendras, in spite of having same level of qualification and discharging same level of duties, is far below compared to the salary of the teachers serving in the formal schools. This growing trend of coverage by non-formal system may create a critical gap both from the side of the teachers as well as from the learners which may again create an intra-structural gap in the schooling system nurtured by the government. This is a separate research question whether such type of parallel schooling is fruitful for better performance or not. This needs again another study that is beyond the scope of the present study.

The foregoing review of educational structure in Uttar Dinajpur districts brings the following gaps that shall have to be mitigated for meeting the target of universal elementary education in near future.

5.6 Persisting Educational Gaps in Uttar Dinajpur

- *There is no recorded private aided or unaided primary school though there existence is beyond any question. The data regarding such type of schools is being highly in need.*

- *There are only 13 Urdu medium primary schools in this district at Islampur subdivision and surprisingly only two Hindi medium primary schools. Considering the lingual and cultural habit of Islampur subdivision of this district, establishment of Hindi and Urdu medium primary Schools may have some positive effect in spreading schooling habit among the children at least at lower levels of education.*

- *Muslim population in this district is much higher than the state average while the literacy level of the Muslims in the district (36%) is much below the state average of this particular religious group (54.7%). Again, there is a large variation in literacy rate between Muslims*

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(36%) and non-Muslims (58%) in this particular district. So the education of this religious community requires serious attention.

- *The three Muslim dominant blocks of the district (Islampur, Goalpokhar-I & II) are not sufficiently endowed with educational institutions and Goalpokhar-I has no recognized Madrasah. The establishment of Junior/High Madrasah in these blocks will open the doors of education to this deprived section of the population.*

- *It is seen that concentration of primary schools under Raiganj subdivision and upper primary schools particularly in Islampur and Raiganj blocks needs to be kept in view while establishing the schools so as to ensure a fair distribution of educational institutions.*

- *The infrastructural deficiencies in Hemtabad block proves that this deficiency have no serious effect on child schooling. Thus there are many positive enabling factors by which children can be attracted to schools and enrolled in the schooling system. It also appears that the status of school building in this district has hardly any relation with the educational attainment.*

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