

**A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF VALUES EDUCATION PERSPECTIVES
ON NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN INDIA**

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAA	Constitutional Amendment Act
EFA	Education for All
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
IQ	Intelligent Quotient
LFP	Low-Fee Private School
LVEP	Living Values an Educational Programme
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPE	National Policy on Education
NRCVE	National Resource Centre for Value Education
NSECHR	National Statement on Ethical Conduct
OBC	Other Backward Class
OS	Open School
OU	Open University
PEO	Programme Evaluation Organisation
QDA	Quantitative Data Analysis
REA	Right to Education Act
SC	Scheduled Caste
SLR	Systematic Literature Review
SSA	<i>Sarva Siksha Abhiyan</i> (trans., Education for All)
SSEHV	Sathya Sai Education in Human Values
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TLR	Thematic Literature Review
UEE	Universal Elementary Education
UNCRC	United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VE	Values Education

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the integration of values education into the non-formal education of children in India. Non-formal education is a planned and organised programme which provides education to poor, marginalised children who are either non-starters or out of school for various reasons. Several million such children have received education at non-formal education centres in various parts of India. This study examines the significance of non-formal education in the lives of these children, and the pedagogical imperative of integrating values education into non-formal education. This qualitative study uses semi-structured individual interviews with members of the leadership teams of both governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the running of non-formal education centres and semi-structured focus group interviews with children participating in non-formal education in the Bihar region of India. An interpretive approach is used to explicate the data. A thematic literature review discusses and clarifies critical concepts of the study and establishes sufficient grounds for discussion of major findings. Extensive field data are analysed to determine the current state of non-formal education, the quality of education in government schools, and the reason why a large number of poor, marginalised children remain out of school. Findings from this analysis provide significant evidence of the need to continue to offer non-formal education. Further analysis of field data looks at the moral perspectives underpinning non-formal education and at various perspectives on integrating values education in non-formal education. Critical findings from this analysis suggest the urgent need for the planners and providers of non-formal education to step up their efforts in offering effective values education. This is due to the fact that appropriate and satisfactory

integration and implementation of values education is not currently occurring, especially at a pedagogical level. The fact that specific research on the non-formal education of children in India is not common and that research regarding their values education is almost non-existent makes this study a significant and seminal contribution in the field of non-formal education.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

I begin by introducing the working environment that gave rise to the research topic, which sets the scene for the study by drawing on how I came to formulate the research problem, interest, and topic. Importantly, I have outlined the aims and key questions guiding this study and the structure of the thesis in terms of the chapters and their contents.

1.2. Setting the Scene: The Mission Experience

My experience of working with the children participating in non-formal education led me to consider this research study. My first encounter with them occurred in 1996 in Bihar, one of the administrative states in India, while I was a member of the Jesuit Society, a Catholic religious congregation that engages in various types of missionary work in many parts of the world. Education is a premier and fundamental commitment for the Jesuits in India, where they run some of the best educational institutions. They also have several non-formal education initiatives in India and run a number of non-formal education centres for the education of poor, marginalised children. I was introduced to non-formal education when I was undergoing formation in a novitiate house where young Jesuit novices go through their initial formative years.

As part of a programme to give these young novices exposure to some of the works in which Jesuits engage - in Jesuit terms, to give some “mission experience” - a senior novice led me to a newly created non-formal education centre situated some distance from the novitiate. I had to cycle all the way through a crowded market-place and into

narrow corridors that ran between dwellings, where several mud houses with thatched roofs formed a colony akin to a slum. The inhabitants belonged to a particular caste called *Musahar*, who are also known as *Bhuiya*. In Bihar, the *Musahar* are one among the 23 castes which together form the Scheduled Caste category, the lowest rung in India's hierarchically structured caste system and they rank third among the 23 castes in terms of population, but rank lowest when it comes to educational attainment or even literacy (Louis, 2002). People belonging to the Scheduled Caste are also known as *Dalits* (see Nambissan, 1996), and they were formerly referred to as the "untouchables" (Robert Jenkins & Barr, 2006, p. 2). Untouchability meant that "physical contact" with these people "is ritually polluting or unclean" (Borooah, 2005, p. 399). In earlier times, the untouchables were not allowed to walk on the road in day-light because people of the upper caste feared that their very shadows would pollute them (Ghurye, 1957). In that era, the possibility of the children of untouchables sharing a classroom with upper caste children was unthinkable. "Their impurity, which for generations excluded them from temples and all public places where others feared "pollution" from contact with them, put them at the bottom of the social pyramid" (Jaffrelot, 2006, p. 174). Article 17 of the Constitution of India, 1949, abolished untouchability, and the Indian parliament enacted the Untouchability Offences Act in 1955, nevertheless, the practice of untouchability continued (G. B. Sharma, 1975) and is practiced even today in various forms (see Deshpande, 2000b; Nambissan, 1996; Neelakantan, 2011). The *Musahar* who were living in the colony where the senior novice led me were victims of exploitation, oppression, and discrimination by the upper castes.

The pitiable life circumstances of the *Musahar* community were evident in what I observed in that small community: filthy, dirty, stinking surroundings where domesticated pigs wandered freely and drunken men staggered about. Scantly dressed

children, several of them of school-going age, whose bodies were covered with mud, were playing in groups, and some were even wallowing in the dirty water along with the piglings. Women in small groups were gathered here and there, seemingly engaged in idle chat. In the midst of this community stood a single-door, one-room concrete structure built to serve as a community hall by the local administration as a place to hold community meetings and gatherings. A drunken man was sleeping on the concrete floor of the hall; the senior novice gently encouraged him to vacate the place so the children could assemble there.

My senior companion went around collecting children, calling them by name. He brought out a makeshift wooden chalkboard which was safely kept in one of the nearby houses. Soon, around forty scantily dressed children of all different age were assembled in the community hall. They all appeared excited to see my companion and to be with him there. He taught them some action songs and conducted some fun-filled games and drills. Then he made them sit on the floor with their legs crossed, arranging them in lines according to their height, with the short ones at the front and tall ones at the back. He read aloud from a story book and asked the children questions, which they promptly answered. From his bag, he took out colour pencils and blank paper, distributed them among the children and helped them draw and colour some pictures. At one point, he asked all the children to stand up and sing the national anthem, which he had previously taught them. After spending nearly three hours at the community hall engaged in various activities, the children were allowed to disperse.

While returning to our novitiate house, my companion took a different route. After about five minutes of cycling, he stopped in the shade of a tree and pointed at a two-room concrete building. It was a government school built as a place to educate children

in that locality, but it looked deserted. Not a single child was inside the school and no teaching was going on. We parked our bicycles in front of the school and walked into a small office at one corner of the veranda. Two men were playing chess, and they turned and looked at us. They seemed to know my companion. Without any prompting they said, “What to do sir, children don’t come to study.” My companion later explained to me that they were teachers who were supposed to educate the local children. However, they did not come to the school regularly, and when they did come, they merely filled in the attendance register and played chess or read newspapers, and then returned home. The children did not come to the school of their own volition, and these teachers made no effort to draw them in. My companion said that the teachers appointed previously had done the same things and seldom taught the children. He added that several civil organisations were involved in campaigns to make the government education system more functional, but with few positive results. He contended that while efforts to make the government schools more functional must continue, engaging with the children through non-formal education was nonetheless important for their education. What my companion had been doing at the community hall was in fact a way to prepare for starting a non-formal education centre there.

A month after that experience, I was sent with another senior novice to a hamlet where there were no government schools, and where a non-formal education centre had been running for some years. Approximately fifty *Musahar* families lived there and it looked very much like the place I had previously visited. The dirty surroundings, foul smell, freely wandering pigs, barely dressed children, and drunken men were all found in the tiny hamlet too. Some women were brewing country liquor in the courtyard of a mud house. The senior novice told me that it was a common practice in *Musahar* communities to brew country liquor for their own consumption and for illegal sale. He

added that despite several arrests, the locals remained undeterred because brewing liquor earned them some money when they had no other jobs.

We parked our bicycles under a tree and walked to the education centre, which was being run with financial aid from the government in a large room in one of the mud houses in the hamlet. Regular classes were conducted for three hours a day at a time convenient for the children. There were around thirty children there, all of them somewhat neatly dressed and groomed, ranging in age from 6 to 14. The children were seated on a carpet that was spread over the mud floor. They each had a bag in front of them in which they carried their study materials. A female teacher was teaching them mathematics. A makeshift wooden chalkboard stood at one corner of the room beside the teacher, and some multiplications were written on it. Seeing my companion and me at the door, the children stood up and greeted us in their language. The teacher also greeted us and welcomed us into the room. My companion had some interactions with the students and asked them questions about what the teacher had been teaching them in the previous weeks. Most of the children gave speedy and correct answers, although some of them needed prompting. The teacher revealed that her best students had recently enrolled in formal schools after some years of successful learning at the non-formal education centre. She added that more successful students would be enrolled in formal schools in the following academic year. When we were about to leave the centre, the children stood up and thanked us. While returning to the novitiate house, my companion explained to me that a hundred similar centres were being run in marginalised communities in various parts of the district by a Jesuit priest who had established an NGO for conducting developmental works among the poor. He added that the children at the centre we had just visited had had no sense of cleanliness, but

through non-formal education they were taught to wear clean clothes and how to give themselves good self-care.

Novitiate life periodically gave me similar exposures to other learning centres. After the novitiate training, my involvement in non-formal education occurred again in the year 2000, when I was required to undergo what the Jesuits call “regency”, that is, two years of a full-time work commitment in some priority areas. I proposed non-formal education as my first choice, and it was granted.

I returned to the colony where I had my first encounter with *Musahar* children. Although the colony had not changed much in terms of its look, smell, and chaos, there was now an established non-formal education centre there and children were regularly attending the classes. A teacher looked after the affairs at the centre, and some children were already enrolled in formal schools after successfully studying at the centre. The situation in the nearby government school remained much the same, except that there were different teachers. However, they had the same ready-made answer: the children did not come to school.

During that year, a Children’s Day was organised for the children who successfully completed their education at the non-formal centres and gained competency in the subjects taught that was comparable to the level of formal school students. It gave the children an opportunity to display their talents, and various competitions and cultural programmes also were organised. Around five hundred children and their parents participated in the event. All those children later enrolled in formal schools to further their education.

As for me, I decided to commit myself totally to work in non-formal education among the most marginalised communities in Bihar.

1.3. Context of the Research

The context of the *Musahar* community is one of extreme poverty and dire social conditions, and other marginalised communities are more or less the same. According to India's 1991 census, 14.56% of the population of Bihar is Scheduled Castes, of whom about 91% dwells in villages and depends exclusively on agriculture or related occupations (Louis, 2002). Agricultural occupations are seasonal, and therefore, the people remain jobless for a significant period of time every year. Their literacy rate, according to the 2001 census, is 19.49% and only 7.07% for female (Louis, 2002). This reveals the dismal state of educational attainment among the children in Bihar who belong to the Scheduled Castes and girls in particular. The situation at the national level for those who belong to the Scheduled Castes is not much better. Moreover, a similar state of affairs exists among the Scheduled Tribes, another significant population of poor, marginalised people who live in communities outside the caste groupings. They are classified as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Constitution of India (I. V. S. Rao, 2005). "The notification of a tribal group as scheduled tribe is based on certain characteristics like the tribal groups' distinctive culture, geographical isolation and low level of socio-economic development" (I. V. S. Rao, 2005, pp. 377-378). They live in "scattered habitations located in interior, remote, and inaccessible hilly and forest areas of the country" (Sujatha, 2002, p. 87). The following table presents the national literacy rate of people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from 1961 to 1991.

All-India Literacy Rate of SCs/STs and Others			
Year	SCs	STs	Rest of Population
1961	10.27 (3.24)	8.54 (3.16)	27.86 (16.59)
1971	14.67 (6.49)	11.30 (4.85)	33.80 (17.11)
1981	21.38 (10.92)	16.35 (8.04)	41.22 (29.51)
1991	37.41 (23.76)	29.60 (18.19)	57.40 (44.96)

Figure-1: Based on the “All-India literacy rate of SCs/STs and others” presented in Louis (2002, p. 75).

The table shows that although there is a gradual increase in the literacy rate of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from 1961 to 1991, their rate of literacy is much less than that of the general population. Moreover, the literacy rate of women (in parentheses) is abysmally low. The state of literacy in India led Weiner (1991) to remark that India is the single largest producer of the world’s illiterates. Since formal education failed to reach all children in India, a major policy initiative by the Indian government in 1986 developed non-formal education as a viable alternative for educating children. The National Policy on Education 1986, put non-formal education on an equal footing with formal education, and thereby gave it a legal mandate (see Chauhan, 2009; Lall, 2005). The National Policy on Education states, “It shall be ensured that all children who attain the age of about 11 years by 1990 will have had 5 years of schooling or its equivalent in the non-formal stream. Likewise, by 1995, all children will be provided free and compulsory education up to 14 years of age” (Government of India, 1986, p. 12). A key purpose of non-formal education was to provide India’s children with a universal elementary education (Rani, 2006); government funding was granted for various initiatives. Hundreds of thousands of children began to receive an education by participating in non-formal education. A large

number of non-governmental organisations became providers of non-formal education with funding from the government, private individuals, or aid agencies, including international agencies.

Non-formal education became particularly significant in the context of millions of children remaining out of school, either because they were never enrolled or because they left school after a short while. Several studies report that a large number of India's children in the school-going age remain out of school (see Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale, 2009; Kingdon, 2007; Lall, 2005; Mehrotra, 2006; A. C. Mehta, 2002; Nambissan, 1996; V. K. Ramachandran, Rawal, & Swaminathan, 1997; I. V. S. Rao, 2005; J. P. Singh, 2002; Srivastav & Dubey, 2002). More than half the children who enter Class I leave school without completing their elementary education (I. V. S. Rao, 2005). According to Chauhan (2009), approximately 59 million children are currently out of school in India.

A major proportion of the out-of-school children fall into the disadvantaged categories, such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale, 2009; Nambissan, 1996; I. V. S. Rao, 2005; J. P. Singh, 2002; Srivastav & Dubey, 2002). Issues related to children remaining out of school will be discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 5. To establish the context of this study, it suffices to point out that for a large number of children who are out of school, non-formal education is the sole system which addresses their educational needs. A significant aspect of non-formal education is that a major proportion of the participating children are from the poor, marginalised communities that are home to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

The massive number of children participating in non-formal education and their disadvantaged socio-economic situation prompted me to think of ways to make learning

more rewarding for them. A significant point to consider was the values education of children participating in non-formal education. While these children developed competency in subject knowledge that could match or even exceed that of children in formal schools, their values formation seemed to be neglected or at least was not attended to in a systematic manner. Their socio-economic marginalisation and extreme poverty deprived them of a family atmosphere that facilitated sound values formation from early childhood onward. This made their educational setting a significant place for their integrated development and opportunity to absorb sound human values. This understanding made me realise the need to investigate the importance of integrating values education in the non-formal education of children.

1.4. Research Questions and Purpose

The study is guided by four research questions, which are listed below:

1. What is the current nature of the non-formal education of children in India in the general educational context?
2. How might values education enhance the essential work of non-formal education?
3. What are the moral perspectives underpinning the non-formal education of children in India?
4. How do non-formal education workers integrate values education perspectives into their work, and what positive effects do they anticipate values education will have?

The purpose of the first question is to examine the current state and nature of non-formal education in India and what makes its continuation important for children. The second question is intended to spur a hypothetical discussion of the imperative to

integrate values education into non-formal education. The third question aims to explore what moral perspectives inspire non-formal education providers to engage in this work. This question will also help determine whether the moral perspectives of non-formal education providers have any bearing on their perceptions of providing values education to children participating in non-formal education. The final question will examine what is presently happening in non-formal education in terms of values education.

1.5. Approach to the Literatures

A Thematic Literature Review (TLR) has been employed to undertake the research study. TLR has been chosen with a view to search the literature in an organised way in order to identify themes that help to answer the research questions. TLR takes a look at some of the literature and allows the researcher to follow threads/references that come up through that literature to find some more. The researcher can then identify some of the key themes that emerge from it which will help answer the research questions. The researcher can follow these themes in searching for more literature, also keeping the eyes open for whether these themes work and/or whether others are emerging that help to make more sense of what the researcher reads to answer the research questions. Based on these themes a critical review of the literature can be written and develop arguments rather than simply list what has been read.

A Systematic Review of Literature (SRL), on the other hand, makes an exhaustive search of all the literature that is available on the topic keeping very clear boundaries about what to include or exclude in the search. Moreover, it involves a very technical way of analysing how trustworthy each piece of literature in telling what it tells. It is mainly done by scrutinising the research methodology applied in the literature to see how well the study has been carried out. Thus, some studies will be given more weight

than the others. This also allows themes; however, I think it is not appropriate for my study. I want to write something where I have searched the literature in an organised way, identified certain themes in it that help to answer my research questions, followed these themes further, and then written my critical argument around the theme. TLR allows this.

Library/IT based literature search has been undertaken. Books, journal articles, research findings, policy documents, newspaper reports, and relevant magazines have been searched extensively.

1.6. Theoretical Framework

Values education provides the theoretical framework for this study. Explaining values education requires an explanation of the terms “values” and “education”. Defining the term “values” generates considerable discussion. As Aspin (2007) points out, values “are not definable as though they are an autonomous element in any institution or setting; they permeate everything that we do” (p. 45). A favoured definition of values is given by Halstead and Taylor (2000), who suggest that values “refers to the principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, the standards by which particular actions are judged to be good or desirable” (p. 169). This definition, however, is criticised by Hill (2005) as carrying “a cognitive weighting which potentially obscures the motivational aspect” (p. 4). Hill, therefore, defines values as “the priorities individuals and societies attach to certain beliefs, experiences, and objects, in deciding how they shall live and what they shall treasure” (p. 4). He argues that this definition does not look at values merely as a “cognitive state of mind” but as a “readiness or disposition” to enable the “whole-person to act in certain ways, given the

opportunity” (p. 4). Along a similar but more elaborate line, Aspin (2007) uses the term values:

... to refer to those ideas, conventions, principles, rules, objects, products, activities, practices, procedures or judgements that people accept, agree to, treasure, cherish, prefer, incline towards, see as important and indeed act upon. Such things they make objects of admiration, high levels of aspiration, standards of judgement, prescriptions for action, norms of conduct or goals of endeavour in their lives seeing them as generally prescriptive in all their values reflection and decisions, and they commend them so to others (pp. 31-32).

These definitions suggest that values are important to and form an integral part of human lives. Values, in fact, are reflected constantly in all that we do (Nielsen, 2005). An examination of the discourses on values reveals an array of different kinds of values (see Amaele, 2009; Aspin, 2007; Venkataiah, 1998) including personal, social, moral, spiritual/religious, aesthetic, political, educational, technical, scientific, material, and economic values.

As for the term “education”, Mary Warnock (1978, in Aspin, 2007) defines it “as an undertaking principally concerned with preparing our younger generation to face the challenges of the future” (p. 28). This definition includes three important components: “preparation for the world of work; preparation for the life of imagination; and preparation for the life of virtue” (Aspin, 2007, p. 28). Seshadri (2005) defines education as “a process of bringing about desirable changes in the way one thinks, feels and acts in accordance with one’s concept of the good life” (p. 10), and points out that in this understanding, education involves values transmission. Michael Oakeshott (1972/1989, in Pring, 2010a) constructs education “as an initiation of the next generation into the world of ideas” (p. xxi). Pring (2010a) points out that this world of ideas evolves “through the conversation between the generations of mankind” (p. xxi), and that teachers have an important role to play in enabling children to engage in that

conversation. All three explanations suggest that education is a creative and continuous process of enabling young people to live their lives meaningfully and to let others do so.

Wilson (2000), however, suggests that there is a need to find agreement as to what counts “as education, as opposed perhaps to training, or indoctrination, or brainwashing, or socialisation, or just any kind of change in the individual client or students” (p. 256). This suggestion gains importance in a values education context, where the transmission of values may become indoctrination when it is associated with passivity on the part of the receiver (Haydon, 1997). Indoctrination in this sense can be understood as “any process which leaves people accepting certain ideas which they are incapable of subjecting to any rational assessment” (Haydon, 1997, p. 121). This concept of indoctrination is refuted by Allen (1975), who points out that “education in its Latin root means “to bring forth”, to bring forth alternatives for reflective inquiry” (p. 1). He explains that the teachers’ task in this understanding of education is to facilitate students’ reflective inquiry, while students themselves are expected to actively “discern the implications of different values and ways of living” in order to make their own decisions and choices, rather than being a “receptacle for the teachers’ thoughts” (p. 1).

A definition of values education “refers to any explicit and/or implicit school-based activity to promote student understanding and knowledge of values, and to inculcate the skills and dispositions of students so they can enact particular values as individuals and as members of the wider community” (DEST, 2003, p. 2). Values education can also be explained in terms of its capacity to address a range of children’s developmental needs, including their social, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, cultural, and physical needs, with particular reference to their inner worlds - their dispositions, emotions, feelings, and thoughts - which lead them to act or respond in a certain way to particular situations

and environments. Seshadri (1998) defines values education as a “planned educational action aimed at the development of proper attitudes, values, emotions and behaviour patterns of the learners” that cover “all aspects of personality development – intellectual, social, moral, aesthetic and spiritual” (p. 45). More recent understanding of values education seems to endorse this view highlighting the significance of values education for children’s holistic development (see Lovat, 2011; Lovat, Clement, Dally, & Toomey, 2011). The latest studies present values education as a pedagogical imperative for student achievement and well-being (Lovat, 2010a; Lovat & Clement, 2008a; Lovat, Dally, Clement, & Toomey, 2011; Lovat, Toomey, & Clement, 2010). This study examines the usefulness and significance of this values education paradigm in the context of the non-formal education of children in India.

1.7. Social Work Connection to Non-Formal Education

Although non-formal education is an educational activity, engagement with non-formal education in India is often perceived to be a role of social activists. In fact, people with diverse professional backgrounds, including social work, health, law, and teaching, engage in the non-formal education of children. In some cases, engineers, doctors, and businessmen with philanthropic goals are also engaged in this work. Trained and qualified teachers, however, rarely choose a career path in non-formal education, as this area of education is often part of projects which end when funding runs out, and thus this path does not tend to enhance their career options. Moreover, those who teach in non-formal education are paid much less than their counterparts in formal education. Therefore, career preferences, job security, and better salaries draw trained and qualified teachers toward formal education.

Another aspect of this issue is that most of the children participating in non-formal education belong to marginalised communities and are largely from low castes, which carries a negative association. Consequently, caste-based discrimination is another reason why non-formal education is not attractive to many. Therefore, people who do engage in this field require a genuine concern for the wellbeing of children from marginalised communities and must be willing to work to promote their social, economic, and educational development.

Engaging effectively in non-formal education requires having the empathy to work with disadvantaged children and their communities, and a commitment to anti-oppressive and anti-discriminatory practices. Social workers generally have skills uniquely suited to the non-formal education context, to advocate for effective services, and to provide leadership in working for the empowerment of weaker sectors of society. These skills stem from their training to better society by engaging with marginalised and disadvantaged groups and communities in myriad ways, including working with slum communities, street children, victims of violence, homeless people, and the economically poor, and to develop a trusting and respectful relationship with these groups.

Social work was earlier known for its charitable and benevolent efforts which were carried out without any remuneration and often by people without any professional training. However, the field has evolved into a legitimate profession which empowers individuals, families, groups, and communities to determine and chose their goals and desired changes in lives. Today, many people hold a bachelor's or master's degree in social work and these trained professionals are the largest group among those who engage in non-formal education of children in India.

Social workers' involvement in non-formal education is not merely an educational intervention but a strategic engagement which aims for the holistic development and empowerment of marginalised communities. The emergence of the non-governmental organisation (NGO) sector has given social workers tremendous opportunities to conduct organised and systematic work with marginalised groups and communities in various ways, including socioeconomic development, advocacy, human rights awareness and promotion, gender sensitisation and the empowerment of women, the political empowerment of weaker sectors of society, and so on.

For sustainable development and the empowerment of marginalised communities, education is an absolute necessity. For so long, ignorance and illiteracy have kept marginalised communities in the clutches of exploitation, oppression, and underdevelopment. Since a large majority of children from these communities are out of school and receive no education, social workers endeavour to promote non-formal education. Governmental support for non-formal education has provided a good deal of motivation for social workers to engage in this system of education. Some have formed their own NGOs for this purpose, and some others have become members of a team of provider agencies. Still others have worked at the grassroots level to raise awareness and establish non-formal education centres. Some social workers became non-formal education trainers after gaining sufficient experience by working in the field. All these efforts are aimed at developing a new generation of educated people from the marginalised communities, an issue which will be discussed further in chapters two and six. My point here is that social workers recognise the importance of education to children's overall development and to the empowerment of marginalised communities, and thus they have engaged in the non-formal education of children.

Collaborative work among non-formal pedagogues has resulted in many remarkable achievements, including producing locally and culturally relevant curriculum and textbooks. However, critical research findings on educational issues which are available in the formal education system have not always found their way into non-formal pedagogical practices. For example, the concept of values education has not received sufficient attention in the pedagogy of non-formal education, despite worldwide recognition of its importance in the lives of children. This may be because non-formal pedagogues are generally from professions other than teaching and thus lack updated knowledge on educational issues. Mainstream educationists seldom engage in or contribute to non-formal education, so non-formal pedagogues need to make non-formal education more relevant and rewarding to children by incorporating critical research findings on educational issues into their work. Therefore, it is important to examine the significance of values education perspectives in the non-formal education of children.

I am a trained social worker who has significant experience in non-formal education. This study is my journey to explore values education and its pedagogical imperative for the non-formal education of children. I believe this study will contribute to increased effectiveness in the planning and implementation of the non-formal education of children in India. Educating children is essential for the development and empowerment of marginalised communities, and this study has significant implications for that area of social work practice, which I will discuss in the concluding chapter.

1.8. Potential Significance of the Study

Formal and non-formal education practices are not two distinctive modes competing against each other, as some may believe; they are, rather, modes that can complement and enhance each other's particular roles in education. Both have emerged as unique

modes of teaching and learning with a broader view to addressing the unique educational needs of people in differing ways, and in dissimilar environments and circumstances. Formal education, for example, is a system that offers education in a stable environment through institution-based and time-bound mechanisms. Its organised and often somewhat inflexible syllabus and curriculum offer a wide range of educational opportunities in a sustained manner. Currently, formal education is the largest and most desired system of education in the world. Non-formal education, on the other hand, is not strictly institution based, as it can be organised and conducted literally at any place where there is a congenial atmosphere. Flexibility is the cornerstone of this system and its flexibility in various aspects, such as “organization, timing and duration of teaching and learning, clientele groups, age group of learners, contents, methodology of instruction and evaluation procedure” (Mitra, 2007, p. 2) make non-formal education unique. While a formal system of education can remain largely inaccessible to certain sectors of society for a range of reasons, such as economic constraints, unfavourable selection criteria or entry requirements, long-distance travel coupled with lack of commuting facilities, and a lack of educational awareness among certain communities, and so on, a non-formal system is able to reach out to all who may have missed out on a formal education. The aspects of flexibility mentioned above enable this system to reach out to those who remain outside the boundaries of the formal education system.

This study, therefore, is not about a formal versus non-formal system of education. It is also not merely about the advantages or importance of non-formal education to a certain sector of society. It is about the profound role that a non-formal system and approach to education can play in transforming the life chances of a vast number of children whose starting point in life, both socially and educationally, is deficit laden. It is also about the

profound role that values education can play for the holistic development of children participating in non-formal education.

What is unique about this research is that, according to the evidence available, it is a pioneering study to examine the integration of values education in the non-formal education of children. In that sense, it is a pioneering work. Furthermore, non-formal education is relatively under-researched relative to other systems such as formal education. This research, therefore, makes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge. Although the study focuses on India, children in many countries currently participate in non-formal education, hence this study has international significance. Findings of the study help education policy makers and planners to incorporate values education perspectives in a planned and systematic manner.

1.9. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into Part One, with four chapters and Part Two, with three chapters, in order to present the work in a simple, straightforward fashion. Part One introduces the research topic and purpose, explains the background and significance of the study, explains critical concepts and definitions, and examines the methodological aspects of the study. Part Two presents the analysis and discussion of field data, and the researcher's conclusions and recommendations. The chief contents of each chapter are as follows:

Discussions about the topic and purpose of the research are introduced in Chapter One and the background of the study is also presented. Four research questions, which provide a focus for the work, are listed. The potential significance of the study is also presented. The structure of the thesis is explained in terms of the content of the chapters.

A discussion of the concept and history of non-formal education and significant definitional issues associated with this concept are the content of Chapter One. The heterogeneous nature of non-formal education and the changes occurring in the delivery of formal education are examined in order to highlight the dilemmas in the conceptualisation of non-formal education. Relevant discourses on formal, non-formal, and informal systems of education are presented to demonstrate the major discussions on the conceptualisation of these terms, and to furnish a working definition of non-formal education for the purpose of this study. India's formal institution based system of education and its delivery mode are examined in order to locate the position and significance of a non-formal system of education for children.

What is the potential of values education to enhance the essential work of the non-formal education of children? Drawing on relevant literature in the field, a convincing case for integrating values education in non-formal education will be established in Chapter Three. It also explores the relevance and applicability of values education in non-formal education of children, which demonstrates the feasibility of its implementation and its potential to produce constructive outcomes for children. The chapter also demonstrates the suitability of the latest research knowledge, which makes values education a pedagogical imperative in the non-formal education of children in India.

The methodological approaches that guide the execution of the research study are addressed in Chapter Four. Research questions form the major guiding point for its planning and implementation. The distinctiveness of the study will be explained in terms of the unique population under study. The rationale for doing a qualitative study will be explained by highlighting its advantages for the study, as will the grounds for

utilising an interpretive approach to explicate the data analysis. The study involved six months of data collection in one of the states in India, using qualitative tools such as semi-structured individual interviews with 33 adult participants and focus group interviews with 89 children. Drawing on insights from relevant literature, this chapter will demonstrate the logic and soundness of site selection, sampling, the interview process and methodology. Various ethical aspects of the study will also be examined and addressed, particularly those that arise from conducting a study involving young children. The study employs content analysis to analyse the field data, and this chapter discusses the advantages of this research technique. The final part of the chapter examines the advantages of a computer-assisted analysis, which the study uses in the form of the NVivo 9 qualitative data analysis software.

The focal point of Chapter Five is an analysis and discussion of field data pertaining to the general educational atmosphere in India's government schools, and the current state of the country's non-formal education. The chapter also highlights the reasons why many children from disadvantaged communities remain out of school and do not participate in formal school education. The outcome of the analysis demonstrates whether there is a need to continue non-formal education. The views of children who participate in non-formal education are also included.

The field data analysed in Chapter Six concerns two important research issues: the moral and philosophical underpinnings of the non-formal education of children in India; and the integration of values education in non-formal education by non-formal education providers. The moral perspectives of the members of the leadership team of agencies, which run non-formal education centres, are explored to determine possible links between their moral perspectives and the way they perceive values education.

Analysis of the field data regarding the integration of values education by experienced non-formal education workers reveals how they conceptualise values education, what their approaches are toward it, what importance they give it in terms of the development of children, and what the challenges are to effectively integrate values education in non-formal education.

Chapter Seven is the final chapter. It provides an overview of the study's major findings and discusses how they answer the research questions. Some critical considerations of the study are presented. Implications of the findings for major stakeholders are discussed and my own recommendations are presented. The chapter also proposes potential areas for future investigation.

1.10. Use of EndNote Software Programme

Proper citation and referencing are critical elements in writing scholarly works, including doctoral theses (see C. M. Smith & Baker, 2007). It is also ethically important to acknowledge other authors whose work influences or shapes the ideas that are developed in the writing. As the sixth edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (see American Psychological Association, 2009) explains, there are ethical and legal principles “designed to ensure the integrity of scientific knowledge and to protect the intellectual property rights of others,” and authors are “expected to give credit to others for their prior work when it is quoted or paraphrased” (pp. 15-16). Moreover, failing to acknowledge others' work is plagiarism (American Psychological Association, 2009).

Accurate citation and referencing consume time and test the patience of the writer, and therefore, there are now some software programmes, such as EndNote, Reference Manager, and ProCite, all of which function as citation and reference managers (C. M.

Smith & Baker, 2007) that help writers by “(i) maintaining a database of references; (ii) automating the collection and organisation of citations from databases; (iii) inserting and formatting citations and bibliographies into word processing; (iv) automatically formatting and reformatting references into particular styles . . . (v) and outputting the information to separate files for interchange or printing” (Evans, n.d.b., in Smith & Baker, 2007, p. 157).

This research study uses the EndNote software programme for citations and references, and the American Psychological Association, sixth edition, for the style of formatting; the software includes this formatting style. A significant advantage of this software is that it allows citation and builds the reference list while the thesis is being written.

1.11. Conclusion

The circumstances that gave rise to this research study and the research context, topic, and purpose were discussed in this chapter. A values education paradigm has been postulated as the theoretical frame work for the study, and its definitional issues have been introduced. Moreover, the potential significance and uniqueness of the study were explained. A brief summary of the thesis contents and of each chapter were also presented.

I now turn to Chapter Two to undertake a review of relevant literature on non-formal education.

CHAPTER TWO

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter the relevant literature on non-formal education will be reviewed. I will begin by discussing some pertinent issues concerning the history, concept, and definition of non-formal education. This discussion locates non-formal education in an international context. I will then examine India's general educational atmosphere, the educational structure, the types of schools children attend, and other important factors, such as economic conditions, caste, and gender, that negatively impact on children's education. An appreciation of these is important to understand the nature and significance of non-formal education in an Indian context. Of the various types of schools, particular attention is paid in this study to formal government schools, because a large majority of poor, marginalised children in India turn to them as well as non-formal centres to receive an education. The quality of education in these government schools, particularly at the elementary level, is also examined. This chapter concludes by highlighting the position and significance of non-formal education in India's broader educational landscape.

2.2. Non-Formal Education: Historical Perspectives

Proponents of non-formal education claim it to be the original practice of education, and that formal institution-based education is a later development. The history of non-formal education can be traced back several centuries, and even to ancient times (see Ambasht, 1992). The practice of teaching and learning at a *Gurukul*, a place where students lived with an individual teacher for the purpose of learning (P. R. Rao, 1997), is an example of non-formal education in ancient India. Socrates and Jesus, two of the

great teachers of all times, are also said to have used non-formal ways of teaching; Jesus, for example, taught through parables wherever his audience happened to be, while Socrates taught in the Athenian market-place (Townsend Coles, 1982). Examples of Buddha's teaching in the Eastern tradition also give weight to such arguments, as he addressed his followers while sitting under a Banyan tree. Acknowledgement of these men as great teachers is seldom contested. Carr (2003a), for example, cites Socrates, Jesus, and Buddha as great teachers in the educational sense.

Brubacher (1947) presents the historical development of institutionalised formal education. He argues that an institutionalised system of formal education was required to accommodate the increasingly complex wealth of knowledge and cultural heritage that the non-formal education practices, which had been carried on primarily through oral traditions, could not deal with, especially at a time when the transition from oral to written history was taking place. However, non-formal education was not completely discarded, as "it continued to exist through the ages into modern times, alongside formal education" in various forms, such as apprenticeship, adult education, and education for children out-of-school (Romi & Schmida, 2009, p. 262).

Non-formal teaching and learning practices are therefore believed to have existed throughout recorded history, since not all educational practices needed to be institutionally based; much has always been conducted outside formal structures. Formal schooling started taking shape only after the breakup of the monasteries in the late Middle Ages; until then, education was understood to be a lifelong process and to have flexibility in terms of the time and place of its conduct (Townsend Coles, 1982). Over the years, "schools as special institutions of learning have become the accepted way of imparting knowledge" (p. 1). Formal education not only spread to various parts

of the world after its appearance in the West; it also “sought to repress or just disregard existing teaching and learning customs and practices evident in the culture of the indigenous peoples” (Brennan, 1997, p. 187). These developments presumably led to the emergence of formal, institution-based teaching and learning as the dominant mode for imparting knowledge.

During the last three decades, non-formal education has gained significant recognition in many countries. Coombs and Ahmed’s (1974) “influential study on non-formal education” (Rose, 2009a, p. 219) is often cited as a major contribution that triggered a shift of focus from the formal to the non-formal sector in considering inclusive educational practices, especially for the disadvantaged and deprived sections of society which have traditionally been excluded from the dominant mode of education. Many countries, which the UNDP recognises as having low human development indicators and which receive development aid, have begun implementing non-formal education on a large scale (Rogers, 2005).

The expansion of non-formal education can be partially attributed to the need to meet the international commitment to provide Education for All by 2015, a goal set during the 2000 UNESCO World Conference held at Dakar, and partially to the recognition by many countries that a formal government education system alone cannot achieve the goal (Rose, 2009a). A significant reason that non-formal education has emerged in many countries is the failure of countries’ formal institution-based education systems to impart education to a vast majority of the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups (Adams, 1972; Chauhan, 2009; Rogers, 2005; Rose, 2009a).

Proponents of non-formal education observe its changing status with great enthusiasm and assume that it might become the dominant mode of education in the future (see

Romi & Schmida, 2009). The flexible nature of non-formal education is viewed as giving it the required momentum for further advancement. As Romi and Schmida (2009) argue, “Being less entrenched in theory and less institutionalized than formal education, NFE is able to change with changing educational challenges” (p. 266). A similar view was expressed more than three decades ago by Adams (1972), who said that non-formal education has greater flexibility in teaching and learning, more openness in making adjustments to changing needs or requirements, and more “equitable distribution of educational opportunities” (p. vii). In the past few years, the topic of non-formal education has assumed enormous significance in the policies and practices of many national and international agencies, as well as governments and educational institutions (see Hoppers, 2006). Governments and policy-makers have concluded that non-formal education is an essential element in achieving the international goals of Education for All (EFA) and Universal Elementary Education (UEE).

2.3. Non-Formal Education: Conceptual Issues

The concept of non-formal education has always been somewhat elusive in clarity, as it means different things to different people (Sukwianomb, 1987) and the field is very broad and diverse (Roakeina, 1987). There has been little consensus as to what constitutes non-formal education (Paulston, 1972). Adult education was its main focus for a long time (see Armstrong, 1984; Fordham, Poulton, & Randle, 1979; La Belle, 1986; Torres, 1990; Townsend Coles, 1982) until the elementary education of children became dominant in the practices and discourses of non-formal education in many countries (Rogers, 2005). Basic education, literacy programmes, and functional education are all various types of non-formal education and vocational training, such as the agricultural extension programme, was “numerically the strongest branch of non-

formal education in most third world countries” (Townsend Coles, 1982, p. 13). However, each of these functioned as a separate and unrelated activity, which obscured the nature and shape of non-formal education. For some, non-formal education became a substitute term for community education, continuing education, and lifelong learning (Wasuka, 1987). Other diverse activities are labelled non-formal education, including “health education, agricultural education and training for farmers, women’s group activities, income-generation activities, adult literacy classes, leisure time education for adults, second language teaching, AIDS awareness campaigns, and work-based training at worker and management levels” (Spronk, 1999, p. 1). These heterogeneous characteristics render it difficult to conceptualise non-formal education without heeding existing misunderstandings and obscurities.

Another aspect of the discussions on the concept of non-formal education is its negative representation as the form of education that is *not* formal. Townsend Coles (1982) calls the term “non-formal education” “unfortunately negative” (p. 9). Brennan (1997) acknowledges that the term is “confusing and limiting” (p. 186), while at the same time using the negative nature of the term as an essential feature of the concept by contrasting it with formal education. Others believe there is nothing wrong in the term being used negatively as it carries positive meaning, like the term non-violence, and is a “celebration of liberation, throwing off of the shackles of formality” [and] “freedom from everything that is not within a very restricted (and restrictive) set of walls” (Rogers, 2005, p. 4). However, any attempt to reach an independent conceptualization of non-formal education is likely to build ambiguity; consequently, some suggest that all attempts to define non-formal education must be avoided and that we should be content with ad hoc descriptions (see Bhola, 1983; Hamadache, 1991).

Perhaps due to the dilemmas encountered in conceptualising non-formal education separately from formal education, definitions of non-formal education often include accounts of formal and sometimes informal education as well (see Ambasht, 1992; Brennan, 1997; Fordham et al., 1979; Paulston, 1972; Romi & Schmida, 2009; Shohel & Howes, 2008) in order to provide a comparative study of these concepts. Such studies often present the “polarised characteristics of formal and non-formal education” (Fordham et al., 1979, p. 213). Simkins’ (1976, in Fordham et al., 1979, p. 213) ideal models for formal and non-formal education, which include five variables - purpose, timing, content, delivery system, and control - are presented below:

	Formal	Non-Formal
Purposes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long-term and general - Credential-based 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short-term and specific - Non-credential-based
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long cycle - Preparatory - Full-time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short cycle - Recurrent - Part-time
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Input-centred and standardised - Academic - Clientele determined by entry requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Output-centred and individualised - Practical - Entry Requirements determined by Clientele
Delivery System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institution-based - Isolated (from the socio-economic environment and from social action) - Rigidly structure - Teacher-centred - Resource-intensive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment-based - Community-related - Flexibly structured - Learner-centred - Resource-saving
Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External - Hierarchical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-governing - Democratic

Figure-2: Developed from the “Ideal type models of formal and non-formal education” by Simkins (1976, in Fordham et al., 1979m p. 213)

More or less similar views regarding the differences between formal and non-formal education exist, some with more variables and explanations added (see, for example, Paulston, 1972). Those understandings, however, emerged more than three decades ago at a time when adult education led the way in non-formal education.

The concept since then has undergone significant changes. As Rogers (2004) suggests, “today’s non-formal education in many contexts means alternative forms of primary schooling for out-of-school children - the street children of Nairobi, the girls excluded from schools in Pakistan, the dropouts of Botswana - rather than less formal learning programmes for adults” (p. 3). With these changes, came new comparisons of formal and non-formal education, with more generous and liberal characteristics attributed to the latter, less positive terms to the former. Rose (2009a, p. 221) presents the following terms commonly associated with both formal and non-formal education in the current literature, which she criticises as being an extreme view:

Formal	Non-Formal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State Provided - Conventional - Mainstream - Accountable to Ministry of Education - Teacher-centred - Homogenous - Rigid - Top-down - Over-crowded curriculum - Curriculum associated with modernisation - Hidden curriculum promotes silent exclusion - Exam-driven - Large class sizes - Centrally recruited teachers - Inefficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NGO provided - Alternative/complementary - Compensatory/supplementary - Accountable to civil society/community - Child-centred - Heterogeneous - Flexible/participatory - Bottom-up - Accelerated learning - Locally relevant curriculum - Girl-friendly - On-going, formative assessment - Small class sizes - Locally recruited teachers - Cost-effective

Figure-3: Developed from “Terms associated with formal and non-formal education” presented in Rose (2009a, p. 221)

Criticisms of those who portray non-formal education in a positive light point out that such portrayals stem from the need for non-formal education providers and their funding agencies to document positive achievements while ignoring problems and failures in order to protect future funding (see Molteno, Ogadhoh, Cain, & Crumpton, 2000). Although there is some validity to this criticism, the argument overlooks the fact

that most donor agencies undertake independent evaluations of their programmes to determine whether to continue funding them.

However, justifying the positive attributes of non-formal education or denying the less positive characteristics of formal education are not what really matters. What is most important is to acknowledge that both forms of education have made and continue to make valuable contributions in their respective ways. The two should attempt to learn from each other rather than to compete as the best of both formal and non-formal education need to be harnessed for the benefit of mankind. Dewey (1916/1966) suggests that individuals and society can benefit greatly from the advantages of both formal and non-formal education if they do not impose their unique identity on each other and if they can be united by breaking down the barriers that separate them. Although a complete amalgamation is not advisable, due to some distinct advantages, such as the flexibility of non-formal education, a reasonable give and take could be beneficial. In fact, recent developments in the field of formal education incorporate such a give and take; just as non-formal education has gone through various changes over the years, formal education has also attempted to adjust its delivery mode to the changing needs and demands of varied socio-political and economic conditions. As a result, the demarcation between formal and non-formal education has become increasingly vague (see Hoppers, 2006; Rogers, 2004) and their “frontiers are blurred” (Weyer, 2009, p. 260). For example, the NGO schools, schools run by non-government organisations (see Blum, 2009) or the NGO provision of education (see Rose, 2009a), and non-state provision of education (see Rose, 2009b) have considerably changed the concept of formal schooling.

Perhaps taking a leaf out of the book on successful non-formal education, many NGOs and other non-state providers have initiated small schools in rural areas to provide an education to economically disadvantaged children. Many of these schools can be found in rural India. They are small primary schools “with enrolment of 100 or less students, three or fewer teachers, and/or two or fewer all-weather classrooms” (Blum, 2009, p. 237). There has been a proliferation of similar small government schools, also in various rural areas (Blum, 2009). Like the non-formal education programmes for out-of-school children, small NGO schools often provide a free education, with assistance from funding agencies (Shukla & Joshi, 2008).

Although formal schools often follow a centralised curriculum, some small formal schools have started using a localised and culturally relevant curriculum, much like their counterparts in non-formal education. The Rishi Valley Institute for Educational Resources - a rural education centre - run by the Krishnamurti Foundation India, offers one example of “locally sensitive, child-centred multigrade teaching methodology”, which was later implemented in “12,000 government schools in 12 states” in India (Blum, 2009, p. 241). Another example is, The *Nali Kali* - or Joyful Learning initiative run by UNICEF in the rural Karnataka of South India - a child-centred, activity-based pedagogy used in classes 1-4 in some 4,000 government schools (Sriprakash, 2009).

Two other examples of the changing nature of formal education are outreach programmes conducted by formal private schools and the emergence of Low-Fee Private Schools (LFP). An important development which significantly challenges the traditional understanding of formal education is what Ashley (2006) calls private school outreach, an initiative by established private schools to reach out to local out-of-school children and provide free or low-fee non-formal education. “On the one hand, it appears

as a conventional private school providing fee-charging education to those who can afford to pay. On the other hand, it challenges the typical image of the elitist and exclusive private school by reaching out to the socially and economically disadvantaged” (p. 481). Another example of formal education adapting to the changing needs of the times are low-fee private schools that target the disadvantaged and are entirely self-financed through the very low fees they charge (Srivastava, 2006). There has been a mushrooming of such schools in India in recent years (see Goyal, 2009; Härmä, 2009; Shukla & Joshi, 2008; Srivastava, 2006, 2007), particularly in poor and rural areas (Härmä, 2009).

The appearance of the heterogeneous schools, many of them greatly resembling non-formal education centres in their methodology, has blurred the fading boundaries between the concepts of formal and non-formal education.

2.4. Definitional Issues: Formal, Informal and Non-Formal education

The concepts of formal, informal, and non-formal education are widely used in the official language today, despite these terms’ “lack of expediency and exactness” and despite their being “very abstract” (Illeris, 2009, p. 139). As a result, a study of any one of these three concepts requires at least a tangential discussion of the other two. The following discussion examines some of the major definitional issues associated with these three concepts.

Rogers (2004) argues that there is an unspoken understanding that everybody knows what formal education is and the term is therefore “not often discussed in any detail” (p. 76). Giving credence to this view is Rampal (2008), who identifies three “spaces” of participation in learning - formal, non-formal and informal. While non-formal is loosely described to be the space for “literacy, vocational education or religious schooling” and

informal as space “in everyday settings through participation in shared activities of ‘communities of practice’” (p. 318), no such qualities or descriptions have been applied to formal space, which suggests that everybody knows what formal education is.

Coombs and Ahmed (1974) offer a popular definition of formal education: “the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured ‘education system’, spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university” (p. 8). However, Rogers (2004) argues that defining formal education is not that simple and that definitions have included state influence and sponsorship, monopolistic claims, compulsory education, formal entitlement systems, etcetera. Accepting this definition would mean that “several forms of schools and colleges as well as private schools” would be excluded (Rogers, 2004, p. 77). For instance, Shukla and Joshi (2008) define private schools serving the people in the poorest sections of India as informal, which implies that state recognition must be a criterion to qualify as formal education.

As for informal education, there are a number of different views of the concept. Coombs and Ahmed’s (1974) definition is considered the classical one.

The lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights from daily experience and exposure to the environment – at home, at work, at play; from the example and attitudes of family and friends; from travel, reading newspapers and books; or by listening to the radio or viewing films or television. Generally, informal education is unorganised, unsystematic and even unintentional at times, yet it accounts for the great bulk of any person’s total lifetime – including that of a highly ‘schooled’ person (Coombs & Ahmed, 1974, p. 8).

Although there is wide agreement on this definition, the typology has some limitations. An editorial in the *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (2009) points out two concerns: first, that the term “informal education” is similar to others recently in use, such as “incidental learning” and “experiential learning”; and, second, that many have

“preferred the term informal *learning* to informal education” (p. 419). A literature review on the classification of formal, non-formal, and informal education conducted by Colley, Hodkinson, and Malcolm (2002) found that there were significant overlaps between non-formal and informal education and learning.

Use of the terms “non-formal learning” and “informal learning” as somewhat interchangeable generates considerable confusion. Eraut (2000) states:

Informal learning is often treated as a residual category to describe any kind of learning which does not take place within, or follow from, a formal organised learning programme or event. However, for those of us who believe that most human learning does not occur in formal contexts, the utility of such a catch-all label is not very great. Moreover, the term ‘informal’ is associated with so many other features of a situation – dress, discourse, behaviour, diminution of social differences, etc. – that its colloquial application as a descriptor of learning contexts may have little to do with learning per se. To avoid such confusion, we prefer to use the term ‘non-formal learning’ as the contrast to formal learning (p. 114).

It is probably this understanding of non-formal learning that prompted Pollard (2008) to conclude that the unconscious role-modelling and learning, which health care and social work students gain through their interactions with practitioners and other members of their inter-professional team, is non-formal learning, while planned or organised learning is formal. In contrast to this perspective, Bitgood (1988) argues that learning taking place while visiting and observing a museum and by interacting with the museum staff is informal learning. As observed in these two examples, although the process and nature of learning are the same in both, they are named differently by the two writers.

Another question raised by some is whether “informal learning can be called education at all” if it is not organised or planned (Rogers, 2004, p. 75). Simkins (1977), for example, is not in favour of applying the term “education” to informal activities and suggests that only formal and non-formal activities are educational. Contrary to this view, Carron and Carr-Hill (1991) look at the heterogeneity of non-formal education

and argue that formal and informal are the two “extremes” and “the appellation ‘non-formal’ is simply a device for labelling those activities outside the control or regulation of the bureaucratic school system” (p. 20). Bekerman and Silberman Keller (2003) compare and contrast informal education with formal education, while remaining silent about non-formal education and demonstrating how informal education differ from its “formal counterpart” (p. 252). They describe informal education as a profession which has developed from daily and oral practices in traditional societies into institutionalised and written practices in modern and postmodern societies. However, the way they construct notions of informal education makes one feel they are actually talking about non-formal education. For example, while comparing informal education with formal education they argue:

It differs in its emphasis on educational processes as opposed to the acquisition of disciplinary knowledge, in its leaning towards the use of multiple educational strategies which can be repeatedly adapted to the needs of participants; and in its student-centred approach and its premise that good education is that which trains one towards life rather than towards specific tasks and skills (p. 252).

Many of the features they attribute to informal education are much the same as those which characterise non-formal education (see, Simkins, 1976, in Fordham et al., 1979; Rose, 2009; Spronk, 1999). This confirms the view that “a few writers use the term ‘informal education’ to mean what others call ‘non-formal’ education” (Rogers, 2004, p. 76).

As for non-formal education, earlier definitions seem to have included all organised and systematic educational activities that happen outside the formal education system. A glance at the following definitions of non-formal education demonstrates this:

(a) Any organised educational activity outside the formal education system - whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader

activity - that is intended to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives (Coombs & Ahmed, 1973 in Fordham et al., 1979, p. 211).

(b) Non-formal education is here defined as structured, systematic, nonschool educational and training activities of relatively short duration in which sponsoring agencies seek concrete behavioural changes in fairly distinct target populations. It is, in sum, education that does not advance to a higher level of the hierarchical formal school system (Paulston, 1972, p. ix).

(c) Any organised learning activity outside the structure of the formal education system that is consciously aimed at meeting specific learning needs of particular sub-groups in the community - be they children, youth or adult (Mobilizing Human Resources: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1979, in Townsend Coles, 1982, p. xi).

(d) Any organized, systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups of the population (La Belle, 1986, in Torres, 1990, p. xviii).

The main features these definitions have in common fall into three main areas: (i) non-formal education is any educational activity that is organised and systematic; (ii) non-formal education is compared to formal education, and consequently, is defined as those educational activities that take place outside the formal education system; and, (iii) the target group of non-formal education can be any identifiable subgroup, irrespective of their age or gender.

These definitions generally hold true to the current understanding of non-formal education in general terms, however, some aspects may be contested because the concept itself has undergone some metamorphoses over the years and many countries have developed localised definitions. For example, adult education, which previously was the major area of non-formal education, is now increasingly referred to as lifelong learning (see Edwards, 2003; Smit, Den Oudendammer, Kats, & Van Lakerveld, 2009). Some argue that “the focus has shifted over the years away from the *advocacy* of adult education to the *implementation* of lifelong learning” (Griffin, 2006, p. 561). Others

claim that the term “lifelong learning” stems from related terms, such as lifelong education, recurrent education, and continuing education (Kallen, 1979), the usual terms generally associated with adult education (Schuller, 1999): “Of all the family of terms connected with adult learning, lifelong learning is today arguably the one commanding the most general recognition as a generic term covering policy and practice” (Schuller, p. 24). However, there is fear that the debate on lifelong learning might threaten the existing adult education structures (Edwards, 1997).

The reasons for the change to using “lifelong learning” are usually considered more a matter of ‘economic’ than ‘educational’ (see Edwards, 1997; Grace, 2009; Nicoll & Fejes, 2008; Tuinjnman & Schuller, 1999). Rubenson (2004, in Nicoll & Fejes, 2008) identifies three orientations to lifelong learning within the policy discussions, dating from the 1970s to the present: humanist, strong economist, and soft economist. Nicoll and Fejes (2008) argue that “the economic perspective is still conspicuous, and the market has a central responsibility, but civil society and the state have entered the arena to a higher degree within policy discourse” (p. 3). The economic reasons for the promotion of lifelong learning have thus been much highlighted and remain undisputed.

In light of these changes, the term “adult education” no longer occupies an important place in the discussions on lifelong learning and is increasingly becoming outdated. Griffin (2006) brings the issue to light convincingly by arguing that “the reasons why adult education has been superseded by lifelong learning are not in dispute, having to do with skills training for employment, global competition, neo-liberal politics and so on” (p. 563). A similar view is expressed by Edwards (2003), who argues that the term “lifelong learning” has been fabricated “to take account of changing economic, political and cultural practices” (p. 5). Lifelong learning has grown stronger in accordance with

the four pillars of education - learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be - as proposed by Jacques Delors in his 1996 report, *Learning: the treasure within* (Aspin & Chapman, 2007). Today, lifelong learning is an established educational activity which recognizes that “learning may stretch out across a lifetime” (Field, 2000, p. 1), although with an interesting paradox, which an editorial in the *International Journal of Lifelong Education* (2006), succinctly reveals: “In theory lifelong learning includes adult education in all its aspects - in practice it excludes some of them” (p. 546).

The recognition above is nonetheless no indication that lifelong learning is promoted everywhere; in fact, it is not. Nicoll and Fejes (2008) point out that lifelong learning has emerged primarily in the policies of post-industrial nations, such as the UK, Australia, Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Finland, Ireland, and the U.S., as well as within the policy frameworks of the European Commission (1996, 2000) and United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (1996, 1997). Nicoll and Fejes (2008) allege that “there is a sense that lifelong learning is being promoted as ‘the’ solution within a new policy rationality of capitalism, whereby those who do not conform will be left out of the next phase” (p. 2).

In other parts of the world that are poor and less developed, non-formal education is currently associated with the elementary education of children who are out of school and/or have never received any form of education (Rogers, 2004). In Bangladesh, for example, non-formal education is broadly understood as primary education for children who have never been to school or who are out of school, and the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee has been spearheading the advancement of primary education for rural Bangladeshi children through its non-formal education programmes (Lovell &

Fatema, 1989; Nath, 2002; Nath, Sylva, & Grimes, 1999; Shohel & Howes, 2008). Non-formal education in this case is understood to be a complement to formal education, the primary aim being to “prepare students to enter or re-enter the formal education sector” (Shohel & Howes, 2008, p. 293).

In India, non-formal education and vocational/adult education are generally considered two different categories in educational research (Khaparde, 2002). Furthermore, definitions of non-formal education tend to include only the education of children. For example, Ambasht (1992) defines non-formal education as “planned and deliberate educational activities or programmes for out-of-school children of 6-14 age groups, leading to achievement of learning outcomes comparable to that of formal elementary schools” (p. 77). In the Indian context, like that of Bangladesh, the primary objective of non-formal education is to prepare children to participate in mainstream formal schools. In both countries, a major feature of non-formal education is flexibility in teaching and learning. In Bangladesh, this flexibility enhances interactions between school and community, which in turn benefits student development (Shohel & Howes, 2008). In the Indian context, the flexible nature of non-formal education helps it to serve even the hardest to reach group of children.

This research study is concerned with the form of non-formal education which deals with the education of children. In India, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Non-Formal Education was established on a pilot basis in 1979 to cater to the educational needs of children who were out of school. This scheme was later developed into a large, systematic non-formal elementary education programme by the 1986 National Policy on Education (Lall, 2005). A major feature of the system was that it “involved voluntary organisations and offered training to local men and women to become instructors” (p.

4). The system was further endorsed by the 1992 National Policy on Education (Chauhan, 2009). Thus, non-formal education became a major force in making education available to a large number of children living in obstructive environments, including rural villages, remote or mountainous areas, and urban slums.

Major issues associated with the history, concept, and definition of non-formal education have now been discussed, and the way the term “non-formal education” is used in this research study has been explained. I will now examine general education in India including the educational structure, the types of schools, and the major factors that have a detrimental impact on children’s participation in formal education. This discussion serves to locate the position and significance of the non-formal education of children in India.



Picture 1: Instructors and children at a non-formal education centre in Bihar in 2006



Picture 2: Children are being taught at a non-formal education centre in Bihar in 2007



Picture 3: Children are being taught at a non-formal education centre in Bihar in 2007



Picture 4: An NFE Instructor checks the class work of a girl at an NFE centre in Bihar in 2007



Picture 5: Children at a non-formal education centre in Bihar in 2008



Picture 6: An instructor and children at a non-formal education centre in Bihar in 2008

2.5. Education in India: Major Historical Developments and Policy Initiatives

India has a long tradition of education dating back to ancient times (see Altekhar, 1944), including the *Gurukul* practices of teaching and learning and the oldest universities in the world, namely *Takshashila* and *Nalanda*, which were established in the sixth century BC and fifth century AD, respectively (see Chand & Arora, 2008). However, in earlier times, the caste system, which is believed to be nearly three thousand years old in India (Deshpande, 2000a), became a serious obstacle to education for a large number of low-caste people. Through the caste system, ancient Hindu society divided the population into four main categories - *Brahmins* (priests, teachers), *Kshatriyas* (warriors), *Vaisyas* (money lenders, traders), and *Sudras* (those who do the menial jobs) - which were “mutually exclusive, exhaustive, hereditary, endogamous, and occupation-specific” (Deshpande, 2000a, p. 322). Ancient Hindu religion sanctioned the caste system (Olcott, 1944), thereby making teaching and learning a divinely ordained

prerogative of the *Brahmins* while assigning menial works to the *Sudras*. *Brahmins* gradually gained supremacy “by gaining a monopoly of magic, learning, professional work and statecraft” (Olcott, 1944, p. 650) and imposing their supremacy on others; meanwhile, the *Sudras* became “untouchables” whose divinely ordained job was to do menial works, thus they were denied an education for several centuries. Changing one’s profession was not permitted in normal circumstances, although in times of distress the higher castes were allowed to perform the work of those in the immediate lower caste; however, no low castes were allowed to adopt the work of a higher caste (Rocher, 1975).

British rule and the arrival of missionaries gave the untouchables their first opportunities to get an education, beginning with passage of the Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 and subsequent establishment of schools (Nambissan, 1996). In order to advance the education of the untouchables, the British “established special schools for them because the public system, due to wholesale rejection by teachers and pupils’ parents, was unable to accommodate them” (Jaffrelot, 2006, p. 174). However, the British displayed a kind of double policy toward the education of untouchables, which crucially affected their early educational opportunities (Nambissan, 1996). Unable to completely withstand the continuous opposition and antagonism that higher caste Hindus showed toward untouchables, the British rulers showed “a liberal stance on the one hand and a tendency to compromise with dominant caste pressures on the other” (Nambissan, 1996, p. 1011).

The British promoted institution-based formal education in order to produce educated people to fulfil their administrative needs in India. They primarily wanted to strengthen and consolidate imperial rule over India, and they preferred to educate only those who

were suitable to them and could be useful in running the administration (Pande, 1985). As a result, school education was available only to a select few, and a vast number of people, mostly untouchables, remained uneducated. The obvious reasons for excluding untouchables from school education are explained in Ambedkar (1982) who quotes Mountstuart Elphinstone, an officer of the government of British India who later became governor of erstwhile Bombay. Elphinstone knew that the missionaries found “the lowest classes the best pupils” and yet he suggested that “we must be careful how we offer any special arrangement to men of that description . . . and it is to be feared that if our system of education first took root among them, it would never spread further, and we might find ourselves at the head of a new class superior to the rest in useful knowledge, but hated and despised by the castes to whom these new attainments would always induce us to prefer them” (p. 415).

Ever since India became independent, concerted efforts have been made by successive central and state governments to educate all its citizens (Chauhan, 2009). Khaparde (2002) explains that after India gained its freedom from British rule in 1947, a number of initiatives were set in motion to formulate education policy. These included the University Education Commission 1948-1949, the Secondary Education Commission 1952-1953, and the Education Commission 1964-1966. Khaparde singles out 1968, 1986, and 1992 as landmark years for the country’s formulation of education policy. He explains:

1968 educational policy led to the acceptance of a common structure of education throughout the country and the introduction of the 10+2+3 pattern of education, which has been implemented by the majority of the states in India. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) was based on an in-depth review of the whole gamut of the education sector and was formulated on the basis of national consensus... Changes were introduced in the NPE (1992) and a revised Programme of Action (1992) was adopted (pp. 23-24).

As noted earlier, in order to reach a wider group of children, India's National Policy on Education (1986, 1992) recommended that non-formal education be practiced as a substitute system for formal education, rather than being merely supplemental (see Chauhan, 2009). India's constitution under Article 45 of Directive Principles of State Policy envisions the provision of free and compulsory elementary education for all children until the age of 14 years (Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale, 2009; A. C. Mehta, 2002; J. P. Singh, 2002). The year 1960 was the original target date for realising this goal. However, only 28 per cent of India's population was found to be literate when the 1961 census was taken (J. P. Singh, 2002). In order to achieve the original goal, India's government initiated various programmes, such as Education for All, Universal Elementary Education, and Universal Primary Education and set specific target dates. So far, none of these goals has been achieved.

India ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in December 1992. Article 28 of the Convention states that the signatories "recognise the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular, make primary education compulsory and available free to all" (United Nations, 1989, p. 8). In 2002, in order to fulfil this commitment, the government of India made "free and compulsory elementary education a fundamental right of every child in the 6 to 14 year age group" through the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act (Chauhan, 2009, p. 232). In 2009, the Indian parliament passed the Right to Education Act, which came into force in April 2010. This act makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14. These are significant milestones in the history of education in India, all on the path to realising the much desired goal of universal elementary education. The government of India also

aims to ensure universal access to secondary education by 2017 (Kin Bing, Goldschmidt, Boscardin, & Sankar, 2009). Moreover, it established two specialised national-level institutions with a view to assist central and state governments in the preparation and implementation of various educational policies and programmes: the National Council of Educational Research and Training, and the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (see Khaparde, 2002). These institutions provide valuable advice to the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development and the various state governments.

2.6. Educational Structure in India

The education structure at the school level in India runs from pre-primary to Class Ten, plus two years of higher/senior secondary school followed by a three-year bachelor's degree at university. This pattern, which is more or less the same in the majority of states in India, is what Khaparde (2002) calls the 10+2+3 pattern of education. He illustrates the structure of education in India in the following way:

Elementary Education			Secondary Education	
Pre Primary	Primary Education (5 years)	Upper Primary (3 years)	Secondary (2 years)	Senior Secondary (Academic/ Vocational) (2 years)
	Non-Formal Centres	Non-Formal Centres	Open Schools	

Figure-4: Reproduced from the School Education Structure in India, by Khaparde (2002, p. 25)

Non-formal education is illustrated in the above table as running parallel to formal education. While formal school education has a clearly demarcated structure from pre-primary through to secondary education, non-formal education often does not have such strict demarcations. In fact, it generally functions under the broad heading of elementary education, and often includes multi-grade teaching in the early years. Open schools help

children participating in non-formal education to study beyond the primary stage. Formal school students who discontinued their studies at any stage of their elementary education are also able to study through open schools. Children who attend non-formal education also can be enrolled at any time in formal schools at any level, provided they have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge.

2.7. Types of Schools in India

There are four main types of formal schools in India: government schools, private aided schools, private unaided schools, and unrecognised private schools (Kingdon, 1996; Mehrotra, 2006; Shukla & Joshi, 2008). Private aided schools are owned and managed by private bodies but receive financial aid from the government. They are required to follow all the regulations applicable to government schools, and their teachers are appointed by the government. Private unaided schools are owned and managed entirely by private agencies and are free from government control. They generate their income through student fees, some of which are extremely high. These schools can be either recognised or not recognised by the government. Recognised private schools are those which “comply with a number of conditions laid down by government . . . and are required to provide information to government from time to time” (Shukla & Joshi, 2008, p. 37). Government recognition of private schools has certain important implications. First, it “confers a degree of legitimacy”; and second, it “entitles them to issue the transfer certificates needed by students to take admission into upper primary and higher classes”; and third, it makes them eligible “to receive some government provisions, including scholarships for certain categories of students” (Shukla & Joshi, 2008, p. 37). However, some stringent conditions laid down by the government discourage many private schools from seeking government recognition, such as paying teachers the high government prescribed minimum salaries (Kingdon, 1996). If the

schools are not recognised by the government, there are different problems. As Mehta (2005, in Shukla & Joshi, 2008) points out, for example, “examinations conducted in these schools are not recognised elsewhere” (p. 38).

The socioeconomic condition of a child’s family is a major factor in their choice of school. Schools at the high top end include unaided private English-medium schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education, the Council for the Indian Schools Certificate Examination, and the International Baccalaureate (IB), all of which offer internationally recognized syllabi and curricula (Lall, 2005). India’s affluent and elite people send their children to these schools. Aided private schools take students from the rich, middle-class and poor segments of society, as they allow concessions and provide scholarships for the poor. However, only a small proportion of poor children get to study at these schools. Low-fee private schools are used by the “poorest fee-paying population in any area . . . those poorer than these groups will be able to send their children only to government schools, or not educate them at all” (Shukla & Joshi, 2008, p. 41). Thus, on the bottom rung are the free government schools which provide education to the poorest of the poor (Lall, 2005).

2.8. Quality of Education in Government Schools

Generally, the quality of education in government schools is extremely poor (Chattopadhyay & Durdhawale, 2009; Robert Jenkins & Barr, 2006; Kingdon, 2007; Kumar, Priyam, & Saxena, 2001; Manjrekar, 2003; B. C. Mehta, 1996; Nambissan, 1996). The quality of the primary school education is abysmally low, and children remain barely literate even after going through five years of primary education (Robert Jenkins & Barr, 2006). The annual education report brought out by the website, Infochange Education, which highlights news and analysis on social justice and

development issues in India, makes the following startling revelation: “While more than 90% of Indian children in rural areas may be attending primary school, nearly half of them cannot read simple sentences or do simple math, according to a recent nationwide survey conducted in 485 rural districts across 28 of India’s 35 states and union territories” (Infochange Education, 2006).

Studies have also revealed that children’s educational achievement declines as they move from lower to higher classes in government schools (Kumar et al., 2001). By and large, children do not learn much even after spending several years in government schools. Kingdon (2007) presents the following report published by *Pratham*, a non-governmental organisation: “In 2006, 47 per cent of children who were in school and studying in grade 5 could not read the story text at grade 2 level of difficulty . . . in arithmetic, nearly 55 per cent of grade 5 and nearly 25 per cent of grade 8 children could not solve a simple division problem (three digits divided by one digit)” (p. 180). Nearly all schools in rural areas are government schools (Mehrotra, 2006), therefore, the poor quality of education in these schools is a serious concern.

Not only is the quality of education in government schools deplorably low, but the physical condition of these schools, the furniture, and the toilet and drinking water facilities are also unsatisfactory. Singh (2002) comments that “not only there is dearth of teaching materials and scientific instruments, but also most of the schools have no building of their own” (p. 478). Most government school buildings are badly maintained and remain in a dilapidated condition (Sridhar & Singh, 2002). Lacking good buildings, children take their lessons under shade trees (J. P. Singh, 2002; Sridhar & Singh, 2002). Most of the schools also lack even basic facilities, such as drinking water and toilets

(Kingdon, 2007; Manjrekar, 2003; Mehrotra, 2006; Nambissan, 1996; Tilak, 2004), which causes many children, particularly girls, to leave school education.

High teacher absenteeism at government schools, which is reported by several studies (see Kingdon, 2007; Kremer, Chaudhury, Rogers, Muralidharan, & Hammer, 2005; D. P. Singh & Singh, 2009; Sridhar & Singh, 2002) is a serious problem which also impedes the quality of education. A study conducted by Kremer et al. (2005) covering 20 Indian states used nationally representative data on teacher absence gathered from unannounced visits to primary schools. Rather than depending on head teachers' attendance logbooks, they undertook physical verification of the presence of teachers. They presented the shocking finding that "twenty-five percent of teachers were absent from school" and "only about half were teaching" at the time of their visits (p. 658). In some states, including Bihar and Jharkhand, teacher absenteeism is more than 40 percent (D. P. Singh & Singh, 2009).

There is evidence that the teachers in government schools generally engage in teaching activity only minimally in terms of both time and effort (Kingdon, 2007). Many government school teachers come late and leave early, "making an average school day last for only 3 hours" (Sridhar & Singh, 2002, p. 261). Even when they are present in the class room, teachers are likely not engaging in teaching activity. Findings from a study conducted by Drèze and Gazdar (1997 [Online: October 2011]) reports:

In fact, no active teaching was taking place in any of the fifteen sample schools at the time of our visit. At best, the teachers had given exercises to the pupils. When they were present at all, teachers in the sample schools were found to be engaged in one or more of the following activities: supervising children; playing cards; talking with each other; talking with visitors (other than ourselves!); reading comics, and preparing rolls for the forthcoming election of the management committee of a local credit co-operative (p. 30).

Similarly, findings from a survey conducted by the Probe Team (1999) report that no teaching activity was taking place in half of the schools at the time of the investigator's visit. Moreover, the report revealed that the "inactive teachers were found engaged in a variety of pastimes such as sipping tea, reading comics, or eating peanuts, when they were not just sitting idle" (p. 63). Despite these revelations, government teachers' salaries are very high in comparison to their counterparts in the low-fee private schools. In fact, private school teachers are paid merely "one-fifth of the salary of a public school teacher on average" (Kingdon, 2008, in Goyal, 2009, p. 316), and yet the quality of education in government schools is shockingly poor.

The emergence and rapid spread of low-fee private schools in poverty-ridden and rural areas of India is seen as a result of the dissatisfaction with the low quality of government schools. Tooley and Dixon (2003) point out that even poor parents opt to send their children to fee-charging private schools because the quality of education in these schools is perceived as being better than in government schools.

2.9. Detrimental Effects of Economic, Gender, and Caste Factors on the Education of Children

Economic Factor: Economic factors are important determinants in the education of children in the Indian context. For parents to send their children to school, certain factors such as family income, taste for education, availability and quality of schools, are important; economic returns to education also plays a major role, particularly for poorer sections of the population (Chaudhuri & Roy, 2009; Kingdon & Theopold, 2008). Moreover, the likelihood of getting an education depends largely on whether or not a child engages in paid work. Working children have only a very low chance to receive an education (Rajaram & Sunil, 2003, p. 137), as their parents will pressure

them to continue working and contribute to the family's meagre income. A significant number of children from poor households work for wages when they are only 12 years of age or even younger (Malik & Mohanty, 2009).

It is important to note that non-formal education in India often provides a flexible schedule for working children so they can get their education without jeopardising their work, which is something formal education does not bother to consider. This does not mean that non-formal education condones child labour; in fact, most non-formal education providers from the NGO sector have undertaken massive awareness programmes to educate the parents about the need for their children to get an education. Despite these efforts, many children work with their parents in the field or look after younger children at home so their mothers can do paid work during conventional hours. Some children earn money by rag-picking; others do so by grazing cattle, pigs, and water buffalo. Ambasht (1992), a leading proponent of non-formal education, comments about working children:

Ideally we would like all children to go to schools and receive proper education till they complete the elementary state. But we have seen that in the given socio-economic milieu, it has not been possible in spite of tremendous expansion of formal schools. Children are required to work, both in the home as well as in the labour market. While work in the parents' home by the child need to be shunned, child labour particularly under conditions of oppression and risk, need be banned. Steps have been taken in this regard with promulgation of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (No.6108) of 1986 . . . It must be emphasised that till child labour is eliminated and the lot of the poor sections of the community improves to the level that children are not required to work, NFE (non-formal education) would continue to be a dire necessity and it cannot be wished away (pp. 74,75).

In response to these circumstances, the Indian government has introduced the Mid Day Meal Programme, which provides a free lunch to children attending school, under the National Programme of Nutritional Support for Primary Education 1995, which is

intended to encourage children's participation in education (Drèze & Goyal, 2003). However, it has not yielded satisfactory results, as is evident in the large number of out-of-school children mentioned previously.

Gender Factor: There is abundant evidence of gender bias and the resultant educational disadvantages faced by girls (see Deshpande, 2007; Devi, 1992; Malik & Mohanty, 2009; McDougall, 2000; Pande, 1985; Shilpi & Sanwal, 2002; J. P. Singh, 2002). Female children are the most disadvantaged when it comes to education. Kingdon and Theopold (2008) state that the "cash cost of education may act as a barrier to education for the females in the poorest households" (p. 346). Chaudhuri and Roy (2008) point out similarly that the "existing empirical evidence suggests that parents tend to allocate fewer resources for the upbringing of the female children" (p. 220). When selecting the type of schools their children will attend, "more female students compared with male students go to public schools" (Goyal, 2009, p. 318). Moreover, if the number of children in a household is substantially big, girl children suffer the most when it comes to education (Rajaram & Sunil, 2003). Similarly, India has patrilineal marriage traditions in which sons stay in the family, because of which a son is generally privileged when it comes to education spending (Drèze & Sen, 2002).

Caste Factor: Although the original understanding of caste consisted of only four major categories - *Brahmins*, *Kshatriyas*, *Vaisyas*, and *Sudras* - there is no agreement today about what is called a caste as there are thousands of castes in the Indian context (Chauhan, 2008; Deshpande, 2000b). British rule actually strengthened the caste identities by their practice of enumerating people on the basis of their caste (Chauhan, 2008; Jaffrelot, 2006). In the current Indian context, Forward Castes, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Castes are the four major social strata (Chauhan,

2008); the lowest two are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe. “Caste and wealth are closely correlated” in the Indian context (Härmä, 2009, p. 155), and in most cases, the lower the caste, the poorer the household (Borooah, 2005). According to the planning commission of India, 80 percent of poor people in India belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Backward Classes (Government of India, 2007).

Subrahmanian (2005) has noted a huge gap in educational attainment between the lowest castes and the rest. This finding is consistent with Chauhan’s (2008) conclusion that, “even after 60 years of affirmative action, participation of the lower castes in higher education still does not match their share in the total population” (p. 217). Chaudhuri and Roy (2009) find that “the low-caste students are less likely to finish middle school than the high-caste students” (p. 227). Cummings (1996) comments that the value of education is appreciated traditionally by the Brahmin caste while other castes are not expected to be educated; and thus, many children do not participate in education. Most children from the lowest castes who do attend school often go to government schools, due to economic factors. Goyal’s (2009) study finds that “Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children form a greater share of the public school-going children” (p. 318).

2.10. Situating the Position and Significance of Non-Formal Education in India

The inability of formal school education to reach out to a substantial number of poor, marginalised children gives non-formal education an important position in the educational landscape of India. Non-formal education, with its characteristic flexibility, is a viable system for educating these excluded children. In the Indian educational context, therefore, non-formal education is a vital element.

However, non-formal education has its critics. Some perceive non-formal education as nothing but a gimmick for providing inexpensive and substandard education to poor and disadvantaged children. The “suspicion among many” is “that the NFE has been devised to get away with the failure of ensuring universal elementary schooling for all the children in the age group of 6-14” (Acharya, 1994). The *Handbook for Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education*, available on India’s Department of School Education and Literacy website, cites some of the findings of the Programme Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission of India. It points out that non-formal education has not been satisfactory because of “the notion that the alternate system is inferior, second rate and second grade, both qualitatively and quantitatively” (Government of India, n.d.b.). The fact that non-formal education has long been associated with educating the poor and marginalised sectors of society has helped detractors construct their disparaging arguments. Moreover, the “historically very different purposes of formal and non-formal education have strongly influenced lasting perceptions about the inferior status of NFE in the minds of policy-makers and the public” (Hoppers, 2006, p. 34). Consequently, many state governments in India have conveniently returned to a safe mode in pressing for the augmentation of formal public schools and school facilities to provide better educational outcomes, despite evidence that merely augmenting schools or facilities does not promote the enrolment or retention of children (see V. Ramachandran, 2003). Moreover, merely increasing resources does not necessarily improve the quality of education (Banerjee, Cole, Duflo, & Linden, 2007).

Another criticism finds similarities between non-formal education and approaches to literacy, and consequently questions the educational credibility of non-formal education (see Mukherjee, 1997). Associating non-formal education with literacy efforts can be

influenced by three things. First, some discourses offer varying approaches to literacy, such as those offered by Street (1984) and Freire (1978). Street examines a number of approaches to literacy under two broad models, 'autonomous' and 'ideological', whereas Freire sees the acquisition of literacy in a political context as involving an active process of consciousness rather than of passively acquiring content. Although Street (1984) attempts to provide a coherent perspective of various literacy practices across diverse cultures and points out some flawed models while offering more appropriate models, he seldom equates literacy with education. He limits the use of "the term 'literacy' as a shorthand for the social practices and conceptions of reading and writing" (p. 1). Freire's (1978) perspective on literacy is also intended to bring about a shift from the problem solving ideology underpinning many literacy programmes to a more radical concept of 'problematizing' social realities, which increases the consciousness of the person acquiring literacy and their ability to independently analyse the historical and social causes which originally gave rise to the problem.

A second reason for associating non-formal education with literacy concerns some non-formal education providers' demonstrated lack of knowledge, interest, and skill in conducting teaching and learning. Non-formal education has been burdened by certain providers who purportedly operate non-formal centres for financial gain. They run projects with little or no knowledge of non-formal education, leaving the children with no more than basic literacy skills even after attending the centre for several years. Although such practices are not common, they have the potential to engender false and misleading notions about non-formal education.

A third reason may be the endeavours promoting literacy among adults that have been undertaken by non-formal educational practitioners in the past (see Armstrong, 1984;

Fordham et al., 1979; La Belle, 1986; Street, 1984; Torres, 1990; Townsend Coles, 1982). As discussed previously, adult literacy has been a common aspect of non-formal education ever since it was initiated as a distinct mode of teaching and learning. As such, it continues to be practised in many countries today. In some cases, the non-formal education of children does not go beyond literacy, as findings in Nepal reveal (Rogers, 2005).

Nonetheless, among the various forms that non-formal education has assumed, it has taken a “reforming role” (Rogers, 2005, p. 216) in the elementary education of children. While India is a leading example of this, Bangladesh and Nigeria also offer convincing instances of non-formal education that contributes to the primary education of children (see Rogers, 2005). These are genuine attempts to provide a sound elementary education to poor, marginalised children where public school education has failed to address their educational needs. As discussed previously, Ambasht’s (1992) definition of Indian non-formal education clearly states that it aims to achieve learning competencies that are comparable to those in formal schools. Therefore, it may be wrong to generalise all forms of non-formal education as promoting literacy and nothing more.

Notwithstanding the above criticisms, the significance of non-formal education is evident in some important aspects. As pointed out earlier, historically, very few people from disadvantaged communities benefited from mainstream formal education. Moreover, urban-centric development made education a privilege of affluent urban dwellers, since schools were built primarily in prosperous urban areas, while the poor and those living in rural regions were left to find their own ways to fulfil their educational needs. There are too few schools available to these people within an easy distance, even for primary education (Nambissan, 1996). The need to travel long

distances to attend school literally halted the dreams many children had for their education, and particularly girls (Manjrekar, 2003). Parents understandably become apprehensive about the safety of their children if they have to walk through unfriendly areas to reach school. In the context of caste-based discrimination, the physical accessibility of a school has to take into consideration whether the institution is “socially accessible” (Nambissan, 1996, p. 1016). In several instances, low-caste children were not able to attend school because they had to walk through an upper-caste section of the village to reach it (Nambissan, 1996). Similarly, educational options for a large number of “working children” simply did not exist (Ambasht, 1992). In these contexts, the significance of non-formal education becomes more comprehensible.

Non-formal education has been able to serve the hardest-to-reach children to provide education in ways that were convenient in terms of time and place. However, it is also true that many government-funded and government-managed non-formal education centres did not function effectively for much the same reasons associated with the failure of government schools. However, this does not prove that a non-formal system of education is flawed, just as the failure of government public schools does not prove that the entire formal school education system is a failure. In reality, non-formal education creates enormous opportunities for children to flourish despite living in underprivileged and oppressive environments.

It may be the case, then, that the success of non-formal education is directly at odds with the poorly run government formal schools, as the example of *Lok Jumbish*, a significant non-formal education project in India, (Rogers, 2005, p. 221) suggests. It may seem bizarre that public schools have been a failure despite receiving governmental support and guidance and enjoying such facilities as all-weather structures and having

amply paid teaching staff, while non-formal education is often successful despite the lack of an all-weather structure and sufficient resources and with a poorly paid teaching staff. For example, Rogers' (2005) study finds that the formal schoolteacher's monthly salary is between Rs.4,000-6,000 while their counterparts in non-formal education received only Rs.200-400 per month, which ironically is "seen by the formal system as a threat" (p. 218). It is small wonder that state governments are increasingly closing down government-funded non-formal education centres, ostensibly giving into mostly distorted discourses which portray non-formal education as a malevolent vehicle for promoting inferior education. The truth may be that non-formal education has brought to light the inherent weaknesses in the government formal schools, and has performed a reforming role by offering alternative and innovative intervention models which challenge the defective practices of the state-run schools.

2.11. Conclusion

A range of relevant literature has been examined to discuss and clarify the concept of non-formal education. Although non-formal education can be traced back historically to ancient times, it has assumed several names and displayed a heterogeneous nature in the course of its development as a distinct mode of teaching and learning. This makes the conceptualisation of non-formal education somewhat complicated. There are also significant definitional issues associated with non-formal education, since there is considerable overlap in the use of the terms "non-formal" and "informal". In India, the present understanding of non-formal education is associated with the organised and planned education of children who are either out of school or have never been to school. Therefore, in this study, non-formal education is used in the sense it has been used by Ambasht (1992).

Understanding the position and significance of non-formal education in the Indian context requires some knowledge of the general historical developments and policy initiatives undertaken in India. For example, without some grasp of the disadvantages caused to some sectors of society by the practice of a centuries-old caste system, it would be hard to understand their continued failure in educational attainment. Therefore, the relevant literature dealing with major historical developments and policy initiatives in terms of India's general educational development were reviewed. India's educational structure and various types of schools were examined in order to compare them to the organisation of the non-formal system of education. Particular attention was paid to formal government schools, because government is the major education provider for a vast majority of poor, marginalised children, and particularly in rural areas. However, findings from the literature reveal that the quality of education in India's government schools is extremely poor.

As for children's participation in a formal school education, economic, caste, and gender factors have a significant detrimental impact. A large number of children remain out of school chiefly because of these factors. The failure of formal education to reach out to a large number of poor, marginalised children, coupled with the shockingly poor quality of education offered by government schools, make a non-formal system of education a necessary option. Without non-formal education, a large number of children have no choice but to remain uneducated.

Nevertheless, additional efforts are needed to make non-formal education more productive and rewarding for the children who participate in it. In the ensuing chapter I will discuss the imperative of values education in non-formal education and examine how values education can enhance its essential work.

CHAPTER THREE

THE VALUE OF VALUES EDUCATION

3.1. Introduction

What is the importance of incorporating values education into the non-formal education of children in India? The impetus for this arises from the myriad examples available in recent research that demonstrate the positive impact that values education can have on student achievement and on students' holistic development and well-being. Values education has been conceptualised as a pedagogical imperative that is significant to all educational settings. The review of literature demonstrates that incorporating values education in non-formal education is indeed an imperative, since several studies suggest that all educational activity is inherently moral and values laden by nature, and so incorporating pedagogy that is geared toward eliciting this inherent dimension can only improve the educational outcomes of the children engaged in non-formal education. I will also address the relevance and applicability of values education in non-formal education.

The definitional issues of values education were discussed in Chapter One. Therefore, I will now discuss some conceptual issues associated with the term and then explain the link between values education and non-formal education, as well as the rationale for values education integration in non-formal education.

3.2. Values Education: Conceptual Overview

Values education is important to all educational systems. School programmes associated with values education have been in existence for a very long time, particularly in schools with some religious affiliation (Aspin & Chapman, 2007). The concept of

values education is traceable back to the ancient times of Plato, Aristotle, and Confucius (Lovat, 2011b; Pring, 2010b). However, the view of values education as an “explicit focus of curriculum thinking and practising” is a relatively recent phenomenon (Pring, 2010b, p. v). The report of the 1972 UNESCO International Commission in 1972 recommended that “educational systems should encourage the promotion of the values of world peace, international understanding and unity of mankind” (Venkataiah, 1998, p. 9). The report of the UNESCO general conference held in 2005 in Paris referred to the importance of integrating common and agreed to values in the curricula of educational systems and the need to offer support to teachers engaged in values teaching (Pascoe, 2005). The repeated recommendations in the UNESCO reports were arguably a contributing factor in the increased focus on values education by nations across the world. Values education, under various names, is currently “either a mandated part of the curriculum, with teachers in training being required to prepare for teaching it, or is at least a focussed part of policy development” in several countries (Lovat et al., 2011, p. 85).

The concept of values education displays certain vagueness in international discourses, which constrain an international study of the subject. A possible reason for this is that “values in education are culturally bound” and “the relationship of values education to cultural context throws up particular challenges in attempting an international study” (Ling & Stephenson, 1998, p. 25). Values vary from culture to culture and can also be quite subjective, in the sense that certain values considered “good” in some societies may be unacceptable in others (Zajda, 2009). A second possible reason is that a number of related concepts with varying names have characteristics in common with values education, or they aim to elicit equivalent outcomes within different contexts. For example, Jones (2009) identifies 16 terms that represent various approaches to values

education - religious monopolism, values education (common values), character education, citizenship and civic education, confluent education, laissez faire, moral development (moral reasoning/just community), values clarification, caring community, cultural heritage, peace education, social action (action learning), discursive school, ethical inquiry (community of inquiry), values analysis, and values stimulation and suggests that “defining values education could occasion a study of its own” (p. 38). Halstead and Taylor (2000) point out similarly that values education is a broad term which encompasses civic and moral education, and is closely related to other terms such as “spiritual, moral, social and cultural development”, “education in the virtues”, “character education”, as well as “the development of attitudes and personal qualities” (pp. 69-70). Haydon (1997), while comparing the terms “moral education” and “values education”, points out that no “systematic distinction [exists] in [their] actual usage” (p. 119). A number of other studies also discuss the term “values education” as one variant or option among others, such as moral education, character education, ethics education, social emotional learning, and positive psychology, all of which denote educational endeavours that emphasise the need for a pedagogy and curriculum that foster the constructive and pro-social development of children and youth, including their character formation and academic achievement in values-rich learning environments (see Berkowitz, 2011; Lovat, 2010a). According to Lovat (2010a), each term may vary slightly in meaning and particular emphasis, but they all have a “common theme born of a growing belief that entering into the world of personal and societal values is a legitimate and increasingly important role for teachers and schools to play” (p. 3).

A recent development, however, constructs values education as an umbrella term for all the alternative terms. In this novel construct, the term is not merely one among several but is construed as a pedagogy known as “the new values education pedagogy” (see

Lovat et al., 2011). The publication of a research handbook, *International research handbook on values education and student well-being* (Lovat, Toomey & Clement, 2010), is what led to this novel conception of values education. It brought together contemporary scholars with expertise and knowledge in various related concepts, such as moral education, character education, citizenship education, ethics education, and so on, while also demonstrating “broad agreement” among them “that ‘values education’ is as good a title” that can “serve as an umbrella term for all the variants and the various species within them” (Lovat, 2011a, p. 145). Lovat et al. (2011) explain the new values education pedagogy as follows:

It is considered to be a principle of curriculum organization, a way of shaping the whole schooling experience, including the planning, managing and organising of the total school curriculum, the teaching and learning opportunities within it, and the entire way in which the school functions, especially in its inter-personal relationships. It is primarily a conception of values education as pedagogy, with effective teaching and learning being enhanced by the positive human relationships and explicit values oriented transactions that are forged within quality values-laden programmes. From a curriculum perspective it both helps to establish the ambience within which the interactions of teachers, students and knowledge are negotiated as well as the vehicle for the interaction. At its very centre is praxis: the informed, committed action that follows out of the negotiation (p. 86).

Values education as conceived in this chapter refers to this understanding of the concept, which recommends a pedagogical approach and encompasses all alternative terms. Although values education is discussed almost exclusively in the context of formal school education in this undertaking, the insights are transferable to non-formal education. The pedagogical imperative to include values education in non-formal education is discussed in reasonable detail later in this chapter.

Values education is understood as a pedagogical approach which recognises that all teaching environments are values-laden, not values neutral (Lovat, 2006); that education and teaching are inherently moral enterprises (Carr, 1996); that “the ultimate point of

learning is to be found in knowing oneself, and the consequent change of belief and behaviour, that inevitably follows” (Lovat, 2007, p. 6); and that education promotes children’s holistic development - personal, emotional, social, moral, spiritual and intellectual (Iyer, 2011; Lovat, 2011b; Seshadri, 1998; Venkataiah, 1998). In other words, it is a planned educational activity aimed at the integrated and total development of children. A pedagogical approach to values education reiterates the knowledge that all teachers have the responsibility to impart values to their students, irrespective of their disciplinary specialisation.

In Europe, the European Values Education project seeks to integrate agreeable values from its member countries. The project informs teachers at teacher training institutes and teachers and students at schools. European Values Education is interlinked with the Atlas of European Values, which is the result of the European Values Study, a long term research project initiated in the late 1970s by the European Value System Study Group, which provided the basis for the European Values Education project (European Values Education, 2011; Halman & Ebrary Academic Complete International Subscription Collection., 2008). The European Values Education project focuses on the four central themes of the Atlas of European Values - work, family, religion, and society (European Values Education, 2011), whereas the European Values Study project collects and supplies data which are vital for the effective implementation of values education. The overall aim of the European Values Education, as explained in the 2011 progress report, is elaborated in the following four goals it strives to achieve:

1. To make a contribution to the awareness and development of European citizenship of pupils, teachers, and teacher training students based on understanding and respect for human rights and democracy, and encouraging tolerance and respect for other peoples and cultures
2. To learn about differences and similarities in values between the European countries; to develop knowledge and understanding among young people and the educational staff of the diversity of European cultures and its value

3. To enhance the European dimension of teacher training
4. To contribute and stimulate communication and discussion about European values between pupils and between teacher training students.

(European Values Education, 2011, p. 6)

The European Values Education project is likely to put itself in conversation with the contributions of widely acknowledged Greek and German philosophical and educational traditions. Greece has a philosophical and educational tradition dating back to ancient times, and the contributions of eminent philosophers like Aristotle are acknowledged even today. For example, several researchers have proposed that the Aristotelian notion of *phronesis* can be utilised to improve education, particularly the teaching practice (see Noel, 1999). In “Nichomachean Ethics”, Aristotle defines *phronesis* as “a true and reasoned state of capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man” (Ross translation, 1984, in Noel, 1999, p. 278). A commonly accepted English translation of *phronesis* is “practical wisdom” (see Carr, 2003a; Noel, 1999; Wall, 2003). According to Carr (2003a), *phronesis* provides a better understanding of the “quality of professional reflection and practice” when faced with the “complex interplay of cognition and affect, judgement and sensibility” in the activity of teaching (p. 32). The German pedagogical term *Bildung* is also widely discussed in educational contexts (see Gur-ze’ev, 2002; Løvlie & Standish, 2002; Nordenbo, 2002; Peukert, 2002; Schneider, 2012). The notion of *Bildung* became prominent in German educational thought during the 18th century to characterise education as character formation (Nordenbo, 2003, in Backurst, 2011). According to Nordenbo (2002), the concept does not refer to “somebody or something that does something to somebody or something, but to an image - a model - of which somebody or something is to become an image or model” (p. 341). In terms of human actions, *Bildung* refers to “the natural shaping of people” (Schneider, 2012, p. 303). It can be roughly understood as “the formation of

human character that involves an evaluative dialogue or a discourse between self and Other, aimed at cultivating self-knowledge through an understanding of the lived world of other people” (Webb, 2006, p. 210). In education, the primary aim of *Bildung* is to “strengthen the student’s innate powers and character development” (Løvlie & Standish, 2002, p. 318). In the sense of “educating oneself” (Schneider, 2012, p. 302) *Bildung* is “a holistic concept in which individuals must perceive themselves in their totality, develop practical judgement and integrate their selves with the external world of other people, society and nature” (Webb, 2006, p. 210). In values education, this concept conveys a useful message for holistic individual development.

In the Indian context, the practice of values teaching can be traced back to ancient India (Nanda, 1997), although its explicit consideration in educational institutions began only after India gained independence from British rule (Venkataiah, 1998). As is the practice in many Western countries, the British government in India took a stance of strict religious neutrality (see Venkataiah, 1998). Independent India witnessed the formulation of a number of policies related to values education, and the government set up various commissions and committees to address the issue, all of which highlighted the importance and urgency of integrating values education into India’s educational system. Venkataiah (1998) gives the following details:

Moral and religious instruction from the elementary to the university stage was recommended by Sriprakasa Committee on Religious and Moral Education (1959). The committee on Emotional Integration (1961) recommended that ‘every student who takes up science should have some background in the humanities and should study a compulsory paper on Indian cultural heritage, just as students in humanities should have some knowledge in general science’ . . . The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) recommended instruction on moral, social, and spiritual values at all levels of study . . . Character-building as an object of education was stressed in the curriculum framed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training in 1975 . . . In 1981, the first National Moral Educational Conference was organised in our country . . . The National policy on education (1986) stressed the need for readjustments in the

curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values (pp. 9-10).

It is important to note here that the same National Policy on Education (1986, 1992) which gave non-formal education the thrust to undertake the elementary education of children also provided sound justification for incorporating values education into the general educational system. The policy clearly envisions that all educational systems, including the non-formal system, will integrate values education as a guiding principle.

The National Policy gives the following justification for values education:

The growing concern over the erosion of essential values and an increasing cynicism in society has brought to focus the need for readjustment in the curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the cultivation of social and moral values. (2) In our culturally plural society education should foster universal and eternal values oriented towards the unity and integration of our people. Such value education should help eliminate obscurantism, religious fanaticism, violence, superstition, and fatalisms. (3) Apart from this combative role value education has a profound positive content, based on our heritage, national goals and universal perceptions. It should lay primary emphasis on this aspect (Government of India, 1992, pp. 26-27) .

Furthermore, as the *Journal of School Social Work* (2011) points out, the Parliamentary Committee in India (1999) suggested that a “comprehensive programme of value-based education starting from the pre-primary level, embracing the entire spectrum of educational process” is necessary to “preserve, maintain and advance the position” of India in the world (Editorial, 2011, p. 2).

Financial assistance is available to both formal and non-formal sectors for undertaking programmes or projects in values education. A Central Scheme of Financial Assistance for Values in Education was implemented by the Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1987 (see Government of India, 2009). It allowed agencies and educational institutions to avail themselves of funding for values education for children and youth. This scheme was revised and extended to include non-formal education in

1990. It was further reformulated in 1992 under the name Scheme of Financial Assistance for Strengthening Culture and Values in Education. In 2003, a national programme, the Scheme of Financial Assistance for Strengthening Education in Human Values, was launched by the National Resource Centre for Value Education of the National Council for Education Research and Training under the Grants-in-Aid Scheme in Value Education of the Department of Education of the Ministry of Human Resource Development (see Bhattacharjee, 2011). It was based on the National Curriculum Framework 2000, which highlights the development of values such as truth, righteous conduct, peace, love, and non-violence. The National Council for Education Research and Training currently provides financial assistance for values education to the formal and non-formal sectors under the Scheme for Strengthening Education in Values. The National Curriculum Framework 2005, which emphasises that “goals of education encompass respect for human rights, justice, tolerance, cooperation, social responsibility and the respect for the cultural diversity in addition to a firm commitment to democracy and non-violent conflict resolution” (Government of India, 2009, p. 2), broadly underpins this scheme.

Although concerted efforts by the government brought out several initiatives in the form of committees, commissions, and policies, thereby highlighting the imperative of values education in educational systems, implementation of these initiatives is still an unmet need in many schools and other educational institutions. Venkataiah (1998) laments the fact that “lured by commercialism we follow money-making education ignoring man making education” (p. 10). Values education is a useful vehicle for constructive social transformation (N. Sharma, 2011), and its appropriate application in all forms of education is an imperative that should not wait.

3.3. What Connects Values Education to Non-Formal Education?

Certain constructs and discourses that victimise and blame children in the context of public school education lead to the establishment of a link between values education and non-formal education. For example, educational practices in India's public schools represent a scenario in which poor, disadvantaged children are seemingly blamed for whatever their educational situation is, rather than putting responsibility on the school system. This blame is implicit in the term "dropout" which is arbitrarily used in many contexts to suggest that children *quit* school when they *should* be at school, when in truth children have merely stopped going because of the unfavourable socioeconomic conditions that surround them and because of the dismal state of the many public schools where teaching and learning rarely take place. Rogers (2005) laments the fact that "children who have been unable to attend schools though no fault of their own are still constructed as 'drop outs', representing a transference of blame" (p. 218). The large number of children in India who have enthusiastically engaged in a non-formal education, approximately 6.8 million by 1995 (Rogers, 2005), and arguably another 20 million in the next 15 years should be an eye opener for those who put the blame on children.

Blaming the victim is by no means a new phenomenon in educational regimes. Its roots are firmly planted in much of the genetic and psychosocial research of the 20th century which, perhaps unwittingly, relied largely on Intelligent Quotient (IQ) tests that emphasised the role of genetics and families in determining educational outcomes, to the extent that it undermined the role of education in transforming life chances (see Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Jencks, 1972; Jencks & Brown, 1977; Jensen, 1968, 1973a, 1973b; McGue, Bouchard, Iacono, & Lykken, 1993; Plomin & Asbury, 2005; Scarr & Weinberg, 1978). Discussions on the issue are often subsumed in terms such as the

“heredity/environment debate” (Jencks & Brown, 1977, p. 169), “nature-nurture problem” (Jensen, 1968, p. 39), “nature-nurture controversy” and “heredity-environment problem” (Caspari, 1968, p. 43), and so forth.

Genetic research, which attempted to establish the importance of genetics on various behavioural patterns began to appear in the late 1960s (Plomin & Asbury, 2005). With the arrival on the scene of Arthur Jensen, there emerged a concept called “Jensenism”, which was “a biological and genetical view of human kind and human differences . . . [and] the bringing to bear of this genetic view point upon understanding the problems of education” (Biggs, 1978, p. 11). In reality, however, rather than leading to an understanding of the problems of education, Jensenism put the blame on the “victims”, those seemingly less intelligent, by claiming that their low IQ scores are influenced by what Jensen called the “heritability” of intelligence – in other words, that they are genetically predisposed to be less intelligent. While discussing heritability and teachability, Jensen argued that “given equal conditions, individuals will differ from one another, not because of differences in the external conditions but because of differences in the internal environment which is conditioned by genetic factors” (Jensen, 1973b, p. 399).

A similar view was expressed by Caspari (1968), who argued that the fundamental biological fact which gives unique genetic individuality to each human finds expression in differential reactions to both environmental and educational experiences. He even imagined that “it is possible to selectively breed for high intelligence” (Caspari, 1968, p. 52), owing to certain gene combinations or genotypes. In a similar vein, in his analysis of IQ scores, Jencks (1972) argued that “genotype explains about 45 percent of the variance in IQ scores, that environment explains about 35 percent, and that the

correlation between genotypes and environment explains the remaining 20 percent” (p. 315). Jensen’s (1973b) work noted that “genetic factors account for at least twice as much of the variation in IQs as environmental factors” (p. 392). He attributed 80 percent of the variance in IQs to genetic differences and argued that non-genetic factors account for only 20 percent.

McGue et al. (1993), look at whether the genetic influence wanes as a person grows older. They argue that the magnitude of genetic influence does not become any less as one grows up; on the contrary, it increases steadily from infancy all the way to adulthood. Others conclude that “there is nothing to be gained by sticking our heads in the sand and pretending that genetic differences do not exist” (Plomin & Asbury, 2005, p. 94). Attempts have also been made to explain family background and disadvantages in terms of genetic influences. For example, Scarr and Weinberg (1978) claim that “differences in family background that affect IQ are largely the result of genetic differences among parents, which affect their own status attainments and which are passed on genetically to their offspring” (p. 691). They further explain that the magnitude of the effect will increase over time. A survey by Snyderman and Rothman (1990) finds that over 90 percent of psychologists agree that IQ is at least partially heritable.

Several studies, therefore, have uncritically supported findings on IQ differences, and some have even made the incendiary suggestion that ethnic inequalities also can be attributed to IQ differences and genetic influences (see Herrnstein & Murray, 1994). Such studies indubitably fail to improve educational efforts for poor and disadvantaged communities, much less to advance understanding of the real educational problems. They help create false thinking and the divisive view that some people are intellectually

superior and some are inferior depending on the quality of their genes. Taking this scenario a step further, education does not have much chance to improve the genetically predisposed inferior human being. Many behavioural geneticists believe the socioeconomic problem of the disadvantaged are a function of their low IQ, which they inherited from their parents (Patterson, 1995). In other words, they are the cause of their educational and social state of affairs.

The question for consideration asks whether there are a lot of people who agree with such propositions. The answer appears to be no. According to Biggs (1978), “the nature-nurture controversy has generated more heat than light, both in psychological theory and when theory has been applied to education” (p. 17). Biggs is optimistic about the role of schooling in improving life chances and rejects education models based on genetic abilities. He does not, however, completely rule out the genetic argument, applying it instead to certain processes through which human beings obtain, store and deploy information. According to Biggs, such an approach provides models of education that are different from and more positive than models based on genetic abilities.

Examining various views on the nature-nurture debate, Pinker (2004) similarly concludes that the “questions are not about nature versus nurture” but “about nurture versus nurture: about what precisely are the nongenetic causes of personality and intelligence” (pp. 16-17). Pinker proposes a “holistic interactionism”, a concept which rejects the mutual exclusivity of nature and nurture, as well as any direct impact of genes on human behaviour. Constructs on ethnic inequalities in relation to IQ (see Herrnstein & Murray, 1994) which view certain ethnic groups as innately inferior have been aptly criticised for their bias (see Fraser, 1995). Patterson (1995) calls such work

not merely “reactionary” but “utterly racist” (p. 208) and argues that members of a society can vary in myriad ways that are influenced by factors such as gender, age, physical prowess, beauty, intelligence, and the like, and that identifying any one as being more important involves certain value judgements that are prone to change, depending on time and place. Shocked by the increasing number of studies which selectively manipulate data to construct arguments favouring genetic determinism, Lewontin (1976) asks: “How are we to explain the scandalous state of investigations in this field? It is hard to come to any other conclusion than that it is the result of the explicitly political position of the advocates of biological determinism” (p. 10). Kamin (1974) has also pointed out the politics of IQ tests and has convincingly demonstrated that no available data can prove that intelligence is heritable, hence he questions how so many psychologists can believe the opposite:

The I.Q. test in America, and the way in which we think about it, has been fostered by men committed to a particular social view. That view includes the belief that those on the bottom are genetically inferior victims of their own immutable defects. The consequence has been that the I.Q. test has served as an instrument of politics. The message of science is heard respectfully, particularly when the tidings it carries are soothing to the public conscience. There are few more soothing messages than those historically delivered by the I.Q. testers. The poor, the foreign-born and racial minorities were shown to be stupid. They were shown to have been born that way. The underprivileged are today demonstrated to be uneducable, a message as soothing to the public purse as to the public conscience (pp. 1-2).

Kamin adds that emphasising variations in IQ and attributing the differences to genetic factors is to assert that educational efforts and social processes cannot be effective, which in turn would mean that improving educational and social environments to increase IQ is futile.

The politics of the IQ test have indefatigably striven to demonstrate that a rather imaginary heritability of intelligence is real and genuine, thereby transferring blame, perhaps unwittingly, to those whose educational social circumstances are deficit laden. For several decades, this idea has propagated the notion that student failure is not the fault of the system but of genetics and families. The politics of dropouts currently making the rounds in India are constructs of a similar blame game, wherein disadvantaged children are shown to be errant. As Lewontin (1976) points out, the view that inequalities are as much a structural element as a social element may invite the wrath of governmental and educational agencies. The alternative, which appears to be more palatable, are blaming constructs that implicate poor and disadvantaged children and their families as the culprits. Such blame games may not be apparent in Indian society, which held not very long ago that education was a divinely ordained prerogative of the caste group which occupied the highest rung on the caste hierarchy (see Harrison, 1960).

The fact is that the majority of those in India who are deprived of education even today are in the lowest caste groups. While the West utilised science, genetic research and sophisticated arguments in constructing educational privilege for certain sections of their society, religious sentiments and caste divisions attributed to divine intervention were utilised in India to do the same. In both instances, the victims and their inherent nature were blamed for their deficit-laden state of affairs.

It is important to break the circuit of blame and to challenge the pessimism surrounding the willingness and ability of disadvantaged and marginalised children to get an education. Values education has the potential to break the circuit and to replace pessimism with hope, as the following discussion demonstrates.

A significant development that challenged the alleged impact of heritability and upbringing on the educational outcomes of children was the landmark Carnegie Report (1994) (see Lovat, 2007, 2010a, 2010b; Lovat & Clement, 2008a, 2008b; Lovat, Clement, Dally, & Toomey, 2010). An investigation by the Carnegie Corporation's Task Force on Learning found that viewpoints which attributed differences in the performance of schools to the inherent learning abilities of students were false and misleading. The Task Force further ascertained that heritage and upbringing were not certain determinants of student success or failure (Lovat, 2007). The report, which was based on solid evidence from research, put the ultimate responsibility for student achievement on schools and teachers (Lovat, 2007), thereby freeing the children from the blame game. Moreover, research in the neurosciences and various other fields supported the report, asserting that cognition, affect, and social dynamics are of equal importance in effective learning (Lovat, 2010a). According to Lovat (2010a), this "re-defined learning to incorporate into the notion of 'intellectual depth' matters of communicative competence, empathic character and self-reflection as being at least as significant to learning as the indisputably important technical skills of recall, description, analysis and synthesis" (p. 8). This realisation was a watershed moment in the emergence of certain pedagogical practices which came to be known as quality teaching (see Lovat, Clement et al., 2010).

The term "quality teaching" is said to have been coined by the teacher effectiveness research community (Clement, 2007). According to Lovat and Clement (2008b), quality teaching requires pedagogies that are contextually fitting and appropriate. In their view, the mere transmission and reception of knowledge does not fit in with a quality teaching regime. A congenial atmosphere is needed in which teachers and students can engage

actively, critically, and reflectively as co-learners. In their perspective, this type of pedagogical practice addresses the holistic development of children, including their “intellectual, social, emotional, moral, and spiritual” developmental needs (p. 2)

The concept of quality teaching meaningfully links the educational enterprise as such to values education, and vice versa (see Lovat, 2005, 2007, 2010b; Lovat & Clement, 2008a, 2008b). The nexus between quality teaching and values education is seen to be producing greater student achievement and holistic student development (Lovat, Clement et al., 2010) and is portrayed as having a double helix effect which suggests that the two are interdependent and inseparable (Lovat & Clement, 2008b; Toomey, 2007). Drawing on ample research in the field, Clement (2007) points out the decisive role that values play “in the creation of the ambience for quality teaching and student achievement” (p. 21) and, while analysing Alton-Lee’s (2003) synthesis of various evidence that supports quality teaching, he shows that “quality teaching is values-laden, particularly in relation to the learning climate in caring, inclusive, and cohesive learning communities” (p. 16). It is now a widely demonstrated finding from relevant educational research that values are an indispensable element of all educational endeavours, as they are vital to human flourishing and thus essential for the well-being of students (Davidson, Lickona, & Khmelkov, 2008). The point is that values lie at the heart of effective pedagogical practices and that such practices can result in more productive outcomes for children, particularly those at the deficit end of society, which is convincing evidence that values education must be part and parcel of any teaching and learning environment.

Important features of quality teaching, such as intellectual depth, relevance, and supportiveness, have the potential to become uncritically fixed formulas, as did their

predecessor objectives, outcomes, competencies, and intelligent quotient; and values education has the ability to keep quality teaching from being reduced to instrumentalist and mechanistic criteria (Clement, 2007; Lovat, 2010b; Lovat & Clement, 2008b). As Lovat (2010b) argues, a focus on values education will guard against the futility of measuring student achievement in instrumentalist terms, since factors determining achievement and their measurability can vary considerably; some are easily measured, some with difficulty, and some are not measurable at all even with the best available instruments.

Thus, quality teaching and values education are two sides of the same coin (Lovat, 2007) and “are cohering and coalescing for effective teaching and learning” (Lovat & Clement, 2008b, p. 13), thus giving students increased hope, while challenging the pessimism regarding student achievement. This indicates that effective teaching cannot ignore values education, as it is an important element of pedagogical practices. This is a major connection that can be made between values education and the pedagogical practices of non-formal education.

Despite this compelling argument, discussions on values education in non-formal education contexts are rare. This is understandable, given the pessimistic views and misgivings surrounding non-formal education. Discussions on values education often take place within the larger but somewhat exclusive domain of formal schooling. Two notable exceptions are the Brahma Kumaris, who are associated with the Living Values Education Programme, and Sathya Sai Education in Human Values, both of which have values education programmes in educational contexts outside the school (see Arweck, Nesbitt, & Jackson, 2005). The ensuing discussion on the rationale for incorporating values education in non-formal education, followed by an examination of the

pedagogical imperative of values education for non-formal education, demonstrates that considering values education in non-formal education contexts is a worthwhile enterprise.

3.4. Rationale for Integrating Values Education in Non-Formal Education

Generally, values education is considered important to counter the decline in desirable human values in the society (see Gandhi, 1993; Nanda, 1997) and consequently recommendations are made for schools to undertake values education seriously. The same can be applied to non-formal education too. Differences in the mode or system of educational enterprise do not necessarily preclude integrating values education in the pedagogical practices of non-formal education. After all, distinctions can also be found between education and schooling such as the following from Carr (2003b): “Schools are social institutions that occupy space and are appropriately organised and regulated, but education is not in and of itself any such thing and does not need any such institution to take place” (p. 255). The distinction that Carr makes supports the fact that what is applicable to school-based education in terms of values education should logically be applicable to non-formal education too, since education in general transcends institutional demarcations.

There are other important reasons to consider values education in non-formal education. First, no existing research on education or teaching or learning is seen to disconnect values education from non-formal education, nor is there any study which undermines or negates its application. Second, if student well-being is taken seriously, then values education is important for non-formal education. For example, there is an apparent hurry in non-formal education to equip children with subject knowledge and competency on the pretext that it is critical for mainstreaming. Depending too much on

subject knowledge can undermine the best interests of education, according to Dewey (1964) who cautioned against instrumentalist approaches to education. Lovat (2010b) paraphrases Dewey's view, suggesting that education needs to cater to "the cultivation of a mindset on the part of teachers and that was, at one and the same time, self-reflective and directed towards instilling reflectivity, inquiry and a capacity for moral judiciousness on the part of students" (Lovat, 2010b, p. 493). Hence, it is important for non-formal education to go beyond what is considered urgent in an instrumentalist sense to a broader view of education that includes values education. As discussed earlier, the new values education agenda, which is seen as a pedagogical rather than a moral imperative, views a values approach to learning as an unavoidable element of any learning environment that seeks to maximise student achievement and well-being (see Lovat, Toomey et al., 2010).

Third, and most important, the imperative nature of values education emanates not from what system or mode of education is in use but from the fact that education, as discussed previously in this chapter, is inherently a moral activity (Carr, 1996, 2003a), and no educational endeavour in its true sense is values free or values neutral but intrinsically values laden (Fraenkel, 1977; Lovat, 2005, 2006, 2010b; Lovat & Clement, 2008a; A. Smith, 2005). In other words, values are intrinsic to all activities which are considered educational (Pring, 2010a). In fact, values education goes on even when it is not consciously planned, and, as a result, its uncontrolled and unacknowledged effect can have a detrimental outcome, since the wrong values for life can be promoted by default (Hill, 1991). Non-formal education can in no way be an exception, since the fundamental aim of the non-formal education system, as explained in the present study, is to provide a supportive educational environment which addresses the holistic development of children. Being neglected, wittingly or unwittingly, by the formal

system of education, children on the margins are left with no options and are greatly disadvantaged. Values education can constructively inform non-formal education, thereby enhancing teacher performance and student achievement, in much the same way they do for formal education. Furthermore, interactions between the two essential components of non-formal education, namely teachers and students, can be given a more profitable directionality by the sensible application of values education and quality teaching perspectives. That is what makes values education a pedagogical imperative in non-formal education. I will explain it in more detail; however, I will first provide a brief examination of the applicability of values education in non-formal education.

3.5. Applicability of Values Education in the Non-Formal Education of Children

Some features of non-formal education enable it to incorporate values education in a hassle-free and meaningful manner. Non-formal education (a) is somewhat less entrenched in theory; (b) is less institutionalised; (c) its unique ‘flexibility’ allows greater freedom; and (d) it is generally community based in approach and execution.

3.5.1. Theory-Free Nature of Non-Formal Education: The non-formal education of children is a fairly under-researched and under-theorized education system. It may not be wrong to say that almost no theory is credited with informing this system; the Freirean theory of liberatory education comes closest. On the other hand, non-formal education can be understood to be free of theoretical entrenchment. Generally, opinions on theories and their applicability to practice often lack consensus among academics and practitioners of various professions (Wacker, 1998), which in a way suggests that while theories can be seen as valuable in informing effective practice, they cannot always be seen as fulfilling the same role. Some educational theorists believe that “a sound theoretical orientation assists us in providing rationales for and making decisions

about our pedagogical choices” (Chapman & Hobbel, 2010, p. xiii). In any case, non-formal education on the one hand lacks any theoretical underpinnings and thereby is wanting in potential insights and knowledge which may inform effective practice, while on the other hand it enjoys greater freedom in the fruitful exploration of new avenues. In other words, there is nothing putting restrictions on the integration of values education in non-formal education.

3.5.2. Non-Formal Education Is Less Institutionalised: Non-formal educational strategies and mechanisms are not guided by centralised or strict procedural guidelines and they are less regulatory in nature. Education providers enjoy greater freedom in functional terms. While funding agencies, both governmental and private, have certain control over implementation through the allocation of money and other resources, responsibility for educational matters rests largely with providers. While non-formal education might have its disadvantages, a significant positive is that it allows the providers to prudently explore advanced pedagogical practices and new research knowledge.

3.5.3. Unique Feature of Flexibility: Flexibility allows non-formal education to enjoy freedom in various important areas, including curriculum development and management, teacher recruitment and in-service training. While flexibility and freedom can cause serious repercussions due to the absence of accountability, they can also be viewed as providing a position of strength in enabling the use of the latest research findings and insights with ease. For instance, several studies depict the important role teachers play in effecting student improvement and student achievement, and their link to values education and quality teaching (see Clement, 2007). Ongoing in-service teacher training can be necessary to obtain the required result in this regard, but it can

be a hassle-free affair in non-formal education. Similarly, curriculum development, management, and decisions on implementation are generally very complex, and rigid institutional structures and policy guidelines can restrict teachers (Lovat & Smith, 2003), who “have a greater influence on the curriculum in practice” (Veugelers, 2000, p. 37). Significantly, it is in the context of strict procedural guidelines and institutional restrictions that teachers are viewed as “deliverers” of the curriculum, an inappropriate conception (see Pring, 2010a). The flexible nature of non-formal education may be an advantage in curriculum development and management, and in giving teachers helpful space for making decisions. Moreover, it may not be difficult for non-formal education to make “values an explicit and central part of the curriculum” (Toomey, 2007, p. 157), as its inherent flexibility allows more openness in making adjustments to changing needs and requirements.

3.5.4. Community-Based Approach: Members of the community whose children attend non-formal education often have an important say in the decision-making process, as well as in the selection of non-formal education centres, the timing of the programme, recruitment of teachers, and so on. Education centres are seldom situated outside the community; therefore, community members are constantly ‘in the know’ about the day-to-day operations. Some members form monitoring committees that oversee the functioning of the education centres. Teachers are also often recruited from within the community, which gives rise to unique pedagogical practices that exhibit values of care, trust, and respect that emanate from the shared values of the community. This generates a positive social environment and effective teacher-student relationship. As for teachers, their relationship with students is not merely professional or duty bound; it is in a realm of interaction that stems from the natural bond and brotherhood

of belonging to the same community and cultural setting. They know their pupils and their needs well, through their own and their shared experiences.

According to Carr (2005), no one can really teach anything well without knowing the learners' interests, capabilities, fears, likes, dislikes, and so on. He states that to teach well, teachers must know students "in a way that is perhaps more characteristic of friendship than of any formal professional association" (p. 270). Carr argues further that parents and friends can be the best teachers and that, "as loving parents, teachers may well have far more success in teaching aspects of science or art to their own children - not least, of course, where these are shared interests that have been cultivated over the course of a long, close and loving association - than they may have in the course of teaching these same matters to school pupils to whom they are less personally connected" (p. 270). Non-formal education offers a reasonable number of such experiences. More significantly, in a non-formal education project, children enjoy the support of the home environment, an important element which can have significant influence on student learning (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993). The community-based aspects of the pedagogical practices, and the resultant enriched teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships, are a distinctive strength in providing meaningful, non-formal education endeavours to cultivate morality. This is particularly true of cultural contexts wherein both pupils and their parents are rarely exposed to educational or other ventures that focus on the cultivation and fostering of sound human values.

Non-formal educational enterprises have the potential to play a pivotal role in developing an understanding of "the value of value", to borrow a term from Nietzsche (in Gray & Webb, 2010, p. 3), and in promoting a morally worthy life, particularly for members of communities whose life is deficit laden both socially and educationally. In

fact, values education perspectives gel well with non-formal education which, in its practices and approach, advocates for “equitable distribution of educational opportunities” (Adams, 1972, p. vii), which itself is a noble value.

Thus, having established a meaningful link between values education and non-formal education, I will now focus on the interactions between the two essential components of non-formal education - namely, the teachers and the students - and how values education becomes a pedagogical imperative in providing positive educational outcomes for children.

3.6. Values Education: A Pedagogical Imperative in Non-Formal Education

Education entails construction of knowledge, however, from the point of view of authentic intellectual achievement, knowledge construction cannot be seen as the mere retrieval of information (Newmann, Marks, & Gamoran, 1996). It requires, among other things, the ability to produce innovative new knowledge, the critical analysis of prior knowledge, the prudent application of knowledge to find solutions to problems or the ability for independent problem-solving; nothing can serve these aims more effectively than an authentic pedagogy which engages students at an adequate intellectual depth (Newmann et al., 1996). Earlier discussions have demonstrated that quality teaching and values education coalesce for effective pedagogical practices.

Effective pedagogical practices are essential for overall student well-being. Myriad examples support the view that the teachers’ role is of paramount importance in effecting greater student achievement and well-being. For example, Darling-Hammond (1996, 1998, 2000) and Darling-Hammond and Youngs (2002) place teachers’ subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge above a range of other variables, such as student demographics, teacher salaries, levels of expenditure, and class size as the most

important for student achievement. Studies by Alton-Lee (2003), Hattie (2004, 2005), and Rowe (2003, 2004) confirm that the teacher's role is more influential in student achievement than socioeconomic status, the effect of the school, gender differences, principals' leadership, and students' backgrounds . Buckingham (2003) argues similarly that "the single most important influence on student achievement is teacher quality" (p. 71) and advocates for having "good teachers" rather than having "lots of teachers" as it produces both fiscal and educational benefits.

In a similar vein, a study conducted to examine the relative impact of teachers on student achievement states that its findings "well document that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher" (Sanders, Wright, & Horn, 1997, p. 63). While student achievement is desirable, regarding student wellbeing as another achievement enhancer may be misleading, since well-being can be seen as having educational value of its own (see Hascher, 2008). I do not address this point, however, to examine the multiple interpretations of the term "well-being" (see Hill, 2010), but to show that, from a values education perspective, teachers must focus on students' overall development, including well-being, which involves the emotional experience, both positive and negative, that children have in educational contexts (Hascher, 2008). Teachers play a central role in this regard, as studies have shown that student emotions are generally influenced by the competence of their teachers (see Gläser-Zikuda & Fuß, 2008). These aspects of the role that teachers play in the holistic development of children clearly point to the need for effective pedagogical practices.

However, this leads to several questions. What is the teacher's role in the context of non-formal education? What kinds of interactions occur between teachers and students?

How can non-formal education benefit from values education perspectives to bring new meaning to its pedagogical practices? The study will now focus on these questions.

3.6.1. Teaching Staff: Pedagogical Implications

Several metaphors can be used to describe the role of teachers in discussions on teaching and learning. Clark (1978) points out a few found in the literature: a clinical information processor, a decision maker, a diagnostician, and a problem solver. Teachers in non-formal education settings are often called instructors rather than teachers. While it is understood that instructors are teachers (see Delbridge et al., 1997), they are not generally considered to belong to a professional body. Indeed, viewing education or teaching as a profession entails complex issues, including ethical norms and principles (see Carr, 2000). It is generally acknowledged that teachers belong to a professional body and that certain criteria must be met to be eligible for that body, such as meeting certain educational and professional qualifications. Teacher training, for example, aims to provide the necessary knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes required to meet the criteria. The term “instructor”, however, does not imply having met any such requirements. In theory, an instructor can be anyone who engages in the activity of instructing or teaching without having any association with a professional body. The particular circumstances surrounding non-formal education, coupled with its fairly unregulated nature, allows non-formal education providers to recruit any person they deem competent to do the job. These people often have only minimal educational qualifications, but are usually from the local community, are rooted in the culture of the children they teach, and, more significantly, are willing to teach for a meagre salary. Therefore, the term “instructor” may be appropriate in recognition of the educational and other qualifications that professional teachers have worked hard to earn.

The term “teaching”, however, has a wider and more complex meaning. According to Carr (2003a), there are three important issues associated with teaching: (a) that education does not necessarily involve teaching; (b) that all forms of teaching are not educational; and (c) that teaching is an educationally implicated notion. He points out that the term is used ambiguously by many and identifies three different uses: teaching as a practice, teaching as an occupation and profession that involves playing a ‘role’, and teaching as an activity. A teacher who is serious about education may try to promote “the ends of teaching *qua* education via the activity or process of teaching” (Carr, 2003a, p. 19). However, there may be cases in which the practice, role, and activity meanings of teaching may not go hand in hand. Carr cites a girl’s effort to teach her younger sister to tie her shoelace as aiming to teach a skill without being concerned with the practice of education or being a member of the teaching profession. According to Carr, the girl is a teacher in the activity sense but not in the role and practice sense. Similarly, a head teacher who fits the role sense of the term may only undertake administrative activities and seldom be occupied with teaching as an activity. He also points out that some practicing teachers may not really engage in teaching directly as they prefer to facilitate more self-directed learning, which allows students more creativity. He adds that some professional teachers only teach some skills and may not be interested in promoting education in the broader sense. For example, he cites a piano teacher who merely teaches the skill of playing the piano. Carr (2003a) concludes, therefore, that we need to look for good teaching in the content rather than in the form of teaching.

If non-formal education is serious about educating children, then instructors need to engage in teaching in the wider sense of the term which Carr (2003a) advocates, irrespective of whether they are members of the teaching profession in any technical

sense or have higher educational qualifications. Moreover, the formation of the children who come to non-formal education cannot be reduced to mere skills training. Therefore, values education in non-formal education is useful in helping instructors to become teachers who can engage students in adequate intellectual depth, while at the same time catering to their overall development, including well-being. Non-formal education providers are in an advantageous position, owing to its many salient features discussed previously, to employ values education and quality teaching perspectives in their training programmes. Shaped and formed within the frameworks of values education and quality teaching, these instructors will be better equipped to undertake their task appropriately. This will require trainers who are *au fait* with regard to values education. State-level and inter-education-provider level initiatives are required to mainstream values education perspectives in all aspects of education, and to help develop suitable trainers.

3.6.2. Curriculum: Pedagogical Implications

Non-governmental organisations that are providers of non-formal education have previously engaged in developing textbooks specifically for children who engage with this form of education. For example, Ghosh (1995) presents the example of *Unnayan*, an NGO in Calcutta, which produced a two-part primer in Bengali namely *Mojar Para Lekhar Khela* specifically for the 6-14 year old children of Unnayan's non-formal education centres located in the fringes of the city. In some cases, a number of education providers, including educationists, lawyers, teachers, and social workers who had been deeply involved in non-formal education affairs, gathered to discuss the curriculum requirements relative to the needs of the children who came to non-formal education. Such efforts might not have produced the best curriculum, but they did apparently produce a curriculum that was culturally and locally relevant. Textbooks

were produced that included examples and stories from the local culture, which enabled children to relate to their own customs, practices, values, and life experience. This is in contrast to the highly centralised and somewhat inflexible curriculum frameworks seen in formal schooling. There are disadvantages to having a highly top-down curriculum that is rigid and prescriptive in nature; in fact evidence suggests that “the expertly-developed material did not always render the desired result” (Cooney et al., 1985, p. 26). Moreover, a curriculum should not fail to recognise children’s varied environmental experiences (Dewey, 1938) or the particular socio-political and cultural contexts in which teaching and learning take place. The unique flexibility of non-formal education can be a significant advantage in developing curriculum that takes these experiences into account. As discussed previously, seeing values education as central to its curriculum would place non-formal education in an advantageous position.

The teacher’s role is crucial in delivering the aims of the curriculum. In non-formal education, it is common practice to place importance on instructors’ talents in singing, acting, drawing, and such other activities to help make teaching more interesting for the students and to keep them focussed on what is being taught. These talents are particularly important when dealing with children who are not habituated or oriented to education. However, it may be worth recalling the distinctions made by Robitaille (1981, p. 149) in terms of the “intended”, “implemented”, and “realized” goals of curriculum, because it can happen that what the children learn is not what the curriculum was aiming for. For example, most instructors place too much importance on subject knowledge, which can have detrimental effects and is not necessarily in the best interests of the children. If values education and quality teaching are concerns central to the curriculum and to instructor training, then such serious defects in pedagogical practices can be avoided to a great extent, first, because values education

perspectives in the curriculum can serve as a reminder of the need for quality teaching, and, second, because the positive focus of values education and quality teaching will have a transformational effect on the instructors.

3.6.3. Instructor-Student Interactions: Pedagogical Implications

Interaction between instructors and students arguably is the most important aspect of non-formal education, since the nature and quality of these interactions can significantly influence educational outcomes. Certain characteristics of the actual running of non-formal education make the interactions between instructors and students distinctive, as their nature differs considerably from those between teachers and students in formal schools. Unlike formal schooling, non-formal education often has no permanent structures; in most cases, education providers make temporary housing arrangements in the community. Education may take place in a community hall, in a rented house, or even in the open space under a tree, depending on the resources available. In the absence of a permanent structure or support staff, the instructor alone is responsible for creating an ambience conducive to education at the non-formal education centre and for managing administrative affairs.

Certain community-based aspects of non-formal education, such as instructors who live within the community and education centres that are located in the community, suggest a pre-existing bond between the instructor and students, since they have shared experiences of life in the community. Their shared experiences include stories of subjugation, marginalisation, exploitation, discrimination, and oppression inflicted on them by the dominant groups in a society that has long been stratified by caste. Theirs is a story of an ongoing struggle to resist and overcome these dehumanising experiences. Therefore, non-formal education reflects, wittingly or unwittingly, a certain pedagogical

practice that is akin to the liberatory education proposed by Freire (1970), who argued that “no pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption” (p. 39). Therefore, the pedagogical practices apparently have a liberatory effect which, in and through education, aims to impact in the form of positive change and bring upward social mobility to the lives of the children from these communities.

The role of the instructor at a non-formal education centre is crucial in achieving the desired results. The fact that meeting the instructor is the starting point for most of the children as they set out on an important journey in education makes the role of the instructor all the more critical. It is important that the children, and their parents, develop positive feelings toward education, consider it a worthwhile activity, and develop interest in pursuing education independently. Values education is of supreme importance in this context, particularly since evidence strongly suggests that it enhances the student-teacher relationship, as expressed in various forms such as a “rise in levels of politeness and courtesy, open friendliness, better manners, offers of help, and students being more kind and considerate” (Lovat, Toomey, Clement, Crotty, & Nielsen, 2009, p. 4), in addition to students’ greater academic achievement and well-being.

3.7. Conclusion

The holistic approach of values education can be considered a pedagogical imperative for non-formal education. The effective use of values education in non-formal education contexts not only can quell the pessimism surrounding its efficacy as a distinctive mode of education; it can also bring about constructive changes that result in improved

teacher performance, greater student achievement, and improved student development and well-being. In fact, the unregulated and flexible nature of non-formal education requires that values education be considered a non-negotiable aspect of its implementation, because the same features which may be an advantage for non-formal education in designing a research-based curriculum or effective pedagogies may also become a concern due to their potential to generate indolence and inactivity, which must be guarded against. While mechanisms such as monitoring and evaluation by funding agencies are in place to ensure accountability from the education providers, this is not enough to guarantee standard educational practice. Non-formal education must incorporate the latest research findings and insights to advance as an effective mode of education, and values education certainly falls into that category. The double impact of values education and quality teaching discussed in this chapter can greatly enhance non-formal educational efforts and guard against student or teacher apathy.

There need be no doubt about the relevance and validity of values education in non-formal education because the inherent nature of any educational activity is moral, and all teaching and learning activity is values laden, as evidence from various studies discussed in this chapter suggests. Moreover, the teacher's role in communicating and embodying various values is significant in all educational settings, including non-formal education. The teacher's relationship with children in terms of shaping educational outcomes is of paramount importance. Lovat (2005) has aptly summed up the formational and transformational power of values education and quality teaching:

The content and substance of Values Education has potential to go to the very heart of the power of quality teaching by focussing teacher attention on the feature of their professional practice that has most impact, namely the relationship of due care, mutual respect, fairness and positive modelling established with the student (p. 43).

Non-formal education must be structured within values education and quality teaching perspectives and frameworks. Curriculum development, teacher training, and the actual practice of teaching and learning all need to be informed and guided by values education perspectives in order for students to achieve optimal educational outcomes.

I have so far reviewed the relevant literature on two crucial concepts, namely, non-formal education and values education. The aim has been to demonstrate the nature, role, and significance of non-formal education in the Indian context. Attention will now focus on the methodological aspects of this study, which is the content of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I will explain the methodological aspects relevant to the undertaking of this qualitative study, which involves field work comprising semi-structured individual interviews with adult participants and focus group interviews with children.

The uniqueness of this study is highlighted by the study population - the members of the leadership teams of both governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in the running of non-formal education centres and the children participating in non-formal education. As explained in Chapter One, the vast majority of children participating in non-formal education belong to the most marginalised communities, including *Musahar*. I chose to collect field data at non-formal education centres operating among the marginalised communities in the Indian state of Bihar, where a significant number of centres are run for *Musahar* children. A majority of the respondents interviewed were running their centres in *Musahar* communities, and members of two focus groups were exclusively *Musahar* children. *Musahars* are the lowest and least literate caste (Joseph, 2007; Louis, 2002).

Musahars are mostly landless unskilled labourers. Some of the hamlets in *Musahar* communities consist of houses built under government schemes that are serviceable dwellings, while others have only shabbily built huts with thatch roofs. Joblessness and landlessness force them to keep pigs, which are relatively easy and affordable to maintain, as they feed on waste and even human excreta. Pigs often are allowed to live in the houses with humans. Many children from the *Musahar* community can be seen

grazing pigs around their hamlets. The sight may resemble shepherd children, but the fact that pigs are dirty and smelly make the children literally untouchable. Moreover, they are treated as such by the rest of the society and are not welcome at the schools. The majority of *Musahars* cannot read, write, or count, which makes them extremely vulnerable to exploitation. An example of this is that they are often paid much less than the going wage for the manual work they do (Joseph, 2007). Poverty often forces the children to work or to go for rag-picking. They may officially be enrolled in nearby schools, but they seldom stay beyond the midday meal, which is given for free under a government scheme.

In the present study I have conducted group interviews with 80 children in five focus groups, and 33 individual face-to-face interviews with members of the leadership team of agencies which provide non-formal education. The following discussion will explain the methodological aspects of this study.

4.2. Qualitative Study

Qualitative tools are powerful to gain understanding of the functioning of non-formal education and its mode of engagement with children in delivering education. Among the advantages qualitative tools bring to this study are the flexibility of open-ended components; the ability to gain information on the perspectives of significant non-formal education stakeholders; and the usefulness in building rapport and communication with the study participants, all of which make them powerful and useful (see Soteri-Proctor, 2010). The open-ended components of individual interviews and focus group interviews provided the flexibility and freedom to explore beyond the predefined set of questions and probes, and in the process provided the opportunity to identify unforeseen factors that could contribute to a better understanding of the subject

at hand, which would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, using quantitative tools.

The perspectives of the members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education were very useful, not only because they were well placed to understand the values education and non-formal education components of the study, but also because their subjective knowledge of the phenomena could provide a rich and reliable source of data; this was particularly important in light of the dearth of reliable and accessible data on non-formal education and the fact that it is a fairly under-researched concept. Qualitative study clearly gives importance to the views of the research participants and their frames of reference (see Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Schwandt, 2000), which enables the collection of rich data. In other words, qualitative study aims to elicit participants' in-depth responses to the questions and, by design, helps the researcher to collect abundant information about a phenomenon (Jackson, Drummond, & Camara, 2007). The importance and value of participants is articulated further in the suggestion that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). Therefore, the ability of qualitative tools to elicit information on the perspectives of members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education and students became a strongpoint for this study.

A quantitative study, on the other hand, would make it difficult to capture these perspectives because of its reliance on somewhat "remote, inferential empirical methods and materials" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 10). The use of semi-structured, open-ended individual and group interviews for the present study allowed me to build meaningful

rapport with the study participants. The importance of building rapport with respondents is seldom disputed; in fact, it is a necessary aspect of conducting interviews, particularly with children to ensure free and fearless participation. Qualitative tools are particularly effective in this regard (see Morrow, 2001).

4.3. Interpretive approach

This study employs an interpretive approach to explicate the data. Interpretive perspectives are said to have emerged in reaction to positivism (see Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Schwandt, 2000). According to Schwandt (2000), fundamental to the dispute between the two was a disagreement about the nature and purpose of both human and natural sciences. While an interpretive approach is understood to be aimed at “understand[ing] human action”, positivism is understood to “offer causal explanations of social, behavioural and physical phenomena” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 191). An “empathic identification with the actor”, which helps to understand certain subjective elements, as their “motives, beliefs, desires, thoughts and so on” (Schwandt, 2000, p. 192), is an important aspect of an interpretive approach. While acknowledging that it is questionable whether it is possible to understand these subjective elements in the actor, Schwandt (2000) argues that “the idea of acquiring an “inside” understanding - actor’s definitions of the situation - is a powerful central concept for understanding the purpose of qualitative inquiry” (p. 192).

Some studies examine the background to interpretive practice. Gubrium and Holstein (2000), for example, talk about three background factors: phenomenological background, ethnomethodological formulations, and Foucaudian discourse. The present study, however, uses the term “interpretive approach” rather generally and does not intend to affix its interpretive approach to any particular philosophical or ideological

background. As Rubin and Rubin (1995) point out, “What is important to interpretive social scientists is how people understand their worlds and how they create and share meanings about their lives . . . The interpretive social researcher examines meanings that have been socially constructed and consequently accepts that values and views differ from place to place and group to group” (pp. 34-35). The interpretive approach is significantly valuable to the present study, which relies to a great extent on the responses of the interviewees to find answers to the research questions. Hence, it uses an interpretive approach “to reconstruct and understand the interviewee’s experiences and interpretations” in a manner that demonstrates an “empathetic understanding of the world of others” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 35).

4.4. Relevance of Cross-Cultural Research Methods

A brief discussion on the relevance of cross-cultural research methods can be understood as significant for this study. Although this is a study conducted by an Indian research student and the study participants are also Indian citizens, the literature is largely Western. Moreover, the study has been pursued at an Australian University and the supervisors are based in Australia. This makes the study somewhat cross-cultural and as Liamputtong (2010) points out, it is important for a responsible researcher to focus on the significance of having and demonstrating cultural sensitivity when conducting cross cultural research. Moreover, “with the globalisation of all fields, including social work, must come a recognition that though theories and methods may be transferred across nations, they must be done so cautiously with care given to and understanding of the impact of values, politics and economic condition of each country” (Segal, 1993, p. 71). An understanding of both emic and etic knowledge and interpretations of data is important in this regard.

The terms ‘emic’ and ‘etic’ were coined by the linguist Pike (1967) from the suffixes of the words phonetic and phonemic in his book, *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behaviour*. Later on anthropologists and others in the social and behavioural sciences borrowed these terms to refer to two different types of data concerning human behaviour. For example, viewpoints of a native of a particular culture which exhibits local custom, meaning and belief existing within that culture are emic knowledge and interpretations. Etic knowledge, on the other hand, refers to universally applicable generalisations about human behaviour. In other words emic is an “inside perspective” while etic is an “outside perspective” as far as cross cultural study is concerned (Morris, Leung, Ames, & Lickel, 1999, p. 781). A research study that uses emic approach will use a research method which involves constant, extensive study of a single cultural group while a study employing etic approach will use methods which involve study of several cultural groups. As for the present study, it was emic in nature as far as the study participants are concerned, whereas the literature review is concerned; the study employed an etic approach.

As it is discussed in Chapter Two, values education is a global phenomenon. The concept of values education cuts across nations and cultures. Therefore, although the imperative of values education integration in the non-formal education of children in India is addressed in this study, review of literature included both Indian as well as Western literature. All the reviewed literatures are in the English language and, therefore, the issue of translation does not arise. My supervisors are rooted in the Western culture but they have travelled extensively to various parts of the world, particularly to India and are well aware of many of the cultural aspects of India. This has helped me immensely to discuss with them and get clarifications on issues arising from cross-cultural literature review. Cross-cultural research enables comparisons to be

made about values education in different cultural or social groups. This is valuable information for policy makers and planners at regional, national and international levels.

4.5. Field Work and Data Collection

Six months of field work was undertaken in the Indian state of Bihar, from March to August 2010. The timing of the field work was important, because heavy rains and floods are common after the month of August in Bihar. Data collection would be difficult during rainy season, as flooding can make travel extremely difficult. The cold season begins in Bihar in November and lasts until March. Thus March to August is the somewhat manageable summer season. More importantly, non-formal education centres are more active during the summer season.

The field work consisted of semi-structured interviews with members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education and focus group interviews with children in the age group 6-14 who either were attending non-formal education centres at the time of the field work or had attended them at one time. All the interviews and focus group discussions were conducted by me. The focus group discussions were conducted in Hindi, the national language of India, which is also the language of the participating children. For the interviews of members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education, some of the participants had reasonably sufficient proficiency in English to use the English version of the interviews. The remaining interviews were conducted in Hindi. Both the interviews and the focus group discussions were recorded with an electronic voice recorder which operates with a rechargeable battery. Recording the interviews helped me to focus on the interview and to avoid any distraction from the process of recording it (Laws, Harper, & Marcus, 2009). Moreover, “it captures people’s own way of saying things, which can bring a

report to life” (Laws et al., 2009, p. 264). Data from the interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed and translated by me.

4.6. Ethical Aspects

Research ethics concern the acquiring and dissemination of trustworthy information in ways that cause no harm to the study participants (Neuman, 1994; Rubin, 1983) and about “fair and honest dealing[s]” with them (Kellehear, 1993). Researchers generally agree on the significance of ethics in research studies, especially those involving human participants. Two important aspects of ethical considerations are that they help legitimise the research and render it credible and that they regulate the research study in terms of what can, cannot, or should not be done (Hallowell, Lawton, & Gregory, 2005). Institutional Review Boards have been established to help researchers conduct ethically sound research (see Christians, 2000). Many universities now have their own ethics committees, which review and assess ethical aspects of the university’s research projects. However, in the social sciences, while there is a general recognition of the worthwhile role played by the university ethics committees, the regulatory authority of such committees are disputed by some (see Haggerty, 2004; Hammersley, 2009). They argue that a checklist of rights and wrongs cannot guarantee ethical soundness, since being ethical is an ongoing process from the start to the finishing stage of the research process. Similarly, Kellehear (1993) alleges that ethics committees can mislead a researcher to think that ethics apply largely to a particular interface. Ethics committees are also criticised for giving a “false impression that ethics is about ‘what we do to others’ rather than the wider moral and social responsibilities of simply *being a researcher*” (Kellehear, 1993, p. 14). Therefore, self-regulation and self-reflexivity are also considered significant in conducting ethically sound research (see Kellehear, 1993).

Notwithstanding the criticisms levelled against ethics committees, it must be acknowledged that they render important service to researchers by considering important ethical aspects relevant to particular studies. Novice researchers learn a great deal about ethically sound research practices by going through a committee review and assessment process. Being a university student, I had to go through the process with my university's Human Research Ethics Committee and had to obtain the committee's approval before I was able to conduct the research. I had to adhere to all the policies, rules, and directives set by the university to promote its commitment to the highest standard of ethical practice in research involving or impacting humans. My study was subjected to detailed scrutiny because of children's involvement in the focus group interviews. Since ethical regulation is uncommon in my home country, I was greatly intrigued by the process. The complexities of interviewing young children attracted particularly great detail aimed at protecting the welfare and rights of the children. The committee's principal reference point was the Australian government's "National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research", which sets out important research values such as "respect for human beings, research merit and integrity, justice, and beneficence" (Australian Government, 2007, sec.1).

For the present study, I obtained informed consent from members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education, children and their parents before undertaking any fieldwork. The "National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research" states that a "person's decision to participate in research is to be voluntary, and based on sufficient information and adequate understanding of both the proposed research and the implications of participation in it" (Australian Government, 2007, sec.2.2.1) . Informed consent means that participants give their consent knowingly and "free from any element of fraud, deceit, duress, or similar unfair inducement or

manipulation” (Berg, 2001, 56). To fulfil this requirement, I used an Information Statement and a Consent Form (see Appendix). The former intended to explain the following: the nature, duration, and purpose of the research; anticipated use of the data; safe keeping of the data; the degree of anonymity and confidentiality which could be afforded respondents; and potential risks and benefits. The latter was used to document both a signature and date by both the participant and the researcher. Two common rationales behind this requirement are that they systematically ensure subjects’ knowing participation and that what was undertaken was an exercise of their choice and provide evidence of voluntary participation, if required by Institutional Review Boards (Berg, 2001). Participants were given sufficient time to read and understand the relevant forms before putting their signature. They were also able to ask me questions regarding the research to clarify any of their doubts. Consent was thought of as an ongoing process, and participants were allowed the freedom to stop participating at any time during the interview without having to give any reason and without facing any consequences for doing so (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Laws et al., 2009). Moreover, interview transcripts were sent to the participants to confirm their satisfaction. This was done in accordance with the university’s policy document, “Interview Recording and Transcribing-Human Research Ethics Procedure”, which cites the following statement from the “National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research”: “Researchers should consider whether respect for the participants requires that the accuracy or completeness of each interview transcripts should be verified by the relevant participant before analysis is complete” (University of Newcastle, 2007, Doc.No. 000417, sec. 1). Specific permission was sought from the informants to use an electronic voice recorder to record what they were saying.

While the noble intention and self-evident character of the principle of informed consent remains mostly undisputed, its meaningful application invites certain criticisms (Christians, 2000). A major criticism results from the fact that the process of obtaining informed consent is closely tied up with giving information about the research. M. Punch (1994) observes that “divulging one’s identity and research purpose to all and sundry will kill many a project stone dead” (p. 90). A second criticism surrounds the notion of consent forms, and suggests that it transforms “encounters that are routinely more informal and exploratory into unnecessarily official and legalistic exchanges” (Haggerty, 2004, p. 404). A third criticism lambasts the view of informed consent “as an absolute moral principle” as “empty ethics” (Corrigan, 2003, p. 787), in that it fails to acknowledge the unequal level in which participants behave as rational actors. In other words, it is important to recognize that not all participants have the same ability to foresee all the consequences of revealing certain facts. Spicker (2011) observes that “some subjects are vulnerable, some may not see the consequences, and damage done to subjects by a researcher is not excused by saying, ‘well, I warned them’” (p. 126). While the first two criticisms are predicaments that researchers have to endure often, owing to institutional requirements, the third invites researchers to be prudent in minimising the risks to participants. Anonymity and confidentiality are two significant aspects which will go a long way in minimising such harms.

Berg (2004) points out that confidentiality and anonymity are mistakenly used as synonyms every now and then. While anonymity makes respondents literally nameless, confidentiality ensures that anything that reveals their identity is removed from the research records (Berg, 2004). Of all the rights of research participants, protecting their confidentiality and preserving their anonymity are considered of supreme importance (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Laws et al., 2009). No wonder then that these rights are

clearly spelled out in all ethical guidelines for social researchers (Wiles, Crow, Heath, & Charles, 2008). However, both anonymity and confidentiality have certain limitations. Berg (2004), for example, points out that complete anonymity is “virtually nonexistent”, owing to the fact that the participants will be known to the researchers in most qualitative research, and therefore, advises providing respondents with a “high degree of confidentiality” instead (p. 65). On the other hand, Wiles et al. (2008) argue that “complete confidentiality in research is impossible because the purpose of gathering data is to obtain new knowledge, to synthesise this knowledge and to disseminate it” (p. 426). Therefore, since complete anonymity and confidentiality are impossible in qualitative research, the present study considered providing the participants with the highest degree of these two important rights.

In order to safeguard anonymity and confidentiality, the names of the respondents, NGOs, and institutions were not used in the report. Pseudonyms were used instead. Interviewees were asked not to name third parties on recordings without their prior approval “particularly if their comments might be considered insulting or defamatory” (University of Newcastle, 2007, Doc.No.000417, sec.2.2) and the recorded interviews were saved to my personal computer which was password protected (see University of Newcastle, 2007, Doc.No.000417, sec.2.3). All data were stored on a secure server at the University of Newcastle, with my research supervisors and I being the only persons to access them. The data will remain securely stored for at least five years from the conclusion of the examination process for any future use. These aspects of confidentiality were clearly explained to the respondents prior to obtaining their consent. The confidentiality of information obtained through focus group discussions, however, appeared problematic, as it is the case generally with all focus group interviews (see Berg, 2004; Linhorst, 2002; Parker & Tritter, 2006), since the

participating children knew each other. Therefore, setting some ground rules at the start about sharing information was very important (see Laws et al., 2009; Linhorst, 2002). Clear ground rules were thus agreed to in order to ensure confidentiality, which also enabled the truthful sharing of information. For example, everyone agreed not to discuss the shared information among themselves or with anybody else outside the focus group discussion. Furthermore, participants agreed to allow each person to finish what s/he was saying and to allow each one to have their say. However, these rules were not imposed on the children; instead, I asked the children to give their suggestions for ground rules, which they were happy to do.

Some other ethical aspects which require special mention derived from doing focus group interviews with children. “National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research” suggests that researchers should ensure that children’s participation in interviews is not against their best interests (Australian Government, 2007, sec.4.2.13). The “new approach to research with children” which places them “at the centre of the process of investigation” (Laws et al., 2009, p. 251) shows them respect by giving importance to their opinions and views. However, obtaining informed consent and addressing the issue of a power imbalance are two significant aspects of ethical considerations in working with children. As for the present study, informed verbal consent was obtained from the children. For that purpose, I used the service of social workers to read out the information statement to the children for three focus groups, while the respective persons responsible to look after the affairs of the non-formal education centres assisted me with the other two focus groups. Their service was of utmost importance in informing child participants who were too young to read and understand the information statement. Laws et al. (2009) suggest that it would be a good idea to use the service of those with whom “children have a trusting relationship” to

work alongside the researcher (p. 255). I chose to be present at the site while the information statement was being read out to the children. In that way, children had the opportunity to know the content of the information statement and also to see me, the person with whom they would have the focus group interview. That also gave them the opportunity to interact with me directly and to ask questions and clarify their doubts. In that way, they were able to give informed verbal consent. Furthermore, on the day of the interview, I reached the site early so the children could interact with me informally and become familiar with the recording instrument. Some of them volunteered to sing a song, which I recorded and played back for them. This enabled the children to feel comfortable about the recording instrument and also to build a good rapport prior to the group interviews.

The children selected for focus group interviews were from extremely poor families, and their parents often migrated to other cities in search of work. Therefore, obtaining parental consent in person was a problem. Moreover, most of the parents were totally illiterate, making it even more difficult to obtain informed consent. Therefore, I gave the children information statements, which included all contact details for requesting any further information or making complaints, and consent forms in closed envelopes marked with their addresses. Each participating child was properly advised to take the envelope containing the documents to their parents. It was done in recognition of the parents' right to know what their child had been involved in. Although not obtaining parents' consent could be justified because of the reasons cited above, I thought it important to acknowledge their rights nevertheless. Giving parents the contact details provided some means by which they could gain further information or convey their unhappiness about their child's involvement in the focus group. Moreover, parents had the opportunity to take the documents to someone who could read it to them. Focus

group interviews were conducted after giving the parents sufficient time for the parents to become informed about the research. Informed written consent was obtained from the respective non-formal education centre in-charges who had the responsibility to care for the children attending their education centres.

Another important ethical consideration concerned minimising the power imbalance between the children and me. Laws et al. (2009) observes that “it is best to think of children as like other disempowered people, and to direct your efforts to finding ways of equalising as far as possible the power imbalance between researchers and children” (p. 252). One way of equalising the power imbalance was to give children control over the decision to participate in the interviews. To do this, at the beginning of and during each group interview I reaffirmed the fact that participation was entirely each child’s choice. They were given the freedom to leave at any time without giving a reason, in fact, without saying anything. This gave children more power to take the final decision regarding their participation, and they were assured that their decision would be respected at all times. Moreover, by seeking their input through focus group interviews, the research design was respectful of the experiences and views of the child participants. The content and process of the focus group interviews, in which participants were encouraged to talk about their educational experiences, were designed so that they would have no detrimental effects on the children. Vulnerability to the over research of this population did not appear to be an issue, as the experiences of non-formal education learners were considerably under-researched. Therefore, the research was in the best interest of the children. Moreover, the involvement of social workers to advocate on behalf of the children further empowered the participants.

4.7. Site Selection

Marshall and Rossman (2006) suggest the following requirements to identify a realistic site: “(a) entry is possible; (b) there is a high probability that a rich mix of the process, people, program, interactions, and structures of interest is present; (c) the researcher is likely to be able to build trusting relations with the participants in the study; (d) the study can be conducted and reported ethically; and (e) data quality and credibility of the study are reasonably assured” (p. 62). Berg (2001) recommends a similar set of requirements: “(1) entry or access is possible; (2) the appropriate people (target population) are likely to be available; (3) there is a high probability that the study’s focuses, processes, people, programs, interactions, and/or structures that are part of the research question(s) will be available to the investigator; and (4) the research can be conducted effectively by an individual or individuals during the data collection phase of the study” (p. 29). I formulated a rationale for identifying a suitable setting by drawing on significant insights from these suggestions, which is explained below. The research questions formed the primary guide to the site selection (see Flick, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Silverman, 1999).

Bihar, an administrative state of India, was chosen for the data collection. Although Bihar, the third most populous state in India (Louis, 2002), has a glorious past, it is currently one of the most underdeveloped states in the country, as per various developmental indicators. It depicts a sorry picture of poverty, underdevelopment, caste discrimination, and other such social evils (see Louis, 2002). While more than 70 percent of the rich and upper caste people have the benefit of an education, more than 60 percent of the poor and lower caste people do not (Louis, 2002). Bihar is one of the five states which together contribute to about two-thirds of the children who do not participate in a school education (Asadullah & Yalonetzky, 2011). Concerted efforts by

the government of Bihar have improved the situation to some extent, but the lot of the poor and marginalised remains an enigma. When the National Policy on Education of 1986 and 1992 placed non-formal education on an equal footing with formal education in providing elementary education to children, several non-governmental organisations came into existence in Bihar to provide elementary education to children. They ran non-formal education centres in various parts of the state to provide elementary education, mainly to the most marginalised children. The government of Bihar was also a major provider of non-formal education. Therefore, Bihar certainly was an ideal setting for data collection because of the availability of the study population.

Although conducting field work in all the states of India would have been ideal, it was beyond the scope of the present study. Conducting research in a few states in a similar way could have provided a different set of samples to compare. For example, selecting seven to ten of India's twenty-eight states and seven union territories would have provided more diverse data. However, it was not feasible to do this with the limited resources available for the current study. It would have taken more time and more resources to complete such a field work. Moreover, even if such an effort would have provided greater diversity, it would not have given a sufficient number of samples per state because the number of interviews would have been not more than five per state, since the intended total number of interviews was 30. Therefore, a more fruitful way of approaching the task was to concentrate on a particular state which had a sufficient study population and to conduct a detailed study within the chosen state, as that would help unearth various aspects relevant to the research questions. The findings of the study, however, can be largely applicable to the rest of the country because of the homogenous nature and practices of non-formal education of children across India.

Although Bihar is not my native place, I had lived and worked there for several years in the field of non-formal education prior to the commencement of the present study. Therefore, gaining entry to the chosen site was not very difficult. Marshall and Rossman (2006) cite the following positive aspects of undertaking field work in a familiar setting: “relatively easy access to participants; reduced time expenditure for certain aspects of data collection; a feasible location for research; and the potential for building trusting relationships” (p. 62). However, to make the field work more efficient and useful, two important contacts were negotiated prior to beginning the field work. As Brace-Govan (2004) points out, “a well-regarded initial contact can be essential in building up trust and lowering barriers” (p. 53) when conducting field work with the study population. One contact was the vice-principal of a college and part-time director of an NGO, the other was a leading social activist who headed an NGO which worked for the empowerment and progress of women and girls. Both of them had long been involved in the non-formal education of children in various parts of Bihar. They were able to provide useful information about potential participants for the interviews and focus group discussions. I approached them via phone and e-mail in advance to negotiate a “distributor Model” external organisation involvement - the organisation would be a conduit to potential participants in research - as outlined in the university’s Human Research Ethics Committee Procedure Document, “Contacting Organisations, Institutions or Business for Research Purposes - Human Research Ethics Guidelines”. However, it became clear during negotiations that when I reached the site to do my field work, I could conduct informal visits with relevant information and inputs from them to help identify and establish contacts with potential participants. This proved efficient, because I was able to use my past experience and knowledge in selecting appropriate samples. Therefore, although the conduits shared valuable information which helped

identify potential participants, and their credibility and reputation and those of their institutions' helped me develop trusting relationship with the participants, the selection of participants was done by me, either after making informal visits to them, or, in the case of individual interviews, after contacting the participants by phone.

4.8. Sampling

"The logic of using a sample of subjects is to make inferences about some larger population from a smaller one - the sample", says Berg (2001, p. 30). While quantitative studies depend on larger samples collected through random selection, qualitative studies "focus in depth on relatively small samples" (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Patton (2002) adds that no rules exist for determining sample size in qualitative study and that what matters in determining sample size is "what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (p. 244). For the present study, 20 semi-structured interviews, each lasting for an hour, were originally thought of as sufficient. However, a piloting of the interviews helped determine that more interviews were needed to include reasonably sufficient samples from both governmental and non-governmental categories. Therefore, overall 33 interviews were conducted with the members of the leadership team of agencies imparting non-formal education. They included any of the following who were above the age of 18: the director/assistant director of the organisation or whoever he/she nominates to speak on their behalf; non-formal education instructors/teachers who actually manage a non-formal education centre; non-formal education consultants; non-formal education programme coordinators/supervisors; and non-formal education trainer-of-trainers. They included members of both governmental and non-governmental organisations; it was important

to collect samples from both to get a holistic view. An effort was made to include both male and female participants.

Both “purposive” and “snowball” sampling strategies were used to identify and select samples. Purposive sampling – also called purposeful sampling (see Patton, 2002) or judgement sampling (see Laws et al., 2009) - a strategy that is used somewhat widely in qualitative research (see K. F. Punch, 2005), uses “sampling in a deliberate way, with some purpose or focus in mind” (p. 187). According to Patton (2002), this strategy “focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (p. 230). Patton defines information-rich cases as those which help the researcher learn a good deal about the issues under study. In this sampling strategy, researcher’s “special knowledge or expertise about some group” helps significantly assists in selecting participants who represent the study population (Berg, 2001, p. 32). My past experience, knowledge, and expertise about non-formal education in Bihar was very helpful in processing a purposive sampling strategy.

Snowball sampling was used to reach a wider participant group, and to obtain a reasonable variation in the study participants (Dobbert, 1982; Marshall & Rossman, 2006) . As Rubin and Rubin (1995) advise, “getting only one side of an argument is not sufficient. You have to go for balance in your choice of interviewees to represent all the divisions within the arena of study” (p. 69). According to Berg (2001), the process of snowballing starts with “identifying several people with relevant characteristics and interviewing them . . . These subjects are then asked for the names of other people who possess the same attributes as they do” (p. 33). The sample can become larger and larger “by asking a number of people who else to talk with” (Patton, 1990, in Brace-Govan,

2004, p. 53). This sampling strategy was particularly effective with many key information-rich informants.

4.9. Interview Process and Methodology

Interviews of the members of the leadership teams of agencies were individual, face-to-face, semi-structured, and open-ended, each lasting approximately one hour. Interviews were divided into three major themes, such as current nature and practice of non-formal education; moral and philosophical underpinnings of non-formal education; and values education perspectives in non-formal education practices. Each theme had a set of questions to guide the discussion. Questions were organised into themes in order to achieve coherence in the interview. This, however, did not interfere with flexibility, which enabled the discussion to take a different course relevant to the participant's experience. Overall coherence was maintained by asking the set of questions in a sequential way, which was helpful in collecting and organising the data in an efficient way for future analysis.

Semi-structured interviews, also known as semi-standardised interviews, “can be located somewhere between the extremes of the completely standardized and completely unstandardized interviewing structures” (Berg, 2004, p. 80). An interview is a “conversation with a purpose”, according to Kahn and Cannell (1957, p. 149). Semi-structured or unstructured, open-ended, informal interviewing is a preferred technique in qualitative research as it allows for “more flexibility and responsiveness to emerging themes for both the interviewer and respondent” (Jackson et al., 2007, p. 25). Therefore, interview questions were used to provide flexible guidance rather than a strict schedule. Questions were asked of each participant in a systematic and consistent order, but with the freedom to digress to probe beyond the answers to the prepared questions, as Berg

(2004) suggests. This ensured that the interviews had a flexible flow while staying focused on the research questions. Probes and follow-up questions were used to deepen the responses to the questions and to obtain rich and deeper responses (Patton, 2002). An empathetic understanding was important in conducting the interviews, an attitude that conveys to the participants that their views are valuable and useful (see Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Although I did not make any promise, either verbal or gestural, as to what I would do about the problems, my attitude demonstrated my genuine interest in the issue being studied and in the views of the participants. Fontana and Frey (2008) suggest that the “new empathetic approach in interviewing differ from the conventional approach; . . . The new empathetic approaches take an ethical stance in favour of the individual or group being studied . . . The empathetic approach is not merely a method of friendship” (pp. 117-118). In order to ensure that I captured their views accurately, I sent the transcribed transcripts from the recorded interviews to the participants so they could change, add, or delete, as appropriate, parts of the interview. This also ensured their satisfaction in terms of what would be included in the data analysis.

4.10. Focus Group Interviews with Children

Obtaining information about children’s subjective experience on non-formal education seemed important for the present study. Children are the main beneficiaries of non-formal education and including their views is vital. Marshall and Rossman (2006) point out that including children’s perspectives “as relevant and insightful in learning more about aspects of their worlds” is important, particularly in education, “where all too often those most affected by educational policy and programmatic decision - the student - are absent from inquiry” (p. 106). Moreover, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child suggests that children have the right to “express [their] views freely in all matters affecting [themselves]” (United Nations, 1989, Article 12) . Therefore,

interviewing children seemed an essential part of the study. However, focus group interviews with children were preferred to individual face-to-face interviews. The presence of their friends can increase children's confidence, as does the "strength in numbers effect", whereas one-to-one time with an unfamiliar adult may feel threatening" (Laws et al., 2009, p. 254). The informal atmosphere in a group interview encourages the participants to speak freely, and thus it becomes an "excellent means for collecting information from young children and teens" (Berg, 2004, p. 123).

Five focus group interviews were conducted with the children in the 6-14 years of age group. Of the five, four groups consisted of children attending non-formal education at the time of the field work, and one included children who had attended non-formal education for a minimum of three years and had been mainstreamed into formal education as part of a residential programme run by an NGO which focuses on the education of girls. As discussed earlier in this study, girls are the most disadvantaged of all children and many NGOs purposely choose to run girls-only non-formal education centres. I, therefore, chose to include two focus groups from girls-only non-formal education centres. The focus group interviews were semi-structured and open-ended questions were asked, which I followed in somewhat the same order from group to group, and used to elicit responses from the children. It was done with an eye on the structure the order of question imposes on discussions, which is "valuable both in channelling the group interaction and in making comparisons across groups in the analysis phase of the research" (Morgan, 1988, p. 56). However, certain flexibility was maintained to accommodate unique aspects of particular groups and to avoid the "fallacy of adhering to fixed questions" (see Morgan, 1996). The children were assured both before and during focus group interviews that there were no right or wrong

answers to the questions. This was done to increase children's confidence and encourage their deeper engagement.

"Focus group interview" is a generic term used by many to mean various forms of group interviews (Fontana & Frey, 2000, 2008). However, there are some who differentiate between group interviews and focus group interviews. Morgan (1996) defines focus groups as a "research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher" (p. 130). Efforts have been made to differentiate focus group discussions from a seemingly wider category of group interviews by giving explicit consideration to group interaction for the collection of research data or by limiting the role of the moderator (see Fontana & Frey, 2000, 2008; Kitzinger, 1994; Linhorst, 2002; Morgan, 1988; Parker & Tritter, 2006; Patton, 2002). There are some who dislike the term "focus group" being used synonymously with "group interviews". Parker and Tritter (2006), for example, make clear distinctions between the two. The role of researchers and their relationship to the participants is the principal reference point in differentiating focus groups from group interviews. Parker and Tritter (2006) argue that if the researcher has a high involvement, adopting an investigative role by asking questions and controlling the dynamics of the group discussion and frequently engaging in dialogue with particular participants, then it is merely a group interview and not a *focus* group interview. If the group interview is to be called a focus group, Parker and Tritter (2006) say that the researcher's involvement should be minimal or peripheral more like the role of a facilitator or moderator. For the purpose of this study, I had to have fairly high involvement with the children by asking questions and often had to engage in dialogue with specific children. Most of the children who come to non-formal education are shy or reluctant to speak on their own. This can be attributed to the particular socio-cultural aspects of their life experiences -

deprivation, oppression, exploitation and, neglect - in varying degrees and with diverse effects. A great deal of motivating and confidence-building are necessary to elicit any meaningful responses from these children. My focus group participants came from this population and understandably behaved as described. Therefore, my approach to doing a group interview with children was not so much like a focus group, if going by the above discussions. Nonetheless, I prefer to use focus group interviews, in the sense that the interview focused on a particular group of children and was intended to obtain specific information in response to the research questions. Children's interactions among themselves and my own investigative engagements with them helped obtain information.

Both purposive and snowball sampling strategies helped identify participant groups. Generally, every non-formal education centre has 30 to 35 children. I thought it useful to conduct the focus group interviews at the non-formal centres and to involve the existing group in the interviews, but not the whole group. The reason was that their familiarity with their friends and their environment would make them more confident. Each group, therefore, was comprised of children aged 6 to 14. Although there is a general agreement among writers that small groups are effective in conducting focus group interviews, no rule exists regarding the exact number of participants, and different figures are given by different writers. For example, while Jackson et al. (2007) suggest that 5-12 participants are typical for focus group interviews, Patton (2002) opines that groups typically consist of 6-10 people. Morgan (1996) points out that while smaller groups are suitable for topics that are emotionally charged, as participants in those groups display high involvement, larger groups work better for neutral research topics because such topics normally generate a lower level of participant involvement. There

are also no rules to determine the number of groups required. Morgan (1996) suggests that four to six focus groups are generally the norm, since the data can become saturated beyond this number and the researcher may not get any new information from the additional participants. Another suggestion to determine the number of groups points to the nature of the study population. Morgan (1988), for example, suggests that if the groups are more homogeneous in terms of their background and role, then the research might require fewer groups. I conducted five focus group interviews, each group consisting of 10-16 children. The groups were homogeneous in terms of both background and role-based perspectives. The likelihood of low level of participant involvement was one reason for forming relatively larger groups. A greater or deeper level of participant involvement was not required for the present study, but wider participation and a moderate level of involvement were needed to obtain the subjective perspectives of the children, which the group interviews managed to do.

4.11. Content Analysis

Content analysis was the research technique used to analyse the collected field data. All the data were transcribed and were available for analysis in both printed form and in Word documents. This enabled both manual and computer-assisted analysis. However, the data were not open to analysis until the information they put across was “condensed and made systematically comparable” by applying “an objective coding scheme”, the process of which is “commonly called content analysis” (Berg, 2004, p. 265). Content analysis enables “systematic and objective analysis” of textual data by “comparing, contrasting, and categorizing them (Jackson et al., 2007, p. 24). In other words, content analysis refers to “any qualitative data reduction and sense making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002, p. 453).

Historically, content analysis was associated with quantitative research (Berelson, 1952). Perhaps for this reason, there are some who advocate the exclusive use of content analysis as a quantitative research technique (see Neuendorf, 2002). This creates a needless distinction between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Krippendorff (2004), a leading proponent of content analysis, questions such distinctions and argues that “ultimately, all reading of texts is qualitative, even when certain characteristics of a text are later converted into numbers. The fact that computers process great volumes of text in a very short time does not take away from the qualitative nature of their algorithms; on the most basic level, they recognize zeros and change them, proceeding one step at a time” (p. 16). Krippendorff therefore recommends content analysis as a research technique applicable to both quantitative and qualitative research. Berg (2004) similarly defends the use of content analysis in qualitative studies and argues that “content analysis can be effective in qualitative analysis - that ‘ “counts” ’ of textual elements merely provide a means for identifying, organizing, indexing, and retrieving data” (p. 269). Data analysis, which involves reading and understanding actual texts - literal words, including the way they have been used - is qualitative, according to Berg (2004).

The process of content analysis began with breaking the entire data set into segments that could be categorized and coded, followed by identifying patterns for the whole data set by relating the categories to one another (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997). Patterns were the “core meanings” revealed as “recurring regularities” in the process of analysis (Patton, 2002, pp. 43, 65). In this way, I allowed findings to emerge from the collected data. The practice of applying data from the particular to the general is commonly called inductive analysis, a typical method used widely in qualitative studies (Patton, 2002).

For the most part in my inductive analysis, categories articulated by the study participants were identified, used, and defined; however, on some occasions, certain categories were identified for which the participants did not offer any labels or terms, therefore I developed suitable terms to describe those categories (see Patton, 2002). Once the data were coded and patterns and categories were established, considerable time was spent in examining their accuracy and appropriateness, such as whether appropriate categories were developed with appropriate names; whether things fit together; whether categories displayed internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Guba, 1978); and so on. This final stage of analysis, which confirms the authenticity and correctness of identifying and defining codes, patterns, and categories, was deductive in nature in the sense that the established codes, patterns, and categories were carefully tested to weed out deviate data that might not fit the categories (see Patton, 2002). The whole process of content analysis was greatly supported by a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis programme called *NVivo*, which is discussed in the following section.

4.12. Computer-Assisted Analysis

Software programmes greatly assist particular needs of researchers, and there are a number of Qualitative Data Analysis software programmes available (Weitzman, 2000). Consistency and speed are the two most important advantages of using Qualitative Data Analysis software (Krippendorff, 2004; Patton, 2002; Weitzman, 2000). Each software programme is designed to meet specific needs; therefore, choosing the appropriate programme is of supreme importance. My data analysis method, as mentioned above, employed inductive content analysis which required coding and categorizing. Therefore, the software programme required had with features such as “fast and powerful search and retrieval, easy coding and revision, along with good text display” (Weitzman, 2000,

p. 813). NVivo 9 is a software programme which has these features and I therefore chose to use it for my data analysis. A major advantage of this software is that it replaces many of the physical efforts a researcher does in the process of data analysis. Davis and Meyer (2009), while discussing the advantages of NVivo, observe that “the system of storage and retrieval of coded information eliminates the need for categorization systems such as physical files, note cards, and cumbersome stack of paper. In addition, the continually updated free node list eliminates the need to physically update code lists, limiting the possibility of misplacing or miscoding meaning units” (p. 121). A significant concern some researchers have raised regarding computer-assisted analysis is that using software programmes reduce closeness to data (see Johnston, 2006; Weitzman, 2000) because researchers are working with small pieces of data in a small window without much sense of “what lies around” (Weitzman, 2000, p. 816). However, with NVivo, such concerns can be greatly minimised because its features offer “contextual information” through “source information, navigable outlines, and linked list of codes, documents, and text segments” (Weitzman, 2000).

4.13. Conclusion

In this chapter the methods used for collecting and analysing the data have been discussed and which provides a context for arguments that will be constructed in the following chapters to address the research questions. I have attempted to provide as much information as possible regarding how the research was carried out. The methodological choice and the logic of its application discussed in this chapter reveal that the study paid careful attention to important aspects of qualitative research, such as “objectivity, ethical diligence and rigor” (Jackson et al., 2007, p. 21).

The study will now turn to the analysis of the field data, which is the focus of the following chapters.

PART II

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Part I of this study dealt with the topic of the research, the context which gave rise to the research questions, the significance of the study, and the methodology. Critical concepts of the study were explored and definitional issues were discussed, which involved an extensive review of the relevant literature. Findings from the literature review revealed that a non-formal system of education is essential for the education of a large number of poor, marginalised children and integrating values education into that system was shown to be a pedagogical imperative for more productive outcomes.

The focus will now be on analysing the gathered field data. Chapters Five and Six deal exclusively with analysis and discussion of the field data, while Chapter Seven is the concluding chapter. The data analysis and discussion are presented in two chapters to provide sufficient space for highlighting the research findings on issues related to two important concepts: non-formal education and values education. The research questions highlight four important issues related to these two concepts: the current nature and practice of the non-formal education of children in the general educational context of India; the moral and philosophical underpinnings of the non-formal education of children; the usefulness of values education to enhance the essential work of non-formal education; and, the manner in which values education perspectives are being realised in non-formal education. Interview questions for the data collection were based on these broad issues. Field data in connection with non-formal education of children will be examined in Chapter Five, while the data on values education will be examined in Chapter Six. Major findings of the study are highlighted in Chapter Seven, which is the concluding chapter, and the research study will be summed up in this chapter.

Context of Data Analysis Revisited

In order to smooth the progress of the analysis and discussion, it is important to recapitulate and briefly discuss the nature and structure of both formal and non-formal systems of education. As mentioned in Chapter Two, formal education in India is structured in the line of 10+2+3; that is, twelve years of school education consisting of both primary and secondary education, leading to three years of university education, such as a bachelor's degree in the arts or sciences or commerce, for example. Successfully completing ten years of schooling that leads to a Secondary School Leaving Certificate has traditionally been accepted as the basic foundation for further education. Nowadays, however, successful completion of "Plus Two", that is, the two years of secondary education after Class 10, is considered increasingly central to having a basic foundation in formal education. In other words, 12 years of continuous and progressive study, generally starting at age five in Class One, is considered a standard and acceptable practice of formal school education. Pre-school education is also available to children under various names, such as kindergarten, nursery school, and so on; however, no regulatory mechanisms are in place to oversee their functioning. The types of schools available are government schools, private unaided schools, and private aided schools. Economic factors are the major determinant in choosing a school. Unaided private schools have become the privilege of the affluent, as they charge very high fees, while children from poor families attend government schools, which are free.

An important feature of non-formal education is that it does not strictly follow the 10 or 10+2 education structure due to the fact that the children in attendance are either late starters or those who have discontinued their school education. The general practice in non-formal education, therefore, is to teach the children using a kind of compressed syllabus, whereby efforts are made to provide the children with competencies equivalent

to the grade or class level in formal schools in fewer years of study. Therefore, non-formal education providers employ a different mode of teaching and learning using a curriculum and textbooks different from those used in a formal education system. Non-formal education does not charge any fees, and is conducted in or near children's home environment.

A large majority of the interview participants had more than ten years of experience in non-formal education, and some had more than 15 years. Only a few respondents had fewer than five years of experience. (A detailed profile of the interview participants is given in the Appendix). The following is the recommended rating of the interview participants' level of experience in non-formal education:

Years of Experience	Level of Experience	Number of Participants Interviewed
Zero years	Unknown	3
Less than 2 years	Beginner level	1
2-4 years	Average level	3
5-9 years	Good level	3
10 years and above	Experienced level	23

Figure-5: Rating of interview participants' level of experience in non-formal education

As the figure shows, the views and perceptions captured by the interview can be understood as mostly of experienced non-formal education workers.

CHAPER FIVE
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION
CURRENT NATURE AND STATE OF NON-FORMAL EDUCUTION

5.1. Introduction

One of the aims of conducting the field work was to collect information on the nature of the work currently going on in the field of non-formal education. It was important to examine this aspect of the non-formal education of children in India, as updated information on this work is rarely available. Hence, I felt it important to fill this vacuum by collecting relevant data on the current nature and status of non-formal education in India. Therefore, I asked questions of the interview participants about their experience of non-formal education and about their views on such matters as: the kinds of people who generally get involved in non-formal education; the recruitment process of non-formal education personnel; whether non-formal educational efforts have been successful; the relevance and importance of non-formal education; and, what is currently happening in non-formal education. The following is an examination of the study participants' responses on these important issues.

5.2. Elementary Education in Formal Government Schools

Of the 33 interview participants, not a single person suggested s/he was happy with the education provided to children in government schools - with the exception of the government officials. Several of those interviewed said that the children studying at their non-formal education centres were also enrolled in government schools, but they added that the children went to the school only to get the midday meal which was provided free of charge and to avail themselves of such other government offers as free uniforms and bicycles. They all agreed that the government schools were not run well

and that frequently no education took place in the schools at all. Moses, who is the director of an NGO which runs non-formal education centres, lamented:

There is massive corruption in the whole education system that nobody is really interested in educating the poor. Teachers do not come. Even if they come they sit there without teaching the children. So, education system is almost a penance for the students. They don't go there to study. They will be very happy if they don't go to the school because they see that education is not a joyful experience to them as it is being run by the government (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Nishant, director of another NGO, expressed a similar view:

The system is corrupt first of all. One is that the teachers are selected not because of education but who can pay more and get a government job. Once they are given the job, they pay a little bit of commission to the education inspectors and so on. Those are the things. No inspection, no constant watching or supporting the system only the posts are filled and people are getting jobs . . . but they are not really responsible to the jobs they are getting. As a result, in the government schools there is no education going on. And the inspectors of the school I would say, they are living on the percentage that they get. They are not inspecting or they are not doing proper inspection. As a result, no education is going on in the school. Without education, what is the use of spending time there? So children are also not going, they have registered their names, they go for the meals . . . they get their bicycles. That is all (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Sherif, who worked for the Bihar state government for several years in various capacities and currently works as a Resource Person and Consultant for non-formal education, was also not appreciative of the education offered in government schools. In his opinion, no proper education had taken place in the government schools for several years. He talked about his experience:

Teacher absenteeism was very serious in the formal system. Despite having competent teachers in formal system, there was a mentality among them for avoiding teaching, evading writing and for keeping away from explaining things to children. Teachers used to come to school they would not teach . . . the teachers did not show much interest in it because in the formal systems run by the government most children were from the poor, Dalit and oppressed communities and so there was nobody to speak on their behalf. Hence the teachers, instead of teaching, spent their time in idle talks, in official works, in making attendance and in walking around. So, no serious business was taking place there in education (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

The findings of an NGO which works for the education of underprivileged children in Bihar and several other states corroborate the views expressed above. The NGO has concluded that even after several years of education in government schools, children are not able to perform even basic reading or writing. Vijay, who is the state representative of this organisation in Bihar, had the following comments to make about the evasive nature of the teachers he confronted about the learning outcomes for children in their schools:

About anything you ask or discuss, they will come to books or the syllabus. If you ask them, “Are they reading?” they will say “I don’t know but they are at Chapter Number 8”. “Are they doing basic arithmetic?” The answer will be “They are doing, we are teaching them Chapter Number 7”. So, it is, I don’t know, really confusing for us also most of the time (Vijay, Interview, 2010).

Priya, who heads an NGO which runs non-formal education centres for marginalised children, had a similar view:

The government school system here is very miserable, very poor, because it is only for the namesake, I feel. Children when they are in the 4th or 5th standard, they are not able to recognize the alphabets or to count (Priya, Interview, 2010).

Some other respondents revealed that teachers resorted to dishonest practices to display false attendance records for children in their schools. For example, Lakshman, who runs an NGO for the non-formal education of marginalised children said:

Even though numbers are shown in terms of enrolment of children in the school, in reality so many children attend only for the midday meal . . . Names of so many of those children who do not attend school are added in the school register. That is merely for showing numbers (Lakshman, Interview, 2010).

Purohit, who is the director of an NGO which has a similar educational programme for children, shared a similar view:

Whatever figures are shown in the school regarding the number of children, those are incorrect figures. The children are never in the school but their attendance is marked in the school register. If somebody checks he gets to see that the children are not there in that many number. When the children have never attended school, how will they be there? If the children are educated in private schools then they get educated and other children remain outside (of education). Enrolment thing is false (Purohit, Interview, 2010).

Niranjan (Interview, 2010), who is a lecturer in the chemistry department of a prestigious college and who initiated an NGO to run non-formal education in the slums of the capital city of Bihar, conveyed that teachers engaged in discriminatory practices when they were at the school. He said that government schools sometimes would have upper caste and lower caste children studying together in the same class room and teachers would display more sympathy toward the upper caste children. He opined that the lower caste children in many cases were served midday meal separately. He felt that there was a mentality among the teachers in government schools which promoted the idea that poor children were unable to study and thus were useless. According to Niranjan, the poor children's socioeconomic conditions were the reason for their lack of interest in education, but the teachers showed them no sympathy. Chotalal (Interview, 2010), who works as the coordinator and trainer for non-formal education programmes run by an NGO, found rampant corruption and mismanagement in the distribution of midday meal and opposed the continuation of the programme altogether. He stated that there was corruption at every step and that the school education committee illegally made a profit by providing children with low-quality food. He commented:

Deserving children are not getting a proper meal. For example, they are supposed to make a menu for the whole week but nothing of this sort is seen in any schools. Teachers and the members of the school education council join hands with each other to make inexpensive food with low quality rice such as *Khichadi* (a type of food cooked using rice) and the newspapers have published news several times of many children falling sick after consuming substandard *Khichadi*. Worms are found in the meals sometimes. So, I object to this programme (Chotalal, Interview, 2010).

Seeing the mismanagement and corruption in government schools, Prakash, who is the director of an NGO which runs non-formal education centres, defined government schools in the following way:

There is so much corruption in it. So, government means what? By government it means that all the people in it and its total system are such that even if you are an honest person you will not be able to do a decent work. You will need to become a thief and will need to please everybody (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

Prakash therefore felt that government programmes worked only on paper. He pleaded for honest behaviour from everyone involved in the government undertaking, from top to bottom.

Another issue highlighted by some of the respondents was that the school-teachers were given additional non-teaching work by higher officials in the government. According to Lakshman (Interview, 2010), this non-teaching work hindered the teaching work. He revealed that a study conducted by his team found that teachers were given so much non-teaching work, such as a survey of domestic animals, a survey on agriculture, and tasks related to the census. Chinmayi (Interview, 2010), who is the person in-charge of an NGO which runs non-formal education centres, shared this view, and added that teachers were also assigned election duties and health-related work, such as in campaigns to eradicate polio. Both Lakshman and Chinmayi felt that there was no continuity in teaching due to this other work demanded of teachers.

Some respondents highlighted the lack of school infrastructure. According to Neeraj (Interview, 2010), India's education infrastructure is insufficient, although the government has built more schools with two or three rooms in the recent past. He said

that whatever infrastructure development occurred did not bring about any change in the quality of education. He commented:

It is believed that when there are good structures and when the environment changes and facilities improve both the students and teachers will have an interest and they will be able to do their responsibilities in an efficient way. But I have my doubts in it. External things are changing in terms of buildings, colour, cleanliness etc but these things have had no impact on the quality of education (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

According to Lakshman (Interview, 2010), there were many children wanting to study but not enough schools or teachers. Vijay (Interview, 2010) felt that there had been an increase in the number of school buildings and classrooms and that many schemes are in place to motivate the children, but that there is no corresponding improvement in the educational achievement of the children.

A senior official in the education department claimed that the government has undertaken several progressive measures. He talked about the steady increase in the number of children enrolled in schools, in the number of teachers recruited, and in the number school buildings and classrooms constructed. He argued:

If you look at the record of school education here, once school education was received by less than one crore children but as of today around one crore or one and a half crore children receive education from the government schools alone. So, the record gradually keeps increasing and along with that resources are also being increased. For example, in the last two years we appointed about two hundred thousand teachers and I think about 25 thousand to 30 thousand additional rooms were also built and more are being built. In proportion to the increase in the resource the number of children going to the school is also increasing (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

Another high-ranking government official in the education department talked about the reduction in the number of out-of-school children:

These never enrolled or out of school have been progressively coming down. This year, for example . . . in November 2005 this number was

roughly 25 lakhs¹, which has now come down to above 7 lakhs and 25 thousand (Alok, Interview, 2010).

However, he credited these gains to the efforts of the civil society and NGOs, and said that government efforts to have community engagement in the education of disadvantaged children paid rich dividends in terms of an increase in the number of children enrolled in school.

5.2.1. Discussion

The claims made by government officials regarding the increased number of children enrolled in schools, the increased number of school buildings and classrooms, or the increased recruitment of teachers cannot be ignored as completely false, since some respondents from the NGO sector also reported that more school buildings and classrooms have been constructed in recent years and that more teachers have been recruited. However, the claim that more teachers have been recruited is no guarantee that there are enough teachers to have a sound teacher-student ratio in the classroom. Similarly, the claim that more school buildings and classrooms have been built does not mean there are enough schools to accommodate all the children. More than half of the study participants confirmed that more schools need to be built, more classrooms need to be constructed, and more teachers need to be recruited.

Similarly, the increased number of children enrolled in schools does not guarantee that this is happening because the government schools are providing a high-quality education. The data analysed above provide evidence of the dishonest practices of teachers who forge false attendance records, adding the names of children who do not

¹ The terms 'lakh' or 'lac' is a unit of measurement used in India. One lakh is equivalent to a hundred thousand.

attend school. The government data, therefore, could be partially, or even fully wrong in terms of the total number of children enrolled. Moreover, as the analysis above shows, many children go to school merely to enjoy the free midday meal. They reach the school at meal time and leave without participating in any educational activities. However, in the records it appears that a greater number of students have enrolled in school. A recent news item published on the news-page of rediff.com states that more than 1.5 million children enrolled in government schools in the state of Bihar have been found to be fake in an enquiry conducted by the Bihar Educational Quality Mission in 2012 (see Rediff News, 2012). It further adds that inflated enrolment of children in government-run schools is a reality.

Another reason for the increased number of children enrolled in school is the efforts of the NGOs, as rightly acknowledged by a high-ranking government official, and not the efforts by the government. NGOs that run non-formal education centres mainstream the children into government schools after a few years at their centres. This adds significantly to the number of enrolled children in schools as there are several NGOs which run non-formal education centres.

Evidence from the data analysed above strongly suggests that there is widespread corruption and mismanagement in the day-to-day running of the government schools. Teachers' engaging in corrupt, dishonest, and discriminatory behaviour at the school is a worrisome case in point. Teacher absenteeism, non-performance, and lack of educational activities provided are other issues brought to light by the data. This seems to have created a situation in which the children who remain at school learn next to nothing, even after several years, putting them on much the same level as those who remained out of school.

Interviewees were asked to express their views on why a large number of children from disadvantaged communities were not motivated to attend school and what they thought were the motivating factors for the children in order to attend school. The next two sections of this chapter will analyse their responses to these questions.

5.3. Out-of-School Children and Why They Are Out of School

A significant number of research participants pointed to caste-based discrimination as a major reason that children do not attend the government schools. For example, Moses commented:

In the context of Bihar the major factor is the caste system whereby most of the teachers come from the so-called upper caste and who despise the lower caste and consider them as untouchables. Therefore, discrimination of children in the school is a major factor (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Poonam, who started an NGO for the empowerment of women and runs several non-formal education centres for the education of girls from the most disadvantaged communities, shared a similar view:

Children from the marginalised communities, *Dalit* [oppressed group] communities find themselves discriminated a lot in the schools . . . they cannot bear that, they cannot tolerate that (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

According to Shahul, who is an experienced trainer of instructors and other non-formal education staff, not only the teachers but the upper caste children discriminate against the lower caste children at school. He said:

If a *Dom's* [one of the lowest caste groups] children come to the school then teachers do not like them and other children do not like them. The same holds true for children from the *Musahar* communities. Other children do not eat food with them . . . Children from these communities do not come to school due to fear and shame (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Niranjan (Interview, 2010) opined that teachers prefer or have more sympathy for upper caste children, and they look down on lower caste children in the school. Niranjan and

some other respondents said that a lot of discriminatory practices took place in the management and distribution of the midday meal. While Nirajan found that lower caste children were made to eat the meal separately from the upper caste children, Chotalal (Interview, 2010) discovered that low-quality and unhygienic food was provided to the lower caste children. Moreover, when it came to cooking the midday meal, nobody from a Muslim or *Dalit* community was allowed to cook (Neeraj, Interview, 2010). Meena pointed out that when disadvantaged children from *Dom* or *Musahar* communities attended school, they faced a lot of problems. For example, children from other castes were unwilling to sit with them during the midday meal. She added, however, that the real problem was with the teachers:

In all places the parents liked to educate their children and wanted to send their children to school but their problem was with the teacher who did not want to make all the children sit together . . . as a result they were not able to provide education to their children (Meena, Interview, 2010).

Another issue highlighted by a number of respondents was the lack of committed teachers, as Sherif remarks:

In reality, teachers' attitude towards the society and the children is very poor. Their commitment itself is poor, commitment of the teachers towards students, towards society, towards school, towards community and towards the downtrodden. Due to their poor commitment those children's achievement are not any better even today despite providing them with various facilities (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

Shekhar (Interview, 2010), who is the director of an NGO, also opined that the commitment and dedication of staff in the field mattered a great deal, and in his view "the overall picture is sad because the dedication and commitment is less". According to Johnson (Interview, 2010), who heads an NGO and who has more than 20 years of involvement in the field of non-formal education, many children did not even know that they had to attend school regularly because of the continuous lack of teaching or

educational activities in the schools. Suraj (Interview, 2010), who is a senior government official working in the education department, also acknowledged that teacher absenteeism had badly affected the education of many children.

A related issue identified by Niranjana (Interview, 2010) and Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) was the existence of teachers who had no teaching skills. Niranjana felt that the whole teaching set up for the underprivileged was fundamentally class based:

Poor people go to government schools and government schools do not have resources right from teachers who are not at all trained or are not equipped to handle children. They are just picked up randomly by certain qualifications whether they have passed twelfth or something like that. So the teachers are not equipped (Niranjana, Interview, 2010).

Chinmayi expressed a similar view:

School teachers have been recruited on a mass scale recently. Those who do not have proper teacher training and those who do not know how to read and write properly have been made teachers. It was like that earlier also (Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

Teachers resorting to the physical punishment of children was cited by some as a major issue. For example, Priya's (Interview, 2010) view was that children were frightened to go to school because of punishment by their teachers. Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) spoke about teachers managing classes with a stick in their hand, which was a haunting experience for the children. Meena (Interview, 2010) felt that children did not go to school because of the police-like behaviour of the teachers.

Meena (Interview, 2010) did not blame teachers entirely for the state of affairs in the schools. She said that teachers were forced to behave like policemen because of the large classrooms. She asked: "If there is only one teacher for 100 children in a class, then what will the teacher do?" In a similar vein, Gopal (Interview, 2010), who heads an NGO, argued:

Children are many but in that ratio sufficient teachers are not there and hence teaching does not take place and children remain out of school and they wander around (Gopal, Interview, 2010).

Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) conveyed that the general understanding of the teacher-student ratio was that a minimum of one teacher was required for every 25 children; however, in many schools the ratio is one teacher to 50, 60, or 70 children, which sometimes forces the teacher to hold a stick to help control the class.

Sixteen respondents said that government school education as a system is corrupt.

Johnson revealed the following issues:

First of all there is massive corruption that is to put it in nutshell . . . Every recruitment was based on the bribes you gave, the teachers each one who was recruited was based on the bribes. So, once they have taken the bribes then they are not accountable to anybody . . . And the whole thing was corrupted, corrupted to the core. And so there was no check and balance and there was no monitoring or accountability. Many of the teachers were going and doing other jobs plus taking the government salary, full fat salary. Or they were putting some boys in that place and pay them thousand rupees and they go and do some other jobs. So, this affected. When the teachers were not coming to the school then why should the children come? (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

Nishant held a similar view, suggesting that government school-teachers were recruited not on their merit but on who could pay more. Moses (Interview, 2010) argued that the whole education system is massively corrupt. Similarly, Shahul (Interview, 2010) stated that the arrangements for running the school are completely corrupt:

It was a good thing from the part of the government to introduce School Education Committees. It was meant to include the parents of the children who study in the school and who are from around the school area as members of the committee. There is often big fight in elections to occupy the seat of president or secretary of the committee because they understand that huge amount of money will come into the committee. The intention behind the formation of the committee was to make the school strong, but that is not happening. The committee is trying to make money and they play politics for it (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

He added that the education committee was supposed to have members who were parents of the school children, but in reality the members often belonged to the upper castes and their children did not even study in the schools. He said that if the parents of children who studied in the school were members of the committee, they would automatically encourage their children to go to school, but as that was not happening, the children remained out of school.

Some respondents considered monitoring or inspection to be an important element of running schools and that this could ensure substantial improvement in educational quality (Nishant, Interview, 2010; Shyla, Interview, 2010). However, in their view, no proper monitoring or inspection took place in government schools. Nishant explained this matter in the following way:

No inspection, no constant watching or supporting the system. Only the posts are filled and people are getting jobs . . . but they are not really responsible to the jobs they are getting. As a result in the government school there is no education going on (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Shyla (Interview, 2010), who worked with the government for several years on various projects in the educational field, attributed the whole problem to the lack of an efficient body to oversee the functioning of the schools.

The midday meal programme, which provides children with a free meal at school, was criticised by several respondents (Chotalal, Interview, 2010; Shahul, Interview, 2010; Iqbal, Interview, 2010; Neeraj, Interview, 2010; Ajith, Interview, 2010; Nishant, Interview, 2010; Prakash, Interview, 2010). In their view, discrimination, corruption, and mismanagement were rampant in the implementation of this scheme. Some criticized the fact that the children were made to sit on the ground to have their meals (Ajith, Interview, 2010), while others criticised the discrimination shown by making

children belonging to lower castes sit separately from the upper caste children (Niranjan, interview, 2010; Meena, Interview, 2010). Some respondents reported that low-quality food was given to the children so the administrators could make illicit profits (Chotalal, Interview, 2010). The common view was that everybody in the government from top to bottom was making illicit money by indulging in corrupt practices. One respondent was visibly scared to talk about it openly and briefly summed up his comments as follows:

Midday meal was there earlier also but there is so much corruption and discrimination in it. I read in yesterday's paper regarding a midday meal scandal to the tune of millions of Indian rupees. I will not go into it because you are recording it. I will talk about non-formal education (Iqbal, Interview, 2010).

Shyla, on the other hand, had no qualms about saying things openly and stated that the government introduced several schemes as part of a plan to achieve universal education at the earliest time possible; however, the malpractice in the government system did not allow the schemes to achieve the required goals. She opined:

More and more schemes are brought up by the government but the lack of coordination, lack of supervision and also the selfishness of the middlemen; they are looting the whole amount (Shyla, Interview, 2010).

Several participants expressed the view that school facilities, including school buildings, class-rooms, toilet facilities, and play grounds, are important for helping children gain an interest in education. According to Gopal (Interview, 2010), the schools lacked these facilities. A high-ranking government official also acknowledged that children did not have sufficient space to sit and study. Another respondent made the following comment:

It may be possible that the dropout rate or the non-starter rate kept on increasing while the enrolment rate was in the decline for Class I and Class II because the government failed to provide the required schooling facilities (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

According to Niranjan (Interview, 2010), government schools lacked resources and nothing that encouraged children's learning was found in any government schools. Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) stated that there was a scarcity of schools and added that the lack of toilet facilities was one reason girls were not attending school. Anwar summed up his views on these issues as following:

To learn they should have the school, to learn they should have teachers, to learn they should have books, they should have play ground and other facilities within the school campus. You provide all these things, you create a conducive situation for the children to remain in the school, I think the children will remain in the school (Anwar, Interview, 2010).

Alphonsa pointed out that the government school children did not have access to a library and had never seen a laboratory or a computer. She lamented:

They are deprived of those facilities where the private school children there are one computer to every two children. But in the government school there are no facilities for them and no one seems to be providing these facilities for them (Alphonsa, Interview, 2010).

Some interview participants said that gender bias was a major reason that girls remained out of school (Priya, Interview, 2010; Poonam, Interview, 2010; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010). They said that parents generally preferred to educate their sons and tended to neglect the education of their girl children. One respondent expressed the view that the lack of female teachers forced young girls to leave school, and that early marriage was another reason for girls leaving school early (Chinmayi, interview, 2010).

Poverty was deemed by many of the respondents to be one of the most significant reasons that children leave school (Sumith, Interview, 2010; Moses, Interview, 2010; Gopal, Interview, 2010; Poonam, Interview, 2010; Alok, Interview, 2010; Niranjan, Interview, 2010; Anwar, Interview, 2010; Priya, Interview, 2010; Kusum, Interview,

2010; Meena, Interview, 2010; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010). Several respondents opined that economic deprivation forced parents to send their children out to work, sometimes even to places far from their village (Sumith, Interview, 2010; Gopal, Interview, 2010; Alok, Interview, 2010; Priya, Interview, 2010; Kusum, Interview, 2010; Meena, Interview, 2010; Subha, Interview, 2010; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010). Respondents generally looked at poverty, migration, and child labour as interlinked problems. According to some, even children who did not go out to work were still not able to go to school, because they had to look after the younger ones in their homes while their parents were working (Priya, Interview, 2010; Kusum, Interview, 2010). Eighteen respondents held the view that most children who remained out of school faced extreme poverty in their living environment, sometimes even having to search for food to stave off hunger and starvation. One participant commented on this issue in the following way:

First of all it is a poverty aspect. The family if they don't have enough to eat, education is not a priority above food. So, if the family is hungry they would run around to search for something to eat, something to provide for that family. The parents will run around, the children themselves will go searching what they can get to eat. They may kill birds, they may catch squirrels, they may do anything in order to first of all satisfy that hunger (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

A high-ranking government official also remarked that poverty and child labour hindered children's education (Alok, Interview, 2010).

Seven respondents remarked that the parents of out of school children were also mostly illiterate (Iqbal, Interview, 2010; Niranjana, Interview, 2010; Priya, Interview, 2010; Kanika, Interview, 2010; Meena, Interview, 2010; Subha, Interview, 2010; Poonam, Interview, 2010). They said that parents were ignorant of the benefits children would derive from education and that the parents had a tendency to view their children's

education in terms of economic returns. Several respondents pointed out that many parents who were poor preferred that their children go to work and earn money rather than go for an education and bring in no money. Thus, these parents were not motivated to send their children to school. One respondent made the following remark:

Even if the children are interested in studies their parents would give them so much work due to which the children run away from education . . . Parents think that if their children work then their income would increase. So they put the children into work (Subha, Interview, 2010).

According to some respondents, children remained out of school if the distance between home and school was too great (Shekhar, Interview, 2010; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

This was particularly so for girls as a respondent pointed out:

Schools are so far from their homes that they do not like to go to school. Parents also get worried that something untoward may happen to their daughters on their way to school and so they consider it better that their daughters remain at home (Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

Shahul blamed the inflexible mindset of the parents and their children as a reason some children do not attend school. He said they continue to have an outlook which is demonstrative of certain fatalism:

Unless and until people themselves feel that education is necessary for their life they will not turn to school. Today most children from the *Musahar* community (one of the lowest caste group) are out of school because their tradition is like that and so they think that they should continue to live the way they always lived (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Another reason suggested by some participants was the children's higher age (Alok, Interview, 2010; Sherif, Interview, 2010; Subha, Interview, 2010; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010). They said that children did not show interest in going to school if they had grown too big to sit in a class with others who were smaller and younger in age. A respondent said:

Children grow up without going to schools. In the cities children start going to school when they are young. In the villages children have grown up and so they feel shy to go to school (Subha, Interview, 2010).

Chinmayi felt that the issue of age affected girls more than the boys. She asserted:

Another issue is that the higher the age of the girls the larger their dropout rate in comparison to the boys. Boys also dropout but it is more in the case of girls (Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

5.3.1. Discussion

What emerges from the above analysis is that the reasons that children are not motivated to participate in government school education raises some important issues, which can be organised into six major categories:

- Teacher-related issues
- Educational system issues
- Socio-economic issues
- Gender issues
- Parent-related issues
- Other Issues

Teacher-related issues seem to be a major reason that children avoid school education. These include: teachers' discriminatory practices; a lack of committed and skilled teachers; punishment doled out by teachers; and, unfavourable teacher-student ratios. Equally important are issues related to the educational system, which include: corruption at various levels of the bureaucracy; a lack of proper monitoring or inspection of schools; mismanagement of government schemes by various stakeholders; and, lack of school facilities. Another very important category concerns children's socio-economic issues, which include: poverty; migration of children and their parents to other places for work; and, children getting engaged in work. Gender issues highlight

various disadvantages faced by girls and their resultant failure to participate in education. Major parent-related issues are the parents' ignorance and lack of motivation to send their children to school. Other issues concern: the long distance between home and school; the higher age of children; and, a certain fixed mindset on the part of children and their parents which displays some form of fatalism, and an attitude of resignation and passivity which results from their thinking that they are supposed to live the way they live.

The outcome of the above analysis is summarised in the following table:

Reasons Children Remain Out of School	
Major Issues	Specifics
Teacher-related issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discrimination by teachers - Lack of committed and skilled teachers - Punishment by teachers - Corrupt and dishonest practice by teachers - Unfavourable teacher-student ratio
Educational system issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corruption - Lack of monitoring or supervision - Mismanagement of schemes - Lack of school facilities
Gender issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender bias toward girls - Lack of toilet facility for girls - Early marriage of girls - Lack of lady teachers
Socio-economic issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working children - Migration in search of work - Poverty
Parent-related issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ignorance of parents - Parents are not motivated
Other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long distance travel to school - Mindset of people - Higher age

Figure-6: Reasons children remain out of school

5.4. Factors Motivating Children to Participate in Government Schools

Respondents were asked to suggest key factors which, in their view, could motivate children to participate in government school education. The following analysis examines the data on this important issue.

Some respondents suggested that the teachers needed to engage in proper teaching methods (Ajith, Interview, 2010; Meena, Interview, 2010), while others suggested that the teachers needed to be skilled in their profession (Niranjan, Interview, 2010; Shyla, Interview, 2010). Two respondents suggested that teachers having a child-friendly attitude was important in drawing children to school (Marcus, Interview, 2010; Niranjan, Interview, 2010) and another cited committed teachers who inspire the students as an important factor (Nishant, Interview, 2010). Some others suggested that if the teachers were able to be creative in their teaching, then children would be more likely to go to school (Shekhar, Interview, 2010; Marcus, Interview, 2010). Teachers who were able to understand the children's problems were considered an important factor by one respondent (Priya, Interview, 2010). In a similar vein, some respondents pointed out that teachers should maintain contact with the children and visit their parents to help motivate them (Suraj, Interview, 2010; Poonam, Interview, 2010; Aravind, Interview, 2010). Prakash felt that recruiting local teachers from the same community as the children was important to motivate the children. He remarked:

You should not bring teachers from outside saying that they have degrees, they have qualifications and that they are graduates and so on . . . Such people do not undertake the job with the intention of giving education. Their interest is in getting a job. So, I believe that we need to recruit as teachers those who are from the same community, who believe in the community and whom the villagers believe (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) recommended recruiting at least one female teacher in every government school to encourage girls to go to school.

Shekhar (Interview, 2010) suggested that closely accompanying children was a key way for teachers to ensure children's participation in education. In his view, if a student was continuously absent, then someone had to take the trouble to find out why. Poonam (Interview, 2010) stated that children having faith in their teacher was crucial to their

participation in education, as was their getting personal attention from their teachers (Vijay, Interview, 2010). In a somewhat similar line, Subha (Interview, 2010) pointed out that teachers should be able to engage in dialogue with each child to motivate them. Pointing out that higher age was a detrimental factor regarding children's participation in education Midhun (Interview, 2010) suggested that children's education begins at an early age. Linking children's friendship circle was seen by Gopal as an effective way to work with children (Interview, 2010), as he felt it would help elicit a collective positive response from children. Shahul (Interview, 2010) suggested that using successful models, such as a "children's parliament" – (a mock parliament consisting of giving children specific responsibilities and duties in imitation of the real parliament) - in educational environments to instil in them a sense of responsibility and ownership, would serve to develop their interest in education.

Some called for improving the school structures and facilities, such as: beautifying the school atmosphere (Sherif, Interview, 2010); building more schools with drinking water and toilet facilities (Chinmayi; Prakash, Interview, 2010); and, making the school environment healthier and more interesting for the students (Marcus, Interview, 2010). Some other suggestions pointed toward policy-level interventions, such as better government policy on education (Sumith, Interview, 2010), and providing good incentives, scholarships, and schemes (Moses; Prakash, Interview, 2010). Some respondents argued that curriculum and teaching needed improvement (Chotalal; Gopal, Interview, 2010). According to Chotalal (Interview, 2010), a suitable and contextualised curriculum was necessary to increase children's attendance at school. Gopal (Interview, 2010) suggested that the play method, which uses various games to communicate with children, is important to engage the children in learning activities. Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) suggested an innovative teacher training programme to promote creative

teaching. Improving the support structures of school education was suggested by Shahul (Interview, 2010), who said that there were already some support structures established by the government, such as school education committees, which should be made functional in a corruption free manner. Similarly, the proper monitoring of school education was needed periodically. Shahul recommended that involving the Panchayathi Raj Institute (PRI), which is a local administrative body, in school education would be beneficial for the children. He remarked:

The children who are out of school belong to the low castes such as *Musahars, Dom, Dhobi, Chamar, Paswan*, and so on. It is necessary to understand the fundamental problems of people belonging to these castes. They will then come forward. PRI can play a very useful role for the same because PRI is about local governance . . . We have to include the PRI and create awareness in the parents (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Some other factors suggested by respondents included providing a free and fearless atmosphere for children in the school (Vijay, Interview, 2010; Priya, Interview, 2010), conducting regular morning school assembly (Sherif, Interview, 2010), and providing a good-quality education (Ajith, Interview, 2010). According to Priya (Interview, 2010), being punished by a teacher created fear and those who got punishment did not return to the school. Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) suggested that teachers should not be given other assignments, such as surveys or census work or election duties.

Some commented that addressing the issue of poverty was imperative to bring about a progressive change in the enrolment and retention of children in schools (Niranjan; Chinmayi, Interview, 2010). A respondent, who had several year of experience of imparting non-formal education, noted that many poor children were malnourished (Marcus, Interview, 2010), and he suggested that sufficient nutritious food was required for children to develop properly and that this was important for enabling children's participation in education. Some others suggested that the community should get

involved in educational efforts with the government to increase the enrolment and retention of children in schools (Gopal, Interview, 2010; Alok, Interview, 2010). In their view, a purely governmental approach was insufficient to bring children to school. A respondent felt that the children's social consciousness was badly affected by the nature of today's society and the market-oriented life and that effort should therefore be made to improve their social consciousness (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

Four participants opined that creating awareness about education is important to motivate children and their parents to get 'youngsters' to school (Johnson, Interview, 2010; Iqbal, Interview, 2010; Purohit, Interview, 2010; Prakash, Interview, 2010). They suggested using street plays, posters, banners, and action songs to organise awareness campaigns. Some respondents suggested that presenting role models and examples of people who became successful through education was important to motivate children as such people often were not accessible to children from disadvantaged and marginalised communities (Subha, Interview, 2010; Suraj, Interview, 2010).

Parents have an important role to play in the education of their children, according to several respondents. Motivating the parents and involving them in their local school's implementation strategies could pay rich dividends in terms of getting their children to school (Gopal, Interview, 2010). The director of an NGO explained:

I will tell you what we have done. One thing is that we prepared educational dramas and role plays. It was on education. Then we publicized it in the villages through street plays, role plays and puppet shows. We made organisations in the villages . . . We made Self Help Groups (SHG) of women and we motivated the mothers through SHGs. The animators of SHGs motivate the parents. Parents are told that without sending their children to school nothing of education will happen to them. And we are getting results of it. People are getting motivated and are sending their ward to schools (Iqbal, Interview, 2010).

Kanika revealed a helpful strategy adopted by her NGO to motivate the parents, which was to inform them about the government schemes available for their children at the school, such as the midday meal, free uniforms, bicycles, and so on. She commented that “unless and until the parents send their children, they would not be able to go to school” (Kanika, Interview, 2010).

5.4.1. Discussion

Each respondent has suggested a different set of factors as being potentially capable of contributing to children’s participation in government school education. Although their answers vary in terms of the specific factors, some common features can be grouped under certain categories as follows:

- Teacher-related factors
- Children-related factors
- Educational system factors
- Socio-economic factors
- Parent-related Factors.

A leading factor emerging from the analysis concerns teacher-related issues. Committed, skilled, creative, and child-friendly teachers who engage in teaching activity properly and regularly and who understand the problems of children are important in motivating them to go to school. Teachers’ visits to students and their parents in their home environment is also an important aspect of developing a trusting relationship with children and their families. This is particularly important in a society divided by caste. Therefore, policy-makers and educational planners may seriously consider outreach programmes for teachers. Recruiting local teachers may also be in the best interest of the children as they would know the children and their community well.

Moreover, such teachers would not be able to shirk their responsibilities in the school as they would be closely monitored by the community members.

A range of factors which emerge from the analysis can be considered children-related. They suggest that children need personal attention from their teachers, close accompaniment by their teachers, and help in connecting with their friendship circle. Teachers also have to be able to engage in dialogue with children on important issues rather than punishing them. These factors suggest the need for a children-centred approach in all educational activity, from the planning to the implementation stage. They also indicate that all pedagogical practices ought to place children at the centre.

Educational system factors highlight the need for improvement in a number of areas including: augmentation of schools and school facilities which are of a good standard; improved educational policies; contextualised curriculum; effective training to enable the teachers to undertake teaching in a creative way using innovative methods; effective implementation of support structures such as school education committees; involving PRI in school education; and, proper monitoring of schools.

Socio-economic factors point to the extreme poverty and the consequent disadvantages in terms of education of children belonging to marginalised communities. Government and other policy-makers need to work out plans to address the issue of poverty to enable children to participate in education. Any educational campaigns or efforts to raise awareness are futile if children and their family have to search for food to satisfy their hunger.

Parent-related factors bring to light the importance of informing parents about the advantages of educating their children. Parents' ignorance is a major reason that they do

not allow their children to attend school. Such efforts must concentrate on making the parents aware of the importance of education in their children's life.

The major motivating factors that emerged from the analysis are summarised in the table below:

Factors Motivating Children to Participate in Government School Education	
Major Factors	Specifics
Teacher-related factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Child-friendly teachers - Committed teachers - Creative teaching - Female teachers - Proper and regular teaching - Local teachers - Skilled teachers - Teachers visiting children's homes - Teachers who understand children and their needs - Teacher keeping contact with children
Children-related factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children getting accompaniment from teachers - Children having faith in teachers - Models such as children's parliament - Teachers having dialogue with children - Linking children's friendship circle - Children getting personal attention - Children getting early education
Educational system factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved school structures and facilities, such as beautification of school, building more schools, providing drinking-water and toilet facilities, etcetera. - Policy level interventions, such as a better government policy on education and providing good incentives, scholarships and schemes. - Curriculum and teaching related factors, such as contextualised learning, play method and activities, suitable curriculum, and innovating teacher training. - Improved support structures, such as a functioning education committee, effective monitoring of schools, and involving PRI. - Other factors, such as fearless atmosphere in the school, regular morning school assembly, good quality education, and not assigning non-teaching works to teachers.
Socio-economic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building social consciousness in children - Addressing poverty - Community involvement - Creating awareness - Examples of successful community members
Parent-related factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving parents in educational matters - Raising parents' awareness

Figure-7: Motivating factors for children to participate in government school education.

5.5. Current Nature and State of Non-Formal Education

Respondents generally believed that non-formal education was no longer being encouraged by the government, although voluntary organisations continued to run such programmes. In their view, government was more interested in enrolling the children in schools. Johnson (Interview, 2010) said that “government is trying to abolish this whole non-formal system and to bring all the children to the schools”. One respondent stated that the Right to Education Act, which made the elementary education of children free and compulsory until the age of 14, forced the government to enrol children in schools (Chotalal, Interview, 2010). Although many of the respondents felt that the government effort to get children to government schools was correct, they sounded pessimistic about children getting a quality education in government schools. As one respondent commented:

Today, non-formal education programmes are closed. Instead, government is running various training programmes with a view to achieve Education for All. School teachers are given motivation and are also provided with various types of technical knowledge such as games. However, no improvement has taken place, not even for name sake (Chotalal, Interview, 2010).

Some respondents pointed out that the government’s move to discontinue existing non-formal education centres gave rise to new non-formal education initiatives by non-governmental organisations. Johnson (Interview, 2010) opined that “currently, the non-formal education system in Bihar is in a very fluid state” and added that it is going through a lot of changes. Link-Schools, which provide tuition to school-going children in a non-formal way was an example of the changes occurring in non-formal initiatives (Moses, Interview, 2010). NFE Bridge Course was another initiative which helped children learn competencies necessary to be mainstreamed into schools (Midhun,

Interview, 2010; Vijay, Interview, 2010; Iqbal, Interview, 2010). Nishant spoke about his initiatives on semi-formal schools for the continued education of children:

We built a school, we managed to make sheds with sticks and so on, which had two rooms and we provided them with teachers. They were half non-formal and half formal schools following the non-formal books so that the education levels can be reached without too much importance being given to the strictness of the standard you know like 1st standard, 2nd standard, and 3rd standard and so on, that was not there (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Another NGO director felt that the government's move to discontinue non-formal education was precipitate, in that the education of many children in remote villages would suffer. He lamented:

In practice the government is not ready or somehow they are still not willing to accept the reality in the remote areas where hardly any government schools function and where there is hardly any education . . . So people are helpless . . . no schools are there . . . Now where will these children go? (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

5.5.1. Discussion

What emerges from the analysis is that government initiatives and support for non-formal education is declining. Government is focusing on enrolling children in formal schools. Non-governmental agencies, on the other hand, are carrying on with the non-formal education of children. Furthermore, they have found new ways of engaging with the children by running link-school, residential bridge courses, and semi-formal schools.

Government efforts to increase school enrolment is creditable; however, efforts must also focus on improving the quality of education in government schools. The analysis above reveals that the quality of education in government schools has not improved. Therefore, forcing the children to go to these schools without improving the quality of education will bring them no real advantage. Moreover, more schools are still needed, especially in the remote areas, to meet the educational needs of children, as has been

pointed out by many participants. Therefore, discontinuing non-formal education at this juncture does not seem an appropriate decision.

The following analysis will examine participants' views on the contribution non-formal education makes to the education of children.

5.6. Educational Contribution of Non-Formal Education

All but one respondent, including the government officials, felt that non-formal education had been successful in making a large number of children's participation in education possible. The participant who differed in opinion argued that education should be the responsibility of the state and that all children should be taught through formal schools (Anwar, Interview, 2010). The rest of the participants felt that non-formal education contributed greatly to the education of disadvantaged children. One respondent offered the following comment:

It has been successful. We can see that in our centres. We had 40 centres in places where the children were not going to schools. Today those children are going to schools. They are enrolled in schools. They were the children who were frightened to turn their face to the direction of the school and who kept telling that they were born to work and that they would continue to work till their death (Sumith, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent shared a similar view:

In my experience, it has been very successful. I saw tremendous improvement in the children who attended non-formal education . . . Change was seen in the people of the community also. We linked children to schools through non-formal education (Chotalal, Interview, 2010).

Government officials also made positive remarks about the contribution non-formal education made to the education of children. A senior official remarked:

Non-formal education has accomplished an important role at present. It is very evident because from the year 2005 to 2010 if you see you will find that in the year 2005 there were about 25 Lac children who were deprived of education. Efforts have been made from the year 2005 through non-formal

education methods to ensure their elementary education and to bring them to school. Today, from that group there are about 7 Lac children remaining and they are being given education through non-formal education in this year. So, this is a big achievement that is there before us of non-formal education in Bihar from the year 2005 till 2010 (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

Some respondents believed that non-formal education helped children to study and progress further in life. One respondent made the following remarks:

In the belt where we have worked, the children who have gone through our education have reached matriculation, intermediate, and B.A. They have gone ahead because after educating them at our non-formal centres we joined them into schools (Gopal, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent who has more than 25 years of experience in non-formal education expressed a similar view:

Now there are people who have gone through this process. Now they are in colleges, they have become teachers. Those who have missed out on education now they have become teachers for such groups . . . Many examples we have. People have become teachers and then committed to teaching people who are like these. So, this is a very good method, I would say (Marcus, Interview, 2010).

Six respondents viewed non-formal education as able to achieve positive results, even in difficult and unfriendly environments. One non-formal education trainer said:

The villagers always tell that education is not a thing of the poor. For example, the people in my place in West Champaran used to tell that education is not really for them but that it was for the ‘big people’ meaning that it was for the rich and high caste. Non-formal education succeeded in changing this thinking and showed that the poor also has a right to education and that children of the poor can go to school (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent, who was the director of an NGO which started several non-formal education centres in a crime prone area, stated:

We had some of the areas we got involved for the first time where hardly any schools run and where there was a high rate of crime. And because of the crime the government agencies did not want to get into those areas . . . And in a three to four year period we could see the enormous change we brought in that area . . . That was the biggest factory where the biggest criminals were being produced. . . So what I am saying is that even in such

places we could make an entry and make a difference and open those places to the world and it made a lot of difference to the society. So in various ways, we could use this method to bring light to the lives of the people (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

In the opinion of an experienced non-formal education provider, non-formal education had been instrumental in changing many lives. She remarked:

I see non-formal education has got its very vital role especially for people who cannot approach formal education and this prepares them to bring a change in their life in their attitude, change in their outlook of life and I have come across many women, many adults and children who have learnt in non-formal education centres and from there they were able to take off to formal government set up learnt and have become kind of you know 'qualified' to go further in their studies. So I think non-formal education is a powerful tool (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

Although the respondents were positive about the achievements of non-formal education in general, many felt that non-formal education centres run by the government did not achieve much success. They felt that the corrupt practices in the government system did not allow the centres to function effectively. A respondent commented:

See, whatever number of non-formal education centres which the government ran in India or in Bihar, all of them failed because they worked at a wide level and problems came in its management. People had no inclination towards it due to which it failed badly (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

In a similar vein, Marcus had the following comments about the government's approach to non-formal education:

But unfortunately the government did not pay any attention as I said it was a devalued programme by itself. The government did not pay much attention to this programme. It was some sort of a programme to give some education to people who were deprived or marginalised. Government did not take this as a serious or a programme with lot of potential as a parallel medium to the very formal education. It could have been a very good parallel with full of potential but the government did not see that potential (Marcus, Interview, 2010).

5.6.1. Discussion

Respondents' views reveal that non-formal education has achieved convincing success in educating marginalised children and spreading educational awareness among the disadvantaged communities. The success of non-formal education is acknowledged by both government officials and NGO representatives. More than half of the respondents said that children attend schools when they are mainstreamed after receiving a non-formal education, and they are able to live a better life than to those who lacked education. A positive feature of non-formal education, highlighted by the analysis, is that it is able to achieve significant results, even in the difficult and adverse environments where formal schools may find it hard to perform. However, non-formal education centres financed and managed by the government do not produce positive results owing to corruption and mismanagement, much the same way as occurs regarding formal government schools. It points to the fact that much of the success of non-formal education is achieved by non-governmental initiatives. Therefore, private non-formal education providers continue to view its potential for producing helpful outcomes for marginalised children while government is closing down its centres.

The approach that NGOs take to non-formal education and their engagement with the community are significant factors in the sector's success. The NGO approach involved the community, the parents, and the children in their efforts to reach out to the target group. It is important to keep in mind that most of the children from disadvantaged communities are the first generation in their family to have any educational access. They have no history of education in their families, as their communities have remained illiterate for centuries. An NGO director shared the following insight:

They are coming from an agricultural background, a community who have never had land. So landless people who have been discriminated against, people who have no culture of education or background of education that in

their families neither their parents nor their grandparents are educated. So it is really a new idea that we are putting into them when we are giving them non-formal education (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

Therefore, merely urging these people to participate in education is futile. Parents and other community leaders need to be involved in the whole process as their cooperation is critical to ensuring children's participation. The following excerpts from the interview of an experienced non-formal education provider show the approach he used to elicit positive response from the people:

We called the people, we formed committees. And people's help was used to write the name of the children who would study at the centre. Who would teach the children? And how would they monitor in these centres? Monitor the teachers? And we formed committees in the villages. And we gave them residential programmes for 5 days each for these committee members, which somehow opened their eyes. And so we could get quite a lot of cooperation from those people. They felt the real need for educating their children. Until then they had never bothered about these things (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

In government schools, on the other hand, involving people in educational planning seldom occurs as they seemingly expect the children and their parents to come to the school voluntarily. This has resulted in a huge number of children remaining uneducated.

The NGOs' approach is often multi-pronged, as they work with the people to empower them in various aspects of their life. For example, one major NGO effort concerns organising and guiding women's self-help groups (SHG) - small voluntary associations of women from poor and marginalised communities who share the same socio-economic background. SHGs are "one form of implementing microcredit schemes to address poverty" (Tesoriero, 2006, p. 321). Group members begin with compulsory periodic savings, thereby generating a substantial amount of capital from which needy members are allowed to borrow in the form of very low-interest loans. Observing the

group members' collective capability to repay loans, banks are also willing to lend money to SHGs (see Mohanty & Panda, 2007). The common objectives of SHGs for women in India concern their social and economic empowerment and their capacity building in terms of skills, knowledge, and leadership roles (Tesoriero, 2006). The fact that the group members in most cases are illiterate and uneducated calls for the highest level of integrity, competence, and commitment from NGOs to ensure the successful functioning of SHGs.

Engaging with people through efforts like the SHGs helps NGOs develop good rapport with them. For instance, Shekhar, who runs an NGO among the deprived communities, began his engagement through SHG efforts, and the group members gradually raised the issue of educating their children when they met as a group. He said:

In our place the project that we have worked with, okay . . . we just began with the SHGs and when we conducted meetings this topic was coming up very much the need for educating the children. It is their need. They expressed it. So, their contribution is more (Shekhar, Interview, 2010).

Shekhar was able to use the platform provided by SHG efforts to raise educational awareness among its members. Moreover, people developed a trusting relationship with his team of animators and other staff. This resulted in the effective running of non-formal education centres too. Therefore, NGOs' involvement in non-formal education can be advantageous for the marginalised communities.

The following analysis will examine whether interview participants consider non-formal education necessary for the education of poor, marginalised children.

5.7. Is Non-Formal Education Necessary?

Respondents generally agreed that non-formal education would not be necessary if the formal schools, both public and private, functioned well and if people spontaneously

sent their children to schools. In their view, however, formal schools run by the government did not function well and did not offer quality education. They also felt that many communities still did not see the need to educate their children. Therefore, a large majority of the respondents felt that non-formal education was necessary in the current scenario. Moreover, they saw that a considerable number of children belonging to disadvantaged communities were working children. Therefore, in their view, it was necessary to continue with non-formal education. A respondent argued:

Of course non-formal education is important. One reason is that the quality of elementary education given by the state is not possible in the current situation (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed a similar view:

Since in government schools not much education is going on . . . at least for some more time this least of the least need to have this non-formal education (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

He added that migration was a major problem which makes children's education in formal schools impossible. In his view, non-formal education is a must for them. He talked about several brick factories where people went to work for many months with the whole family. He explained:

The whole family comes there and they are working till rainy season and they go for one or two months to their home. They have no way of education. They will never be educated unless some centres are started in their place and find out the time which can be changed according to their need and season and so on. So, for some group non-formal education is a must (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent also firmly argued that poverty and related issues made non-formal education necessary. He argued:

Look, the thing is that if you look at Bihar there is so much poverty there even now. People have to think about having two time's meal even today. In that kind of a situation when the children earn their daily food through work it is not possible that they leave their work and go to schools. They like to

work as well as study. In that situation non-formal education is very useful for them (Sumith, Interview, 2010).

Government officials also agreed that non-formal education was necessary for children from marginalised communities. A senior official stated:

It is a different issue that the number of children from marginalised communities attending non-formal education is more. It is necessary for them. It cannot be said that non-formal education is entirely necessary for the education of any children because no child's education can be said to be complete without going through the formal education. We make efforts through non-formal education to prepare them so that they can be linked to formal education (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

A high-ranked government official also expressed a similar view:

Basically non-formal education is a tool to ensure universalisation of elementary education. How you ensure universalisation of elementary education is by making this education available to the communities which are removed from such facilities. So, basically to address the issues of equity and access non-formal education remains important (Alok, Interview, 2010).

Some respondents from the NGO sector, however, did not view non-formal education merely as a tool to provide education. In their view, it was an approach to make positive changes in the mindset of the people, which could then lead to their unprompted participation in education. A respondent had the following comment:

Look, there are many children who do not go to school now. Even if the government makes a hundred thousand efforts and give them food, dress and bicycles still they do not reach there. It means that their mindset has not changed and their family situation has not changed. And, non-formal education is not merely a medium for learning alphabets. It motivates people. It remains always with the people. So, if non-formal education centres are open then it means that it will run totally in that atmosphere through which a capability is developed in the people. Unless and until people themselves feel that education is necessary for their life they will not turn to school (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

The view expressed by another respondent in the following excerpt support Shahul's argument:

It [non-formal education] is very necessary for those who have had no education because non-formal education is connected to their life. It is not the alphabets alone that are taught in non-formal education but about their total life, about how they fight against the problems in their life and how they find solutions to the problems. All the issues related to their life are dealt with in non-formal education (Iqbal, Interview, 2010).

Subha added further support to the empowering aspect non-formal education has in the lives of people. She commented:

If they get education through non-formal education then they get motivated for further education. They become capable of going out and of knowing their rights (Subha, Interview, 2010).

Admitting children directly into government schools was likely to result in their failure to continue their education, according to Meena (Interview, 2010), a non-formal education animator. In her view, non-formal education was necessary to motivate the children. She said:

What happens if they study at the centres is that they will be mainstreamed later on. If they are directly admitted to schools without any non-formal training then there are problems since they do not have a base. However, if we mainstream them through non-formal education then we will be successful in achieving in them the required level of competency befitting to the Classes into which they will be admitted (Meena, Interview, 2010).

5.7.1. Discussion

Analysis suggests that non-formal education is important in the present scenario for the education of marginalised children. Although formal school is seen as the most desirable system of education, the low quality of education in government schools strongly favours the continuation of non-formal education. Moreover, non-formal education is considered critical in raising awareness about the importance of education among members of marginalised communities who pay no attention to their children's education. Moreover, the educational needs of working children cannot be adequately met by the formal educational system, as their educational demands require flexible

adjustments in timing and venue. Non-formal education is perceived to be particularly beneficial for working children. Furthermore, in the context of the universalisation of elementary education, non-formal education is perceived as significant in addressing the issues of equity and access.

An important aspect which the analysis highlights is that non-formal education is perceived by many in the NGO sector to be more than a mere tool for education. It is viewed by the NGO sector as being part of a wider approach to the empowerment of members of marginalised communities. Hence, making positive changes in the mindset of people that enable them to spontaneously participate in education is a key component of the NGO's non-formal educational activities. Children who are mainstreamed into formal schools after attending non-formal education are therefore expected to show greater resilience and motivation to continue their education than those who enrol without any non-formal education background.

I will now focus on the views of the children who participated in the focus group interviews on non-formal education. It will examine whether their experience has been positive and whether they appreciate their experiences at the non-formal education centres.

5.8. Children's Experience of Non-Formal Education:

Among the five focus group interviews conducted with a total of 79 children, everybody sounded positive about their experience at the non-formal education centres. They did not have any negative views of the quality of the education at the centres, although some felt that the extreme heat and cold they experienced at the centre was uncomfortable at times. Most viewed the centres as providing them opportunities to get an education which they otherwise would not have received. Some children said that

they would have studied at nearby schools if the centre had not been established in their locality. However, their views seemed more a wish than a practical plan, because there was nothing to prevent them from studying at the schools instead of at the centre. The general view of the majority of the children was that in the absence of non-formal education centres they would have paid private school tuition or would have remained uneducated.

The children commonly agreed that the non-formal education instructors were proactive and encouraging in their approach to educating them. Members of Focus Group 5 were more vocal in this regard. This group included those who went through non-formal education before they became part of a residential educational programme. They were attending formal schools at the time of the interview. One child said:

My experience was that the instructors went from house to house to call the children and taught them. I was impressed by it (Priyanka Kumari, Focus Group Interview, 2010).

Another child expressed a similar view:

We never had time to study. We used to go to the paddy field. *Deedi*² came to call us and we used to leave our work and go to study (Vanaja Kumari, Focus Group Interview, 2010).

A large majority of children said they would like to see many more children studying through non-formal education. Nobody answered in the negative to the question of whether they would be happy to bring other children to non-formal education centres to get their education. Their general view was that more children should be given the opportunity to study through non-formal education.

² Children call any elder woman in their society *Deedi* in Hindi Language, which means elder sister. In most cases, children called female non-formal education instructors *Deedi*.

5.9. Conclusion

The highlight of this chapter has been seen in the analysis of the data which shed light on both the general educational atmosphere in government schools and the present state and nature of non-formal education in India. The analysis has brought to light the reasons that children remain out of school and what can motivate children to participate in public school education.

Analysis of data from this study revealed that the quality of education in government schools is not satisfactory, since bureaucratic corruption at various levels and in diverse forms seriously impedes the normal functioning of government schools. Non-performing teachers were seen as a major cause for the unsatisfactory state of affairs in the public schools. Many government schemes with great potential to generate a positive response from children and their parents about their participation in education were seen to have failed, due to the collective mismanagement and corrupt practices of the people responsible for their implementation, which include the teachers, other school staff, and government officers.

The analysis shows that according to the results of this study, the reason that many children remain out of school relate to a complex web of interconnected factors, including poverty, discrimination, systemic failures deriving from the corrupt and dishonest practices of teachers and other responsible people in the government machinery, and a lack of educational awareness among disadvantaged communities. Making constructive changes in these factors will help motivate children to participate in government school education.

Analysis demonstrates that governmental support for non-formal education is presently on the decline, although NGOs continue with non-formal education efforts. A lack of

government support forces NGOs to look for new ways of engaging with children and their communities. Link schools, bridge schools, and semi-formal schools are examples of such initiatives. It remains to be seen whether these initiatives will continue to produce the same successful outcomes which many committed NGOs have achieved in the past for the children.

The poor quality of education in government schools and the lack of readiness in many disadvantaged communities to participate independently in education are the major reasons NGOs cite to support the continuation of non-formal education. The multi-pronged approach of NGO workers, which facilitates the education of children, is revealed by the analysis as generating positive responses from children and their parents. The syllabus and curriculum-based functioning of government schools with practically no community involvement is considered less effective in eliciting positive responses from children and their parents. The data analysis, therefore, suggests the need to continue non-formal education.

The children's views examined in the analysis demonstrate that non-formal education appears to have a significantly positive impact on them. The non-formal education teaching staff members apparently receive desirable responses from the children in terms of enabling their participation in education. Evidence suggests that their strategy to visit children and their parents where they live or work motivates children to take part in non-formal education. The children's overall experience of non-formal education is seen as positive.

Having examined the nature and state of the non-formal education of children in the context of Bihar, the study will now turn to the analysis of the data on values education perspectives, which is the focus of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

VALUES EDUCATION PERSPECTIVES

6.1. Introduction

Data analysis in this chapter examines study participants' views on two important issues: (a) the moral perspectives underpinning the non-formal education of children in India; and, (b) the integration of values education into non-formal education. Participants were asked to explain what they thought of as constituting the moral philosophy behind the non-formal education of children in India. The aim in asking this was to gather information on the moral perspectives which inspire non-formal education workers to engage in this activity. An examination of their moral perspectives will also help determine whether there is any link between their moral perspectives and the way they perceive the values education of children, or the importance they give to it. Therefore, I will turn to analysing the moral perspectives of respondents on non-formal education before addressing their values education perspectives. The outcome of the data analysis in this chapter is expected to answer the research question on the integration of values education by experienced non-formal education providers and what they anticipate the positive effects of values education will be.

Respondents generally did not want to associate themselves with any religion. None of the interview participants was involved in providing education exclusively to any religious group. Their non-formal education centres served children belonging to different religions including Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Respondents from both governmental and non-governmental agencies generally identified themselves as secular.

6.2. Moral Underpinnings of Non-Formal Education

Poonam considered educating all children to be the moral philosophy behind non-formal education. She said:

Moral principle of non-formal education in India I think is that we feel that all should get education, universalisation of education (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

Another participant shared a similar opinion:

The philosophy behind non-formal education is to bring into the mainstream of education those children from marginalised areas where there is not even a school and where nobody has any reach (Kusum, Interview, 2010).

For others, the moral philosophy behind non-formal education was the realization of education as the children's right (Niranjan, Interview, 2010; Neeraj, Interview, 2010; Vijay, Interview, 2010; Priya, Interview, 2010). In their view, education is a fundamental right of all children, and since formal education was unable to fulfil this right for many, non-formal education was aiming to fill this gap. Niranjan (Interview, 2010) commented that "moral philosophy is everybody has a right to education."

Another respondent had a similar opinion:

Through NFE we make it like education as children's right . . . Here we have centres and at the same time we have a development committee. So through that our purpose is to motivate government school teachers or equip them with more up-to-date information and knowledge to provide quality education to children and children demand education as their right; a quality and compulsory education as their right (Priya, Interview, 2010).

A high-ranked government official also had a rights-based perspective on the moral philosophy:

Under Bihar Education Project the basic philosophy is that elementary education being a legal right must be made available to the deprived sections particularly the religious and linguistic minorities and the scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Children (Alok, Interview, 2010).

Some other respondents perceived educating disadvantaged children as the moral philosophy behind non-formal education (Sumith, Interview, 2010; Shekhar, Interview, 2010; Alok, Interview, 2010; Alphonsa, Interview, 2010; Kusum, Interview, 2010). As Sumith pointed out:

See, our moral thinking behind non-formal education is, as I have told you already, that to connect to education those children who do not have time for education or are unable to go to private schools due to child labour (Sumith, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed a similar view:

I think it is to provide education for those who are deprived of basic education (Alphonsa, Interview, 2010).

Yet another respondent agreed:

In a nutshell the philosophy is that the deprived ones are given chances, opportunities for education (Shekhar, Interview, 2010).

Other views that participants expressed about the moral philosophy behind non-formal education included: spreading educational awareness among deprived communities (Ajith, Interview, 2010), organising collective work for education (Moses, Interview, 2010), achieving an educated and prosperous society (Aravind, Interview, 2010), empowering weaker sections (Alok, Interview, 2010), providing joyful learning (Neeraj; Lakshman, Interview, 2010), and making good citizens (Iqbal, Interview, 2010).

Respondents generally agreed that the moral philosophy might vary from agency to agency. In their view, all agencies did not have the same commitment to educating the children. Therefore, they argued that depending on the nature and type of agency, the moral philosophy could also differ, according to them. As one respondent pointed out:

If a group, an agency let us say, if it has understood and it has taken up that education is the basic thing then it will go for it with lot of enthusiasm . . . Otherwise other agencies, they can say okay we have some education programme . . . The agency does not give a sense of urgency and they don't really show that they are convinced (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed a similar view:

It can vary. It varies also because there are some groups who consider it as an isolated event that education is the only component or the main component (Moses, Interview, 2010).

He added that an approach of that sort was lacking in important aspects, such as building awareness, social consciousness, or a sense of the equality of human beings.

To highlight the different moral perspectives among agencies, one respondent pointed out the dishonest practices of some agencies:

Depending on the organisations such moral philosophy can be different. I have seen that organisations run by the missionaries and by some non-missionary organisations also have done some good works for non-formal education. I have seen it while working with them. However, in the present situation there is so much of unemployment and many who have contacts with government officials and administrators or with political leaders have managed to register their own organisations through unfair means and run their organisations like a business for profit (Chotalal, Interview, 2010).

An experienced non-formal education in-charge argued in a similar vein:

Yes, I have told you previously that when people do not get a good job or do not get a good position they feel a kind of helplessness, a sort of compulsion to join non-formal education and they run it the way they like and their interest will be in getting whatever income they can from it and they will be corrupt also (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent remarked that moral philosophy could vary among agencies and that governmental non-formal education initiatives had serious impediments. He commented:

Yes, it varies. I found the government run programmes of NFE often you know they are just for the formality sake . . . Whereas there are committed NGOs, at least a few that I have been involved in imparting non-formal

education, I found them very much into what I have mentioned as conscientisation, creating awareness among the masses through non-formal education (Ajith, Interview, 2010).

Another question was asked of the interview participants in connection with the moral perspectives question to find out what kind of people engage in providing non-formal education in the private sector. Although a majority of respondents pointed to social workers as the largest group, other professions were also mentioned by many including lawyers, government officials, engineers, health workers, human rights activists, religious priests and nuns, social activists, teachers, and educationists. Respondents generally agreed that anybody who saw the need for alternative ways of educating children committed themselves to engage in non-formal education. A respondent referred to them as people having a “real heart for the people” (Johnson, Interview, 2010). He explained:

And somehow when they come in touch with these kinds of people in the villages or in their own contexts of work it simply ignites a certain fire in them. And they begin to reflect as well as they begin to think of how he or she could contribute to help these children and then they begin to experiment with different things (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent shared a similar view:

What I have experienced from my life is that those who encourage non-formal education are the ones who are having an interest in the social field, or also in the health field. My experience is this because I feel the more the members get into the society . . . or in the health field they come in touch with the life situations of the people from the non-formal sector (Shyla, Interview, 2010).

Some respondents maintained that anyone could get involved in non-formal education, provided that they had a sincere commitment and vision to educate children (Poonam, Interview, 2010; Kusum, Interview, 2010; Subha, Interview, 2010; Johnson, Interview, 2010). Poonam remarked:

I think the ones who can get involved with non-formal education is anyone who sees that education is very vital to individuals, to communities (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent shared a related view:

I don't see any difficulty in people from different professions coming into this and that is the beauty of it I think and that is where this non-formal education has no boundary whatever (Marcus, Interview, 2010).

A government official who oversees the non-formal education of girls argued along a similar line:

There is nothing like that in non-formal education that any one category of professionals or people of any particular level can get involved in it . . . There is no barrier and any volunteering NGOs could run it or any individuals could run it. It can be anyone and in fact it is that way (Kusum, Interview, 2010).

6.2.1. Discussion

Data analysis suggests that the in-charges of non-formal education hold diverse views regarding the moral perspectives which underpin non-formal education. The respondents' pragmatic answers reveal that non-formal education providers generally do not have a common moral philosophy which informs their practice. However, providing disadvantaged poor children an education is a major moral perspective which inspires many non-formal education providers to engage in this activity. In their view, every child needs an education and non-formal education is a means to achieve it.

Analysis reveals that respondents are aware of the varied moral perspectives among agencies. They identify the diverse types of agencies as the main reason for the different moral perspectives. In their view, not all agencies engage in non-formal education with the same level of commitment; while some are sincere and deeply committed, others are corrupt or indolent. A majority of NGOs are viewed as committed and honest by the

respondents, but government agencies are not. Some non-governmental agencies are also considered fraudulent and as existing merely to make money in dishonest ways.

The analysis reveals that people from various professions engage in providing non-formal education to children, although social workers, health workers, and lawyers form the majority. The NGO sector provides them with an atmosphere conducive to educational engagement and enables them to interact with people through activities aimed at their empowerment. The diverse professional backgrounds of non-formal education providers may be a contributing factor in the surfacing of multiple moral perspectives on non-formal education.

Are the multiple moral perspectives found among the respondents suggestive of a plurality of views regarding the integration of values education into non-formal education? What are their perspectives on values education? What positive effects do they expect values education to have? Attention will now focus on the study participants' perspectives on integrating values education into the non-formal education of children in India.

6.3. Values Education Perspectives

Some respondents stated that values education is what makes people educated, rather than their academic achievement. A respondent remarked:

Education is not about learning alphabets or mathematics. Many people have degrees but not all of them are really educated. Until and unless morality comes into an individual he or she cannot be considered educated (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed a similar view:

Look education should be value based. If it is not so then education is not education, it is merely a degree, a thing of literacy and it is for this reason, due to not receiving value based education a group is taking shape of

educated people whose sympathy for the society is finished (Lakshman, Interview, 2010).

A government official also had a similar opinion:

If you know how to read and write but if moral values are not there in you then you are not educated. If you are educated then you will have moral values. It can be the case that I may not know to read and write but I am still educated if I have moral values (Kusum, Interview, 2010).

One respondent considered values education important in fostering love in children:

The whole world is failing due to the absence of values education. Globalisation, marketisation, working against the best interest of others and stealing benefits of others and so on are there, why? Purification of heart did not occur to you and me. Love has not sprouted in you and me. Everything is finished if there is no love. Everything is over if there is no purification of heart. Therefore, all these things are very truthful that until and unless value education comes in front, children's achievement and children's betterment of life will not happen (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent had the similar view that values education is necessary to have a peaceful and non-violent world:

Our nation is going in the direction of violence, the whole world is treading towards violence and peace is needed, non-violence is needed and peace and non-violence is possible only through love. For love and for that kind of a change and for leading a peaceful life we need to give value based education from early on (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent felt that values education would help children from oppressed communities to engage in value-based struggles for their liberation. He commented:

Value based education has great importance due to the reason that they can then have value based struggles. And a value based society can be built. They will be able to build a society of their dreams other than the present society which is said to be of the rich. They follow the values that are created by the rich and try to reach there. They see their wish being fulfilled in it because they see that their [rich people's] richness has come through such means as loot, exploitation, lie, and deceit (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

A senior government official opined that values education has the potential to mould model citizens for marginalised communities. He explained:

As such it will have a very important role because when we form a child through non-formal ways and inculcate all those values in him it is natural that he will fulfil an effective role in his community and he will become a model person for other children and many children will then try to follow his example while growing up (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

Johnson, who has more than 20 years of experience in providing non-formal education to children, felt that non-formal education is able to provide values education in a jovial and friendly way for the benefit of marginalised children. He argued:

Values education can definitely help the marginalised children. Non-formal education has a very powerful tool to communicate these value systems, in fact easily, in a much more cordial atmosphere than in a formal system. Because this can have much more of discussion and any methods that you want to use, through games and through various things that you can communicate this (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

However, another respondent expressed that it would be difficult to choose certain values in the Indian context, due to the existence of several religious and cultural perspectives (Anwar, Interview, 2010). He was unhappy about the emergence of many fundamentalist and extremist groups and ideologies. He feared that children would be brainwashed and misguided by fundamentalist groups in the name of values education. He suggested, therefore, that children should be given the freedom to choose the values they perceive as good, rather than having values imposed on them.

Some respondents simply acknowledged their ignorance about the concept of values education and were unable to discuss the topic.

Some stated that values education was effective in eliciting behavioural changes in children. For example, Aravind (Interview, 2010) argued that children would be misguided by wrong values in the absence of values education. He cited *naxalism*³ as an

³ *Naxalism* is an extremist ideology associated with militant communist groups operating in many parts of India. The first noticeable emergence of *naxal* movement occurred in 1967 as an uprising of

example that can attract and misguide youth. In a similar way, Shekhar (Interview, 2010) revealed that children in the remote villages where he worked were exposed to the harsh realities of life. He said that, faced with poverty, parents encouraged their children to steal from others. Shekhar pointed out that by exploiting the people's vulnerability, some extremist ideologies were propagated among them by groups with vested interests, who were known to incite them to violence. In his opinion, children were attracted to the extremist groups and showed an inclination to join when they became adults. According to Shekhar, values education could play an important role in changing this situation:

If you have moral values imparted to them from the beginning, slowly that trend can be changed (Shekhar, Interview, 2010).

He added that children had a habit of using abusive language and that values education had changed that habit in many children. He stated:

Children spoke abusive language . . . They don't use such language now because they are exposed to the realities. In our lessons we have communicated to them these small-small things. They pick up (Shekhar, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed a similar view on the positive effect values education has on children:

If you talk about truth then somehow that children will begin to learn that telling truth is important, being true is a very important value, being true

disaffected and disenfranchised peasants in Naxalbari, a remote village in the West Bengal state of India. During more than forty decades of its existence in India *Naxalism* is often associated with insurgent movements occurring in India. There are mainly two schools of thought which deals with the issue of insurgency. The first explains insurgency as an outcome of unmet political demands, often from a minority group which seemingly feels victimised or oppressed (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Varshney, 1998). The second school of thought identifies economic inequality as the reason for insurgencies and explains class struggles and revolts of lower class social groups in terms of the economic inequality existing in the society (see Rob Jenkins, 2006; Kujur, 2006; Muller & Seligson, 1987). Elements of the above two theories are attributed to be at play in the case of *Naxalism* and economic underdevelopment is attributed to be a major reason for the uprising of this radical movement (see Kujur, 2006).

brings you respect, being true brings you acceptance. So education has a lot to do with one's morality (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

However, Moses expressed a different view. He said that the overall context of the oppressed communities is important in determining the approach to values education. In his view, values education should enable the marginalised children to construct their identities in an oppressive society which has caste-based discrimination and divisions.

He commented:

Values education as understood in the context of the oppressive communities, values education does not have a practice of caste system in Bihar. It is definitely a break point. But it has to be a different type of values education. It is not telling that stealing is wrong or telling lies is wrong. That is not values education. Basically it is an assurance of one's own identity and individualism (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Niranjan expressed a related view that supported a socio-economic approach to values education:

You see they don't have material things. So, what can they bank up on? Bank up on good values. If the values are really ingrained in them and they are convinced about those values then they can be proud of those values and proud to carry on this because materially they will be inferior to other classes, you know rich classes. So if you have good values, for example, dignity of labour respecting their work, and acknowledging that, okay, I am so and so I have been not been able to study not because I have less IQ or anything like that but because of my socio-economic circumstances. So, this confidence if they have they will be able to face challenges more easily (Niranjan, Interview, 2010).

Chinmayi (Interview, 2010) also articulated the significance of a socio-economic approach to values education in the context of child labour:

We can see here in this area that children aged 4 or 5 work in tea shops. They work as servant boys in educated people's house also. So, if we give values education to those children and tell them what harm is there in working at such a young age it will have an impact. We can motivate the people only on the basis of economic benefits. So, we need to show them how much they earn as young children and how much they lose as grownups if not educated (Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent expressed the hope that values education would bring about greater socio-economic equality. He argued:

We believe that value based education will take place and changes will be brought about through it. There is no other way to bring about a change particularly for social harmony and economic equality and capability (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

Nishant expressed a view that was different from all of those the above rights-based approach to values education. He argued that values education should enable the children to realize their fundamental needs and rights:

The values education, the moral value . . . I think first of all, there is a saying like first you look for your belly, what you get to eat to survive, then where you can live, then what you can be. All these three most important things have to be looked into. So, for these people their moral value will be how to find some food, find a place to live, and find to wear something. So, their values will be moral or right you call it, their moral value will be to stand and fight for their rights (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Neeraj gave his support to this approach arguing that values education will enable children to fight for their basic rights through just and acceptable means:

Moral education is important for creating respect for manual labour and discipline for creative works and to make people understand those values in life such as democracy, freedom and equality. Then, they will be able to fight with more vigour and honesty for their rights to food and shelter. If they engage in such struggle without these values then they will resort to unfair means (Neeraj, Interview, 2010).

Some other respondents expressed a culture-based approach to values education. For instance, one respondent stated:

Children are like earthen water-pots and children will be formed only in terms of what types of cultural values are imparted to them by the NGO workers and government staff (Purohit, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent had a related view on the cultural aspects of values education and argued for prudence and restraint in dealing with cultural issues (Anwar, Interview, 2010). He said that consuming a certain alcoholic drink was a cultural practice among

certain caste groups and changing that behaviour was a sensitive thing. He explained the case of *Musahars* in a village:

There they tap the juice of the palm tree which is toddy. If you drink, it is intoxicating. But the situation in which they live, it is a cause of enjoyment for them and they enjoy it and it is part of their life. And you are going to that *tola*⁴ and you are saying to them that it is very bad, it is anti-religious thing, it is not value based thing. It means you are hitting on the cultural sentiments (Anwar, Interview, 2010).

A family-based approach was expressed by another respondent, whose view reflected the fact that the problems arising in family life were leading to the erosion of values in children's life (Priya, Interview, 2010). She said that many poor children came from broken families where parents were either violent or their relationship with the children was not sound. Children lacked parental love and care. She recommended that the "school or centre" be "more like a home... to impart [a] value system or to give a direction to their life or to teach them what is right or what is wrong" (Priya, Interview, 2010).

Some other respondents discussed in general the positive effects that values education would have on marginalised children. For example, Marcus (Interview, 2010) opined that values education was important for strengthening children's motivation to participate in education. He added that in the context of India, where unity in diversity was the social norm, values education could play an important role in promoting peace and harmony. A high-ranked government official believed that values education could ensure children's participation and retention in education (Alok, Interview, 2010). He noted the potential of values education to have a positive impact on children in non-formal education in the following remarks:

⁴ A *tola* is a small hamlet consisting of a cluster of houses often belonging to a particular caste community

Oh, yes. Not only get them motivated to attend those centres and eventually mainstream schools but also it has a great role to play in ensuring that they stay in the schools and complete the entire cycle of elementary education (Alok, Interview, 2010).

Suraj, a senior government official, pointed out that values education had the potential to help form model citizens for marginalised communities:

If a child from the marginalised or weaker community enters formal education through non-formal education then he grows to be an ideal person for his community and his impact can inspire the future generation also (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

A trainer of non-formal education pointed out the negative outcomes generated by the absence of values education in previous educational regimes. He remarked:

All the teachers, lawyers, officers, and majority of the leaders have gone through education. Now if you see, who are involved in corruption? They are the ones who have gone through education. It means that they have gone through education but they have not developed morality in them (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

He added that he and his team of non-formal education providers therefore included values education as an important element in the primer they had prepared for the children in non-formal education. According to Shahul, values education is necessary for children to become good human beings.

Another respondent pointed out the positive improvements in teacher-student relationships as an outcome of values education:

From my experience, if a teacher teaches just the subject the children respond to some extent, but when I have found in my own situation when a teacher teaches with values you know like we say '*Dharam Class*' that values education, the children seem to listen to the teacher more than the teacher who just taught the subject because the children understand that this teacher is more interested in forming their character as well as their teaching (Alphonsa, Interview, 2010).

6.3.1. Discussion

A leading insight emerging from the analysis is that non-formal education providers in general are knowledgeable about values education and the benefits it offers. Some of them consider the integration of values education essential if non-formal education is to be regarded as education at all, while the others have a range of opinions suggesting that values education is in the best interests of children.

There is, however, a small minority of respondents who are completely ignorant about the concept of values education. This cannot be overlooked as insignificant because it suggests that either they are not serious about educating children or their approach is faulty. Non-formal education providers' understanding of the significance of values education is vital for its meaningful integration in non-formal education. A provider who considers values education unimportant or is ignorant about the concept will obviously be incapable of integrating it in non-formal education. This will have detrimental effects on children's development, as discussed in Chapter Three.

No apparent link can be established between non-formal education in-charges' moral perspectives and the way they view values education. Just as they hold varied views about what moral perspectives underpin non-formal education, they also have different opinions regarding what constitutes values education and what approach should be used. Their views suggest that values education cannot have a unitary approach in all circumstances and in all environments. Unique characteristics of the children and their community are considered significant aspects which demand different approaches in diverse circumstances. These include children's social, economic, emotional, and cultural needs, along with their fundamental rights.

Based on the respondents' opinions, four major approaches to values education can be identified: a socio-economic approach, rights-based approach, family-based approach, and generic approach. Depending on their approach to values education, non-formal education providers anticipate its various positive effects. Those who hold a socio-economic approach point out that values education is able to instil in children the dignity of labour and respect for any work. They also argue that values education can motivate children to pursue education in the hope for a better future and economic uplift and that this change will lead to greater socio-economic equality. Those who advocate a rights-based approach point out that values education will help children fight for their basic rights in an honest manner. In their view, values education will enable them to avoid unfair means in their struggle for justice. A family-based approach maintains that values education will help children choose the direction they want to go in their life with the knowledge of what is right and wrong for them. Therefore, they propose that schools and non-formal education centres provide a home-like atmosphere for the purpose of values education. A number of respondents who have a generic approach to values education anticipate some other positive effects. For example, they believe that values education will give children greater motivation to participate in education and will also ensure their retention. Some of them argue that values education will promote peace and harmony in a divided world, while others say it will help form model persons who will inspire other children in the community. Some respondents anticipated a positive teacher-student relationship and others see that values education helps bring about positive behavioural changes in children, such as telling the truth, being honest, using polite words, and avoiding using abusive words with other children. Some believe that values education will enable children to keep away from the influence of extremist and dangerous ideologies. And, finally, some perceive values education as being

capable of helping the marginalised children to construct their identity in an oppressive world and thereby build their confidence.

A comprehensive values education approach, however, will integrate children's various developmental needs, including their social, economic, emotional, intellectual, and cultural needs. Therefore, the diverse views expressed by the respondents can be viewed as complementary rather than contradictory in a comprehensive approach to values education. Although the unique contextual aspects of some children may require a special emphasis on particular social or economic or cultural needs, for example, the other developmental aspects such as their intellectual or emotional needs cannot be neglected in a holistic approach to values education. Therefore, in the non-formal education context, it might require greater openness from the non-formal education providers to be able to integrate perspectives which are needed for the holistic development of children. Exclusive and inflexible approaches to values education, whether based on a socio-economic or human rights perspective, may not be in the best interests of children, despite having a noble purpose, since it implies the omission of some important developmental needs.

An important point yet to be analysed concerns the role that non-formal education instructors play in translating values education perspectives into practice. The fact that non-formal education providers are knowledgeable about values education or that they consider values education important for the development of children are not enough for the effective integration of values education in non-formal education. Instructors also have an important role to play in the fruitful realisation of values education. Respondents were asked to comment on the recruitment and training of non-formal education instructors, for the purpose of gathering information on the kind of people

who become instructors and the nature of training they receive to engage in the non-formal education of children. An analysis of the information on these important aspects of non-formal education would be helpful to determine the nature of the values education being imparted in non-formal education. Are the instructors able to impart effective and sound values education? Are they trained to do this? The following analysis will focus on these questions.

6.4. Recruitment and Training of Non-Formal Education Teaching Staff

Respondents generally agreed that those who engaged in teaching in non-formal education had a very important role to play in the character formation of children. One respondent made the following comments:

Look, teachers' role has great importance. As an example, in our culture we call teachers *Guru*. *Guru* means the one in whom the darkness is no more, the one who bears light. Only a candle that burns can light another candle. A person without awareness cannot be successful in creating awareness in others. They will ruin the society. If one cleans the floor with a cloth how the floor can be clean if the cloth itself is dirty. Hence, it is very important for a teacher to be of good character, impressive, efficient and to be a thinker (Gopal, Interview, 2010).

The director of an NGO acknowledged that the effectiveness of a non-formal education centre depends primarily on the instructors. He remarked:

When we analyse our strength or weakness in a very critical way we find that the instructor will play a very important role in this value thing. And it depends . . . as an organization if we say that value type of thing will be discussed and debated between kids at the centres then it is totally dependent on the instructor (Vijay, Interview, 2010).

An animator of non-formal education felt that the teachers' role has utmost importance in the character formation of children. She commented:

Teachers' role is the most important one. Teachers should first become like that only then they can give such education whether it is about behaviour or about their character (Subha, interview, 2010).

In the opinion of one NGO director, children are likely to look to their teachers as role models, as she said in the following:

It is very important because children understand teachers as their role model and they imitate the teachers (Chinmayi, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent, however, felt that the role of teachers was certainly important but that their selection was even more important (Prakash, Interview, 2010). He said that teachers who do not have good life values would not be able to impart sound values to children. He opined, therefore, that the role of the non-formal education providers in selecting appropriate teachers was critically important.

Although respondents generally considered the role of teachers very important, they agreed that they faced many hurdles in recruiting trained teachers or people with good educational qualifications to teach in non-formal education. One respondent made the following comments regarding the difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers:

Look, I have told you previously also that non-formal education happens under a project. Hence, we cannot involve in it those teachers who need to be paid highly (Sumith, Interview, 2010).

According to Shekhar (Interview, 2010), he was able to recruit some people who were willing to teach economically downtrodden children for nominal pay in a place where there was no school. Sherif had the following remarks about the recruitment and low pay of instructors:

In non-formal education nobody comes with a diploma in education or bachelors in education. They were all people from the same locality or village who were active. They were mobilised and were linked to it. They were told they would not get anything if they remained at home and they were promised of rupees two hundred or three hundred as honorarium (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent confirmed that low pay is a key factor in the recruitment of instructors:

In non-formal education there is no salary for anyone, there is only honorarium. Hence, only a few people want to work in non-formal education. So, we mainly look for people who have an interest in it and who can work with dedication even when the payment is less (Gopal, Interview, 2010).

Some respondents spoke about the caste-based discrimination and divisions which forced them to be selective in choosing teaching candidates. Shekhar (Interview, 2010) said that he had to choose people from the low caste since the children belonged to that caste. Another respondent commented on the existence of untouchability practice among various caste groups which made the selection process difficult:

So, by and large we take instructors from the same community who would feel at home in their own villages who are free from the so-called untouchability feelings (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Shahul's comments added to the claim that caste discrimination and the practice of untouchability were determinants in selecting teachers for non-formal education. He talked about the *Musahar* community:

If it is a *Musahar tola*, then there may not be many who are educated from among them and educated people from other castes do not like to come and teach Musahars due to the social confinement of castes and due to the practice of untouchability (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Vijay (Interview, 2010), Lakshman (Interview, 2010), and Priya (Interview, 2010) also revealed that they selected teachers for their non-formal education centres who belonged to the same community as the children.

Some respondents articulated clearly that they were not concerned about educational qualifications when selecting candidates for teaching, as one respondent said:

No, qualifications do not have much acceptance in it. We give preference to those who are socially oriented because until and unless they are full of

social feelings they will not work with the children. Being highly qualified may be more problematic (Purohit, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent shared a similar view:

In non-formal education we give importance to quality. We consider qualification as a criterion but when we work in it we think that we should give more importance to quality. Even if their qualification is little less but if they are able to conduct meetings with the village people and if they are able to motivate them then we give particular attention to these things (Prakash, Interview, 2010).

According to Shyla, formal degrees were not essential for someone to engage in teaching in non-formal education. She stated:

We don't need degrees for the non-formal teachers . . . what we need is those who can understand the life situations of the society, their own children, I mean children of the centre and then pick them up and bring them to that level when they can stand on their own two feet to face the society (Shyla, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent argued similarly that it was not a person's educational qualifications but their competency to teach the children that was important for teaching in non-formal education:

There is no strictness of that kind in non-formal education that teachers should be B.Ed. qualified or that they should be trained teachers. What is looked for in non-formal education is the competence to understand and make others understand and the ability to read and write. They are recruited based on these competencies which are demonstrated in interviews and written tests. They need not be already trained teachers (Kusum, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent also endorsed this view. She said:

In non-formal education we are running classes and the children need to be given a particular level of competency within a particular time period. If they have studied up to matriculation or up to intermediate and if they can teach then it is fine in it (Meena, Interview, 2010).

As for training the teaching staff, a general consensus was found among the respondents regarding the importance of training to prepare the recruited candidates to teach

effectively in non-formal education. Respondents commonly acknowledged that instructors at non-formal education centres often had no pre-service training or prior teaching experience. They were trained by the non-formal education providers before being entrusted with the task of teaching. Nine respondents noted that members of the teaching staff were given periodic training throughout the year.

No consensus was found among the respondents regarding the inclusion of values education perspectives in the training of instructors. Although some respondents claimed that the instructors were trained to impart values education to children, a large number of them said that the training was not adequate to enable the trainees to engage in values education. As one respondent said:

There is no special training on moral values for non-formal teachers. They are given more training on the method of teaching. That is the main thing. And method of teaching and also what I would give when I train the teachers is social analysis more than the values” (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent commented that values education was not included in the trainings:

No, there is no training in this regard. I repeat that in reality all these are related to the entire system. In order to give them such trainings there should be values in the training centre itself and training process should have values (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

According to another respondent, creative learning was often the focus of the trainings and values education was almost totally neglected. He opined that the teachers in non-formal education were not able to impart values education. He remarked:

No, I don't think they are. In many of the cases they are not trained because there is no formal training process for non-formal teachers on moral training. In whatever training we have attended couple of trainings was more based on creative learning. It was not focusing on moral values. Moral values, it is left to the judgement of the teachers most of the times (Niranjan, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent confirmed that, in general, non-formal education instructors were not trained in values education perspectives. He stated:

Again, I would make this clear distinction. In general no, they are not trained to imparting moral values. But there are places, institutions and people who have gone very much into that (Ajith, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent noted that a lack of resources and capable trainers were serious impediments to provide adequate values education training:

They are not sufficiently trained as much as we would like to have because of various factors. One is the lack of resources to train. The second is the lack of resource persons to give training properly (Johnson, Interview, 2010).

A high-ranked government official acknowledged that the trainings did not include values education:

This remains a major challenge because our teacher training modules are still conventional and although we are trying to incorporate these things now but the existing teacher training modules do not unfortunately have this content (Alok, Interview, 2010).

According to Chinmayi (Interview, 2010), each organisation must decide whether to include values education perspectives in the training programmes of instructors. She added that instructors learn more from society than from trainings.

Some respondents mentioned that although instructors were given no direct training in values education, important perspectives along this line were included in the curriculum. Moses made the following remarks:

They are trained. We don't call it values education as such, but it is part of the curriculum. Therefore, it is integrated (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Others believed that some NGOs included values education in their training but the governmental training programmes did not. Shahul noted the following:

They were trained well in places where the training was done independently . . . However, wherever the training was done by the government it was not done in that way . . . But wherever the NGOs gave training there they gave training on values education (Shahul, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent shared a similar view:

In our training period wherever I have been training them, we have touched this factor. But I have also attended the government training programme. The teachers they just bypass all these (Shyla, Interview, 2010).

6.4.1. Discussion

Analysis reveals that despite having ample knowledge about the significant role that instructors play in the education and character formation of children, non-formal education providers apparently face enormous difficulties in recruiting educationally qualified candidates to teach at non-formal education centres, chiefly due to the caste-based divisions and discrimination in Indian society. The shortage of educationally qualified people from the lowest caste groups is a serious concern for the field. The extremely low pay instructors receive for their teaching work also implies that non-formal education is not an attractive place for many to engage in teaching. Consequently, non-formal education providers recruit whoever is available from the same caste or community as the children to fill the teaching positions. As a result, in the recruitment process, educational qualifications are often considered as secondary to the candidates' social commitment, membership in a certain caste group, and willingness to teach for a meagre salary.

Perhaps understandably, educationally qualified and properly trained teachers are seldom willing to teach in non-formal education. Thus, it is mainly local people with limited educational qualifications who become non-formal education instructors. It makes training a crucial element in ensuring the children experience effective teaching

and learning. The above analysis demonstrates that most non-formal education providers state that adequate training is essential to improving the quality of their teaching staff. They generally provide training before entrusting newly recruited candidates with the responsibility of teaching. Ongoing in-service training is also generally provided to further enhance the instructors' teaching ability.

Although members of the leadership teams of agencies that provide non-formal education view values education as an important aspect of children's development, the inclusion of values education perspectives in the training of instructors does not commonly occur. In other words, many study participants suggest that instructors are not often trained to impart values education to children. Some acknowledge that certain NGOs are serious about integrating values education in non-formal education, but many NGOs have not been serious about it. Eight participants also believe that Government teacher training programmes are devoid of values education perspectives.

The absence of values education in the trainings of instructors for non-formal education is a serious concern. The fact that the instructors are generally not well educated suggests that without adequate training they will not be able to impart values education, as even well-educated teachers must have some training to engage in values education. As Haydon (1997) argues, "That people entering teaching have values of their own does not necessarily mean that they have thought a lot about them, that they can readily articulate and defend them, or that they will know how to respond when encountering others with contrary values. In all these respects, the educators may themselves need educating" (p. 153). Failure to provide appropriate values education training to the teaching staff can result in the improper or inadequate values education of children.

The data analysis above has examined study participants' views on the recruitment and training of non-formal education instructors and has found that the instructors are often not trained to impart values education. An equally important question is whether values education perspectives are incorporated in the syllabus of non-formal education. The following analysis examines this important aspect.

6.5. Values Education Integration in Non-Formal Education Syllabus

By and large, respondents agreed that values education perspectives were integrated in the syllabus of non-formal education. One respondent explained:

Values education is certainly included in it. We do not do the work of merely teaching alphabets. Our work is not merely to make them literate but to make them educated. Hence, whatever work we do in non-formal education we include in the syllabus values such as equality, universal brotherhood, political unity and knowledge of the environment. We encourage the children to raise their voice against discriminations, atrocities and exploitations (Chotalal, Interview, 2010).

Shekhar (Interview, 2010) said that he did not produce any textbooks for non-formal education, but he borrowed textbooks from other NGOs which did produce such textbooks, which had content on values education. Ajith (Interview, 2010) pointed out that committed NGOs produced textbooks and other resource materials which incorporated values education, whereas the government failed to produce such materials. He added that the government was in fact forced to use some of the textbooks produced by NGOs. The opinion of a high-ranked government official seemed to support this view as he revealed that values education was incorporated in the new government books (Alok, Interview, 2010). A senior government official confirmed that values education was included in the new textbooks. He commented:

We include it at every level. We include value education in every way in every material for non-formal education. For example, if there is a story you may not see it so plainly in it but the meaning of the story has it in it so that values are instilled in the children. So, attention is always paid while

preparing materials such as textbooks etcetera to include values that can be inculcated in children (Suraj, Interview, 2010).

Although respondents agreed that values education was included in the non-formal education syllabus, they differed in their opinion of what the content should be. For example, one respondent spoke about building confidence in children as the basic element of values education. He remarked:

The existence of caste system, the lower caste always feels that they are useless, they have no talents, they are not capable, and they are sinners. Basic element is to instil this confidence that you are somebody and also there is something called the equality of all human beings. So basically values education is not based on certain moral practices but basic foundation of our existence that the equality, justice and freedom that is addressed by values education (Moses, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent spoke about human rights awareness as a key requirement:

As far as I am concerned or my NGO or my thinking goes like this. First of all they should know their rights. So my efforts will be I will look for the books which would give the ways people are exploited and the reason why they are exploited and the right to fight against exploitation. So it is a kind of I would say for non-formal education the moral value will be to make people aware of their rights and make them come together and fight for their rights (Nishant, Interview, 2010).

Another respondent, however, had quite a different opinion about the integration of values education. She remarked:

Values you don't teach separately. In non-formal education you don't separately put a time for values education. It is that values education is given along with other as you know when you discuss the topics that you are talking... I don't think it is particularly set apart and put it as a separate chapter and so on. It is a running theme or it should be a running theme that will come into every topic of your discussion (Poonam, Interview, 2010).

An experienced non-formal education provider was forthright in admitting that values education was not given adequate consideration. He said that although values education was included in the syllabus of non-formal education, it was not given the importance it should. He remarked:

Our aim was knowledge upgrading. It was not our aim that they would learn about friendliness, cooperativeness and brotherhood. These things came in the contents but more emphasis was on raising their competency of language, competency of reading, competency of writing and competency of comprehension. In the process of raising their language specific competencies, value oriented things included in the contents were not picked up (Sherif, Interview, 2010).

6.5.1. Discussion

Data analysis reveals that, by and large, non-formal education providers strive to integrate values education in the syllabus of non-formal education, although they emphasise different aspects and needs. For example, while some providers highlight confidence building, others emphasise human rights awareness. This is very much akin to the varied approaches to values education displayed by providers in the earlier part of this chapter. There is also evidence to suggest that despite being incorporated in the non-formal education syllabus, values education was not given sufficient importance at the pedagogical level.

6.6. Conclusion

The non-formal education of children in India is not based on any single moral philosophy or perspective. Diverse pragmatic perspectives inspire non-formal education providers to engage in this work. Humanitarian thinking - that is, a concern for the needs and well-being of marginalised people - is the primary motive for most people to engage in non-formal education. Analysis has revealed that socio-economic marginalisation and caste-based discrimination are the principal cause of children's educational deprivation, and non-formal education is seen as a viable alternative to formal education and a way to bring about constructive change for these children.

Professional limitations do not necessarily prevent aspiring volunteers from engaging in non-formal education in various capacities, including as providers, financiers, or

instructors. In fact, people from all walks of life engage in non-formal education. Social workers, health workers, and lawyers are the largest groups of professionals engaging in non-formal education, often by establishing their own or by joining existing NGOs.

Non-formal education providers generally are serious about integrating values education perspectives in non-formal education as most recognise the importance of values education in the development of children. However, their approaches to values education do differ, and it appears that their experience with certain groups or communities influences their agendas for values education. This may not be appropriate in a holistic approach to values education as, focusing primarily on one single need or value is not in the best interests of the children.

Providing values education in non-formal education is a challenge, largely due to the fact that adequately educated teachers are hard to find in non-formal education. Recruiting qualified and trained teachers from the upper castes seldom occurs due to concerns about caste-based discrimination, and qualified people are also unlikely to work for the nominal pay offered in non-formal education. Finding qualified recruits among the lower castes and marginalised communities is rare; therefore, non-formal education instructors are often people who belong to the same caste or community as the children, have received only a basic education, and are willing to engage in teaching for a nominal salary, which they receive in the form of an honorarium.

Effective values education can take place only with the help of capable teachers. Although being highly qualified is not a requirement for engaging effectively in values education, teachers do need to be knowledgeable about it, which makes adequate teacher training essential. Unfortunately, much of the evidence from the present study suggests that the training of non-formal education teachers in general pays no attention

to values education, focusing instead on the teaching methodology and subject knowledge. This can be a serious impediment for effective implementation of values education in non-formal education. The fact that the instructors lack sufficient education and pre-service training only adds to the gravity of the issue. Although values education is generally incorporated in the syllabus, its realisation is difficult when teachers are not adequately trained to impart it.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the major findings of this study, which have been reported in more detail in earlier chapters, in terms of what the findings are and what they reveal about the integration of values education in non-formal education. The implications of some of the findings for the non-formal education sector and for future research are also presented.

7.2. Context and Methodology Revisited

I believe that my thesis has contributed to the understanding of the significance of non-formal education for marginalised children, and the imperative of integrating values education in it for the children's greater benefit. In a milieu where poverty, exploitation, and caste-based discrimination thwart the educational attainment of children in marginalised communities in India, non-formal education has made considerable advances in educating them. The fact that it has always been associated with marginalised communities, however, renders it with a negative connotation.

The exclusion of certain groups and communities from education has been a norm which finds expression in various ways even today. In the history of India, education was the prerogative of the upper caste for a long time. Therefore, the arrival of formal institution-based education was welcome news and the British promoted it with great determination, albeit for the select few who would assist them in administration of the country. Although independent India made considerable progress in providing inclusive education, a large number of children remain beyond the reach of formal schools; this is

particularly so in the case of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children, especially girls.

The context of Bihar illustrates how socio-economic deprivation, structural problems, caste-based discrimination, and bureaucratic corruption have denied educational opportunities for children belonging to marginalised communities. This made Bihar an ideal place to undertake my field work. For me, the field work was a re-entry into Bihar, where I began my engagement with non-formal education as a Jesuit Novice and where I worked with the most marginalised communities, particularly the *Musahar* community. The Jesuits' non-formal pedagogical approach yielded remarkable results, and several children belonging to impoverished communities were educated. During my field work in 2010, I happened to meet a group of 20 young children from the *Musahar* community at a Jesuit House. They were all from a small administrative block not far from Bihar's capital city of Patna. All of them had successfully completed Class Ten (matriculation) and were preparing for further studies. A girl from the same community was already at the university pursuing a bachelor's degree in science. They all began their educational journey in non-formal education, and although they were not part of my field study groups, their successful journey through non-formal education made me take notice of them. The Jesuit priest who organised the young children's meeting conveyed that similar cases of children from the state of Bihar and elsewhere in the country advancing in their education were being reported increasingly by his friends and colleagues. Although Jesuits are leading the non-formal education initiatives in Bihar, several other NGOs are running non-formal education centres. Moreover, the government of Bihar ran several projects for non-formal education in various parts of the state. This made my field work in Bihar a rewarding exercise.

This is a pioneering study that looks at values education in non-formal education. In doing this study, I chose to use qualitative research tools, knowing that the flexibility of open-ended components would allow me to explore in detail the perspectives of the respondents. In the absence of any literature on values education in non-formal education, the perspectives of the study participants were supremely important. Moreover, the aim was to collect reasonably in-depth responses from the respondents, which meant that using a large sample was impractical for the scope of this study. The knowledge that qualitative tools allow the in-depth study of relatively small samples encouraged me to undertake a qualitative study. Moreover, the advantage of qualitative tools in building rapport with the study participants additionally supported my choice of a qualitative study.

A possible limitation of the study may be the small sample. A larger sample might produce more diverse, valid and robust data. A quantitative study using survey tools would be useful in reaching out to a much wider study population, perhaps covering all the states of India. Therefore, a triangulation method using both qualitative and quantitative tools may be advantageous for future studies. Furthermore, using case studies of individuals or groups of students who have gone through non-formal education would be a useful method of obtaining significant information on the level of success non-formal education has achieved.

What is most significant about this study is that it has initiated a discussion on the important topic of integrating values education in the non-formal education of children. This is a pioneering study in this area, and it has the potential to have an impact on educational policies and programmes in India and across the world. The continuing significance of values education is demonstrated in the range of literature examined in

this study. Various values education projects and programmes across the world - such as the European Values Education project (see European Values Education, 2011); the Australian Values Education Good Practice Schools Project (see Lovat et al., 2009); Living Values: An Educational Program; Sathya Sai Education in Human Value (see Arweck & Nesbitt, 2004; Arweck, et al., 2005; Nesbitt & Henderson, 2003) provide convincing evidence of its significance. Millions of children in India participate in a non-formal system of education, and their values education cannot be neglected. This thesis highlights this important issue, and in that sense it is unique.

7.3. Critical Considerations of the Study

A question that may come up when considering non-formal education is its relevance, particularly when formal education is transforming the lives of people with unparalleled efficiency. Formal education is clearly the most highly desired system because of its ability to provide education in a sustainable manner in established institutions. This may raise the question of why non-formal education is needed at all. Proponents of non-formal education have compared it with formal education in ways that depict the latter as the less positive. However, I do not think such comparisons are needed to demonstrate the relevance of non-formal education. Both systems have limitations and strengths and their own unique ability to address the educational needs of certain people. However, a formal education system lacks the flexibility to reach out to certain sections of society, which is where the relevance of non-formal education becomes more evident. In other words, a formal system of education is inaccessible to certain sections of society due to factors such as economic deprivation, caste and gender discrimination, travelling distance, unfavourable entry requirements, and lack of availability in certain areas.

Evidence brought out in this study through the literature review and analysis of field data unambiguously convey that there are not enough formal schools to provide a primary education to all children; that the government schools that do exist lack even the basic facilities such as toilets, drinking water, and sufficient class-rooms; and they do not provide a satisfactory quality of education. While the lack of facilities, such as toilets, leads girls to stop going to school, the low-quality of education discourages children more generally from attending. This does not mean that formal education as a system is faulty, but that the public school system in India is substandard. Both the field data and the literature review confirm that formal public school education in India is burdened with bureaucratic corruption at all levels. A high rate of teacher absenteeism and nonperforming teachers make the quality of public school education abysmally low, which leaves students functionally illiterate even after several years of school education. Government schemes such as the midday meal, which were implemented to provide incentives for children to participate in education, also fail to produce positive outcomes because of corrupt practices by the officials who run them, including the teachers. Government schools are the only type of formal school available to the poorest populations, and if they do not offer even a minimum quality of education, where else can these children go? Is it appropriate to suggest that they wait until the public schools rid themselves of the evils affecting their proper functioning? More than six decades have elapsed since India gained independence - how much longer should they wait? Should they have to turn to private schools that charge fees to receive a quality education? Millions of children who remain out of school and millions who participated in public school education yet remain functionally illiterate provide a silent answer: they have nowhere else to go to fulfil their educational needs.

Non-formal education becomes immensely significant in the circumstances mentioned above. It may not be a permanent solution to the educational needs of marginalised communities, but it is a viable alternative that can address their needs until other more effective and efficient systems are in place. The flexibility of non-formal education gives it the ability to reach out to these communities and to accommodate their particular needs. The community-based and empowerment-oriented approaches of NGOs have produced encouraging results, and perhaps this model can be emulated by others who engage in similar activities to help them produce more positive outcomes. As this study reveals in Chapter Six, most private providers who engage in non-formal education have philanthropic intentions and concern for the well-being of children, and they aim to provide an education that will result in positive outcomes.

If non-formal education is currently an imperative in the lives of marginalised children, so is values education. It must be an integral part of non-formal education for the same reasons that it is an essential part of a formal school education (Lovat, 2010a; Lovat & Clement, 2008a; Lovat & Schofield, 2004). This is discussed at length in Chapter Three. It is inappropriate to assume that the children participating in non-formal education only require subject knowledge to make up for their lost chances in life. They also need sound values education so they can develop sound human values. Therefore, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, values education is a pedagogical imperative in non-formal education.

This study, however, does not suggest transplanting a Western values education paradigm into the Indian cultural context. As stated in Chapter Three, particular cultural contexts create particular challenges for values education; moreover, values can be culture specific. Each country or union of countries may have to work out a particular

values education paradigm that is attuned to and based on their culture, values, and needs. Insights can be drawn from successful values education models or projects to help design a framework for values education; however, it is unlikely that a model exists that can be emulated globally. Although programmes like “Living Values Education” include representatives from more than 60 countries around the world and promote certain universal values, their approach is “non-prescriptive and allows materials and strategies to be introduced according to the circumstances and interests of the users and the needs of students” (Living Values Education, 2010, p. 4). Therefore, while values education in India can learn from programmes and projects in other countries, its framework ought to be based on the diversity of India’s culture, values, and needs.

In terms of integrating values education in non-formal education, a significant finding from the study highlights the importance that many non-formal education providers attach to the social justice and human rights aspects of non-formal education. While social justice and human rights alone are inadequate to underpin a holistic values education approach, they are certainly significant for the overall well-being of children. For instance, social injustice and human rights violations have the potential to inflict serious damage on particular groups or individuals, since they interfere with life satisfaction and happiness. An obvious case of social injustice may be discriminating against someone based on caste or gender, which can negatively impact on the victim’s experience of subjective well-being. Several discussions in Chapter Two and Chapter Five of this study have highlighted the caste-based discrimination experienced by low-caste children in government schools. One example is the practice of separating low-caste and upper caste children during the government-provided midday meal at school. Experiences of this nature reinforce in the low-caste children a belief that they are less

valuable than the upper caste children, which is detrimental to their overall development. It is difficult to imagine a values education paradigm that does not address this issue of social injustice. It is important to note that the preamble of the Constitution of India envisages political, economic and social justice to all the citizens of the country (see Gandhi, 1993).

The notion of wellbeing is also linked to values since “an understanding of what wellbeing involves cannot be divorced from values, precisely because wellbeing is itself an evaluative notion” (Haydon, 2010). Accordingly, as Haydon (2010) explains, when everything goes well for a person, s/he is understood to be in a state of well-being, but what it means for something to go well for a person is based on certain values. Well-being encompasses a framework of values and goals, rather than being values neutral or devoid of values (Hill, 2010, in Clement, 2010). It is not just that values and well-being are reciprocal, as some studies have shown that engagement with the parameters of well-being will enhance the “conceptual clarity and operational veracity” of values education, especially a particular view of social wellbeing, the central claim of which is that “the wellbeing of the person is fundamentally determined in its mode of being through the relationships in which it stands to other people” (Webb, 2010, p. 971). In this sense, the social well-being of poor, marginalised children is at grave risk, since their relationship with others in their society is unequal and largely exploitative and oppressive. The value of equality or equity in this context becomes central to the well-being of children. Most people would agree that equality and equity are aspects of social justice and human rights. If, as Inglehart (2000) suggests, we are witnessing a global worldwide increase in subjective well-being, we may ask how this translates into the specific context of the non-formal education of children in India.

7.4. Significance of Rights-Based Discourse in the Indian Context:

Evidence brought out by the data analysis has highlighted the significance nearly half of the study participants attach to rights-based perspectives while working with the marginalised and impoverished communities. This necessitates a brief discussion on the rights-based discourse in the Indian context.

As an approach to development, rights-based approach emerged in the late 1990s and within a decade NGOs, donor agencies, and multilateral development assistance agencies incorporated it in all of their works and engagements (Kindornay, Ron, & Carpenter, 2012). The United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted in 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) have all perhaps contributed to the emergence of a rights-based perspective on development. The United Nations International Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights were early champions of the rights-based approach (Kindornay, et al., 2012). These three agencies developed a "Common Understanding of the Human Rights Based Approach" to development which inspire and encourage development workers to view human rights as an essential element of all engagements with people (Kindornay, et al., 2012, p. 479). The UN Common Understanding envisaged advancing the principles codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its associated conventions (Kindornay, et al., 2012). The United Nations further encouraged and promoted the establishment of National Human Rights Institutions and which resulted in the formation of national human rights institutions in several countries (Raj, 2006).

India is a signatory to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and associated covenants and has responded well to the various initiatives of the United Nations and has established a National Human Rights Commission, an independent governmental body to guard the constitutional rights of every individual, through the enactment of the Protection of Human Rights Act in 1993 (Jayanth, 2004). Moreover, the constitution of India guarantees protection of the fundamental rights of all citizens of India. The Part III and IV of the constitution deal with the fundamental rights and directive principles of State policy respectively. They broadly cover most of the human rights declared as such by the United Nations.

Despite constitutional provisions and various laws passed by the parliament, human rights violations occur in various parts of India. Caste and gender discrimination, displacement induced by development projects, and communalism contribute to various types of human rights violations (see Ramanathan, 2012). Therefore, Mathew (2003) suggests that human rights needs to be studied at three levels in India: “first, state violations of human rights; second, socio-economic factors which work against the rights of the people; and third, denial of the right to livelihood and decent living conditions leading to indignity and lack of self-respect for a majority of the people” (p. 155). These three levels offer wide range of opportunities for civil society organisations and NGOs to engage with people in their struggle for justice and protection of human rights. Several NGOs nationally and internationally undertake a rights-based approach to development and work for the promotion of human rights (Kindornay, et al., 2012). The provision of Public Interest Litigation, which is litigation for the protection of the public interest, has been used by several concerned people and organisations in India to fight against human rights violations (see Ramanathan, 2012). Any public spirited

person can file a Public Interest Litigation case in a law court on behalf of a group of people, whose rights are affected.

A significant change in the structure of the governance occurred in India in 1992 in the form of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the constitution of India. This amendment is “popularly known as the ‘Panchayati Raj Amendments’, which gave local governments, rural and urban, a legal status that they formerly lacked” and “the significance of the empowerment which these provisions bring to the rural and disadvantaged populations is immense” (Kapoor, n.d.b., p. 4). Panchayati Raj is a three-tier system of administration within each state of India in which elected bodies represent the people at the village, block and district levels. It was launched in the beginning of the 9th Five Year Plan by ensuring people’s participation in the decentralised planning process. It ensures increased participation of people in administration and more effective functioning of rural development programmes. However, there are several impediments such as bureaucratic negligence, political apathy and lack of awareness among ordinary people about their rights to the successful implementation of Panchayati Raj (Kannan, 1993). Civil Society Organisations and NGOs working at the grassroots level generally undertake awareness campaigns to educate people about their rights in terms of the Panchayati Raj. Caste, Class and gender factors contribute to significant violations of human rights which the Panchayati Raj system of administration can effectively address. Mathew (2003) points out:

After the new generation of panchayats have started functioning several issues have come to the fore, which have a bearing on human rights. The important factor which has contributed to the human rights situation vis-à-vis the panchayat system is the nature of Indian society which of course determines the nature of the state. The Indian society is known for its inequality, social hierarchy and the rich and poor divide. The social hierarchy is the result of the caste system, which is unique to India. Therefore, caste and class are the two factors, which deserve attention in this context. At another level, it is essential to look into the question: who

are the victims of the social system? Who are the victims of the nature (and character) of the state? They are the former untouchables (who now call themselves 'dalits', which means 'oppressed'), tribal people, women, and the poor (p. 156).

This greatly substantiates the claims of the study participants who argue for a rights-based approach to values education. The structural change brought in the administration by the Panchayati Raj system has given the marginalised communities increased opportunity for participation in the administrative processes. However, this has also become a reason for human rights violations because the upper castes view the increased participation and assertiveness of lower castes as a threat to their hegemonic privileges. Mathew (2003) states:

There has been a sharp increase in violent manifestations of casteism in local communities ever since the local government system got strengthened through the Constitutional amendments. When the panchayati raj institutions have been seen by the upper castes as tool for the lower castes to assert their rights as individuals living in a democratic polity the latter have become targets of caste-based discrimination and violence (p. 156).

Therefore, NGOs undertake a rights-based approach for empowering the oppressed groups and suggest a rights-based approach to values education of the children

The discussion now turns to examine the central research goals outlined in Chapter One.

7.5. Research Goals Revisited

This research set out to find answers to four key questions. A thematic literature review and qualitative field study together provided a response to the research questions. The literature review provides a solid foundation for discussions related to the findings of this study. The nature and breadth of the study means that any review cannot be exhaustive or in great detail, but adequate information is covered, with the aim of establishing the current and relevant issues necessary to set the context of this research.

The following section goes on to provide an overview of the major findings in relation to the research questions.

7.5.1. Research Question 1: *What is the current nature of the non-formal education of children in India in the general educational context?*

This question aims to gather updated information on the non-formal education of children in India. Chapter Two and Chapter Five together answer this question, with the former reviewing pertinent literature on the topic and the latter examining primary data from the field work. Findings from the study demonstrate that non-formal education continues to be an efficient and relevant system which is particularly beneficial for children belonging to marginalised communities. The significance of non-formal education is seen against the backdrop of the widespread corruption and mismanagement in the functioning of formal government schools and the low-quality education they offer. In this regard, a significant finding of the study concerns the negativity associated with government school teachers, due to a prolonged period of their dishonest and unproductive conduct and discriminatory practices in schools. In contrast, their non-formal education counterparts are seen as pro-active, productive, and inspirational at the education centres, despite having little in the way of educational qualifications and receiving very low pay for their work.

Another equally important finding which, significantly, recommends the continuation of non-formal education relates to the socio-economic issues of marginalised communities, particularly poverty and the negative effects of being from a low caste. Caste-based discrimination makes school education an unpleasant and even hostile experience for the low-caste children, and poverty often forces them to work in various environments, including in cities, where they migrate with their family in search of work. Gender

discrimination and disadvantages further impede the education of girls. A formal system of education is incapable of fulfilling the educational needs of many children from marginalised communities under these circumstances. Of the various types of formal schools in India, only the government schools are affordable to the marginalised communities; they are neither sufficient in number, nor do they provide a quality education. Therefore, non-formal education, with its feature of flexibility and demonstrated quality, is very important for these children. Nonetheless, the study findings reveal that the government is closing down many non-formal education centres and reducing financial support in an effort to increase the enrolment of children in government schools. The current state of non-formal education, therefore, is somewhat uncertain, due to a lack of government support.

7.5.2. Implications and Recommendations

A major implication of these findings concerns policy-level interventions. Declining government support for non-formal education might negatively affect the educational needs of children from marginalised communities. Evidence suggests that the NGOs' approach to non-formal education impels in children greater endurance and helps them succeed better in formal schools when they are mainstreamed after some years of non-formal education, in contrast to those who are directly enrolled. Although non-formal education might not be a long-term solution, providing government support to non-formal education for a minimum of ten years could enormously enhance educational opportunities for underserved children. During this period, the government should be required to make every effort to improve the quality of education in government schools and to make the entire government education system functional and corruption-free. Several issues need to be addressed to enable children from the marginalised communities to pursue an education without any prompts or prods. These include

poverty eradication, gender sensitisation, and spreading educational awareness. Effective policies are required to achieve progress in these areas.

7.5.3. Research Question 2: *How might values education enhance the essential work of non-formal education?*

This question was posed to examine the imperative of integrating values education in non-formal education, which was the central theme of Chapter Three. The importance of the values education paradigm was established by thematically reviewing a range of relevant literature. Whether the same meaning translates across the context of the non-formal education of children in India was a focus of investigation. The holistic approach of values education to the development of children was seen as a pedagogical imperative. While particular features of non-formal education facilitate the integration of values education, its unregulated and flexible nature requires values education to be an integral part of ensuring its quality and worth.

The study finds no specific conditions within the Indian context that naturally resist the values education paradigm. In fact, the educational history of independent India includes examples of efforts by successive union governments to set up commissions, committees, and policies to support values education in educational institutions. Financial aid is also available from the government for values education programmes in both formal and non-formal education. Nevertheless, values education is not common in educational institutions across India, although some schools and non-formal education centres do take it seriously. A serious impediment to effective values education in the non-formal education of children concerns the teaching staff's lack of training, as they generally are ordinary people with very little education. An important finding from the field data discussed in Chapter Six suggests that values education perspectives are not

part of the training of teaching staff. Even if values education perspectives are incorporated in the syllabus, its successful translation into actual practice will face grave problems if instructors are not trained and capable in this area.

7.5.4. Implications and Recommendations

A significant implication of these findings for the non-formal education sector is that it invites providers to rethink their training strategies for non-formal education teaching staff. Their excessive emphasis on subject knowledge needs to be altered, and a more integrated strategy which takes in values education perspectives needs to be adopted.

One recommendation is that the government assist non-formal education providers by setting up resource units in each state or district for the purposes of values education. For example, a district-level resource unit with trained personnel could provide training to non-formal education instructors.

7.5.5. Research Question 3: *What are the moral perspectives underpinning non-formal education of children in India?*

and

Research Question 4: *How do non-formal education workers integrate values education into their work and what positive effects do they anticipate that values education would have?*

Question 3 serves the purpose of initiating a discussion on the moral perspectives behind the non-formal education of children in India. No previous study on non-formal education across the world discusses this topic, and it intrigued me to find out what moral perspectives inspire and promote the non-formal education of children and how they relate to the values education paradigm.

The study finds that people from various professions are running non-formal education centres and they display a range of perspectives, which includes the universalisation of education, seeing education as a children's right, making education accessible to marginalised communities, spreading educational awareness among marginalised communities, organising collective work for education, overcoming ignorance in marginalised communities, empowering weaker sections of society, achieving an educated society, providing joyful learning, and forming good citizens. These are primarily pragmatic views which highlight what non-formal education stands for and what its purposes are in different contexts. A major theme that links them all however is humanitarian or philanthropic thinking which shows concern for the empowerment and well-being of weaker, marginalised communities. As the study reveals, for many NGOs, non-formal education is not merely a tool to provide education to children but is part of a wider goal of empowering marginalised communities.

No apparent link exists between the moral perspectives of non-formal education providers and their approach to values education. Committed non-formal education providers seem worried about the plight of children from marginalised communities in terms of their lack of educational attainment. Their efforts are aimed at reaching out to these children in order to help them catch up with the rest of the world. In doing so, they are concerned about children achieving competency comparable to that of formal school children in subjects such as mathematics, science, languages, and so on. They may be justified in doing so because the education system in India is market-oriented, and securing a job becomes the primary concern. Non-formal education children also are encouraged to pursue education to help obtain a good job and improve their socio-economic status. It is certainly legitimate to give marginalised children the hope that education can change their social status and economic condition. Equally important

however is the ‘inner life’ of the children - their thoughts, motives, traits, and dispositions. A range of recent studies examined in Chapter Three of this study draws attention to the imperative of values education for the holistic development of children. In non-formal education, however, the integration of values education does not occur effectively. Supporting this claim is the finding that the training of non-formal education instructors generally does not include values education.

Since instructors generally obtain only a very basic education that is sufficient to teach the children the required elementary level subjects, their knowledge of values education and the nuances involved in imparting it in a pedagogically appropriate way is limited. This means that they will be unable to undertake values education without suitable training. The fact that their training generally does not include values education is therefore a serious concern. It reveals that the integration of values education in non-formal education faces considerable obstacles at the pedagogical level. A significant finding from the study is that some non-formal education providers are completely unaware of values education.

In spite of the above, the majority of non-formal education providers are generally knowledgeable about values education and understand its significance for the development of children. This includes both the governmental and non-governmental sectors. Committed NGOs produce textbooks specifically for non-formal education and make an effort to include values education in the syllabus. These text books are borrowed by other NGOs for non-formal education purposes, and the government also seems to have borrowed insights from the NGOs in producing similar textbooks. In conceptualising values education, certain aspects of the socio-economic deprivation of marginalised communities appear to influence providers more than others. In some

cases, values education is visualised in terms of the socio-economic benefits it might bring about, and in others it is believed to assist the peaceful struggle for basic human rights and social justice. Furthermore, in some other instances, values education is considered capable of enabling marginalised children to build their identity in a world that is oppressive and unjust. This socio-economic approach to values education, which highlights human rights and social justice, is distinguishable from other approaches that indicate a range of more generic positive outcomes, which are discussed in Chapter Six.

Recognising the socio-economic needs of children as an area for intervention is not a wrong approach to values education. These needs are certainly relevant in the particular socio-cultural and educational context of the children participating in non-formal education. In fact, the starting point for values education in non-formal education may well be the socio-economic, social justice, or human rights issues with which children may instantly connect. Nonetheless, viewing values education exclusively from a socio-economic, social justice or human rights perspective could provide a distorted outlook. The latest research on values education internationally demonstrates that it is a pedagogical imperative which can bring about the holistic development of children, including in its social, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. Incorporating these insights into non-formal education will help develop a comprehensive approach to values education, which is undoubtedly advantageous to the children.

7.5.6. Implications and Recommendations

A significant implication of these findings relates to the planning and organising of non-formal education. The meaningful and complete integration of values education ought to become a non-negotiable aspect for non-formal education, right from the planning stage

to the implementation. The study reveals that values education is not present in all aspects of non-formal education, particularly in the training of instructors. It apparently remains largely a disjointed activity that exists in the minds of non-formal education providers and in the textbooks, yet does not find any significant expression at the pedagogical level. Values education cannot be reduced to be mere textbook content, nor can it be another subject that is “taught”. Values education should be the guiding principle for the planning, organising, and implementing stages of non-formal education and, as this study argues, it must be recognised as a pedagogical imperative.

A national framework for values education seems to be a viable recommendation in this regard. International values education models can be of great help in developing a values education framework for India. For example, the National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools (2005) envisions providing planned and systematic values education in all Australian schools. A similar approach in India could help both formal and non-formal education systems to undertake values education in a planned and systematic way.

7.6. Implications for Social Work

A critical finding from the study reveals that social workers, particularly those who work in the NGO sector, are the predominant group of professionals engaging in non-formal education. Social workers run their own NGOs for non-formal education or are members of the leadership team of agencies that provide it. Therefore, the present study has some important implications for social work training and practice in the Indian context.

A significant implication is that the social workers involved in the non-formal education of children in India must have an active commitment to and engagement with values

education. Social workers or other legal or health professionals who engage in non-formal education should not disregard values education, as providing it to India's children is an obligation of every responsible citizen in the country. In a formal school setting, for example, a science teacher should not claim that it is his or her business only to teach science, not to promote values education, as values education is the responsibility of all teachers, regardless of their chosen specialisations (Carr, 1996). In a similar way, all who engage in providing non-formal education are responsible for the values education of the participating children. In fact, values education provides a framework for professionals from different sectors to address disadvantage. Social workers who engage in non-formal education have an obligation to promote values education by undertaking relevant research and by integrating values education into the non-formal education of children.

Another implication involves social work education and training in India. Trainee social workers should be given an adequate understanding of values education, and aspiring social work students can be exposed to values education through field placements in non-formal education settings. Social work courses in India now deal increasingly with ethics and values in social work practice. Values education can be effectively incorporated into this practice, which in turn will provide a deeper understanding of ethics and values in social work. As the definition of social work adopted by the General Meeting of International Federation of Social Workers held in 2000 at Montreal in Canada suggests, "principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work" (Hare, 2004, p. 409). These are also aspects highlighted by the present study as significant to values education of children participating in non-formal education in India. In fact, values education in a non-formal education context provides

concrete and realistic viewpoints to discuss and understand human rights and social justice issues in terms of disadvantage.

7.7. Implications for Future Research

The broad and exploratory nature of this study means that there is room for further, perhaps more detailed, investigation on issues arising from the findings before definitive conclusions can be reached. There are also important findings which have contributed to the body of knowledge based on which future studies can be undertaken.

The following are some recommendations for future research:

1. There is a need to investigate why the schools and other educational institutions generally are not serious about imparting values education in India, when there is nothing that seemingly advocates against the values education paradigm.
2. Investigating the moral perspectives underpinning the non-formal education of children internationally could be an interesting research study. No knowledge is yet available on this topic, so such a study would be a pioneering work in this field.
3. Non-formal education of children is an ongoing enterprise in many Asian countries, including India, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Pakistan. A comparative study of values education perspectives in the non-formal education of children in these countries would make for an important contribution to the body of knowledge. Integrating values education in non-formal education is an unexplored area and the study could be ground-breaking in many ways.
4. There is a need to investigate further the impact that the socio-economic, social justice, and human rights issues of marginalised communities across India have

on the conceptualisation of values education, and how it limits or enhances a comprehensive approach to values education.

5. Non-formal education has been actively contributing to the education of children in India for more than three decades. No systematic and independent assessment and analysis, other than what has been done by the programme evaluation committees of government-funded non-formal programmes, has been undertaken state-wise or nationally. There is a need to investigate the impact, both positive and negative, of non-formal education on marginalised children at both the state level and the national level.

7.8. Conclusion

This chapter summarises the thesis and gives an overview of the key findings with respect to the research questions. Some critical considerations of the study are presented. Implications and recommendations arising out of the study are also discussed. Major limitations as well as the significance of this study are also mentioned. Topics for further investigation emerging from this study are also suggested.

Values education is of the utmost importance for integration into the non-formal education of children. The crux of the study is that without values education, non-formal education is merely an activity of imparting information to children, while at the same time a non-formal education that integrates values education is an activity that offers the potential for holistic development of children. The field work context of the Bihar region of India depicts the hardships that marginalised children have to endure to receive education. Although non-formal education is able to reach out to them to provide education, the scarcity of resources and funds mean that this system is not able to provide education in comfortable places such as good buildings or rooms. In some

cases, non-formal education centres operate in the open air or under a tree. Children attend these centres whether or not it is a hot day or a cold winter's day. When they show an appreciation of non-formal education by participating in it, they are more likely to appreciate any effort which helps them develop as good human persons. When ample research evidence suggests that values education is significant in all educational settings (see Chapter Three), non-formal education also needs to integrate values education in all aspects of its implementation. By highlighting this important aspect, this research offers hope and possibilities of a better life to the marginalised children. This study contributes to the values education paradigm by pointing out its relevance in a non-formal educational context. As mentioned in the preceding section, further research is urgently needed for non-formal education on the Indian subcontinent. For example, the issues of caste and gender are likely to be significant factors that determine educational outcomes and warrant rigorous research attention.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Theme 1: Current Nature and Practices of NFE

1. Could you talk about your experience of NFE? (Prompts: How long have you been involved in NFE? In what capacities have you been involved, e.g. as a member of the leadership team of NFE providing agency, e.g. director, assistant director, principal, NFE instructor/teacher, NFE trainer, and NFE animator? Was your work paid or unpaid?)
2. Please tell me what qualifications are required for someone to be involved in imparting NFE to children in the following capacities: (a) member of the leadership team of NFE providing agency, e.g. (a) director, assistant director, principal etc (b) NFE Instructor/teacher (c) NFE Trainer (d) NFE animator
3. In the formal education sector only those candidates with appropriate qualifications in teacher training are recruited for teaching. What is the practice in NFE in this regard?
4. Who are the professionals in your opinion being involved in the business of imparting NFE to children? (Prompts: Social Workers, teachers, politicians, doctors, nurses, lawyers, etc) Why are they involved?
5. Could you please tell me whether NFE has been successful in imparting education to children? If “Yes” to what extent and if “No” to what extent? What are the reasons for being successful or being a failure?

Theme 2: Moral and Philosophical Underpinnings of NFE

1. In your opinion is NFE necessary to impart education to the children who otherwise do not have access to formal education? Can you please explain why it is so?
2. What does NFE aim to achieve through its educational practices? What role do NFE providers play for the continued education of children after the completion of NFE?
3. Why is it that despite concerted efforts by the government for Universal Elementary Education through various schemes (e.g. free uniforms, bicycles, mid-day meal, etc), children are not motivated to attend school? Can you please say something more about it? What do you suggest as the key factors that could motivate children?
4. Should education be primarily a moral activity? Can you please explain?
5. What is the moral philosophy which underpins the NFE practices in India? In your opinion does it vary from one NFE implementing agency to another? Can you please explain?

Theme 3: Values Education Perspectives in NFE Practices

1. What is your experience of values education practices in NFE? (Prompts: Is it included in the syllabus? Is values education an important concept in NFE or is it unwanted? Can you please say something more about it?)
2. In your opinion how important is the role of teachers in the character formation of the children

in NFE? Why? Are they trained to help young children attending NFE learn and practice sound human values?

3. Are children encouraged to learn and practice new values in the NFE environment? Does religion have an impact on the character formation of the children? How?
4. In your knowledge is there a national level policy on values education for NFE? Is such a policy necessary to build a peaceful future?
5. Do you think that values education has the power to motivate the children to bring about more productive outcomes, especially for the marginalised children? Can you please say something more about it?

Thank you for participating in the interview

APPENDIX-2: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW TOPICS

a. Please tell me about your experience of being at this centre

Prompts:

1. Do you like being at the centre?
2. Are you happy to come here?
3. What do you like most?
4. What do you dislike?

b. Please tell me about what you want to become in your life

Prompts:

1. Do you like to become a doctor, teacher, engineer, carpenter, and actor? What else?
2. Can you say something more about it?
3. How did you get this desire?

c. What do you have to do to reach there?

Prompts:

1. Do you have to Study?
2. Do you have to work?
3. Do you have to help each other?
4. Do you have to listen to your teacher?

d. Do you think NFE is helping you to reach there?

Prompts:

1. Does NFE help you to learn whatever is required to become what you want to become?
2. Do your NFE teachers encourage you to pursue your goals?

e. What do you know about values? Are they important in life?

Prompts:

1. Where do values come from?
2. Are they learnt?
3. Do values contribute to flourishing of society or not?

f. What values do you practice in life?

Prompts:

1. Respect for others?
2. Helping others who are in need?
3. What else?

g. Does NFE centre help you learn new values? Can you say something more about it?

Prompts:

1. What new values have you learnt?
2. Do you like other children learn and practice these values?

h. Let us try to sum up your experience. What do you see as the positive and negative changes in your life due to NFE? What changes do you like to see in making NFE better?

Prompts:

1. Would you have studied if there was no NFE?
2. Will you continue to study further?
3. Will you bring more students to NFE?
4. Will you need more teachers in NFE?
5. Will you need more study materials?

Thank you all for your active participation

APPENDIX-3: INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT PROFILE

SL. No.	Pseudonyms	Designation	Sector	Work Experience	Gender
1	Shekhar	Director	NGO	5 years	M
2	Priya	Director	NGO	13 years	F
3	Marcus	NFE Consultant and Advisor	Govt & NGO	30 years	M
4	Moses	Director	NGO	20 years	M
5	Subha	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	10 years	F
6	Chinmayi	Director	NGO	21 years	F
7	Ajith	Director	NGO	11 years	M
8	Sherif	NFE training strategist & Former government official, Government of Bihar	Govt & NGO	25 years	M
9	Shyla	Trainer of NFE	Govt & NGO	21 years	F
10	Rajendrakumar	Government Official, Government of Bihar	Government	-	M
11	Purohit	Director	NGO	16 years	M
12	Aravind	Government Official, Government of Bihar	Government	20 years	M
13	Niranjan	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	9 months	M
14	Anwar	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	12 years	M
15	Alok	Government Official, Government of Bihar	Government	-	M
16	Suraj	Government Official, Government of Bihar	Government	-	M
17	Vijay	State Director	NGO	10 years	M
18	Midhun	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	More than 2 years	M
19	Meena	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	8 years	F
20	Nishant	Director	NGO	14 years	M
21	Johnson	Director	NGO	25 years	M
22	Prakash	Director	NGO	26 years	M
23	Shahul	Trainer of NFE	Govt & NGO	20 years	M
24	Poonam	Secretary	NGO	15 years	F
25	Chotalal	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	17 years	M
26	Lakshman	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	32 years	M
27	Iqbal	President	NGO	30 years	M
28	Gopal	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	21 years	M
29	Neeraj	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	24 years	M
30	Kanika	Teacher, NFE	NGO	2 years	F
31	Kusum	Government Official, Government of Bihar	Government	17 years	F
32	Alphonsa	The Person in-charge, NFE	NGO	9 years	F
33	Sumith	Coordinator, NFE	NGO	2 years	M

Male = 24; Female = 9; NGOs = 28; Government = 5; Total = 33

APPENDIX-4: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PARTICIPANT PROFILE

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW-1

SL.NO.	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER
1	AJITH KUMAR	12	BOY
2	RAJU KUMAR	13	BOY
3	PRIYANKA KUMARI	8	GIRL
4	PALLAVI KUMARI	9	GIRL
5	SALMAN KUMAR	13	BOY
6	RAKESH KUMAR	13	BOY
7	NEERAJ KUMAR	8	BOY
8	PINKI KUMARI	9	GIRL
9	KAREENA KUMARI	10	GIRL
10	BINOD KUMAR	12	BOY
11	SHAHUL KUMAR	9	BOY
12	PRADEEP KUMAR	9	BOY
13	MADHU KUMARI	9	GIRL
14	ARATHI KUMARI	9	GIRL
15	SONAM KUMARI	8	GIRL

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW-2

SL.NO.	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER
1	LAILA KHATUN	10	GIRL
2	NADIYA KHATUN	12	GIRL
3	ANAMIKA KUMARI	12	GIRL
4	PRIYANKA KHATUN	12	GIRL
5	MUSKAN KHATUN	13	GIRL
6	KAJOL KHATUN	11	GIRL
7	FATIMA KHATUN	11	GIRL
8	KATRINA KHATUN	12	GIRL
9	JOYTHI KUMARI	10	GIRL
10	SALEEMA KHATUN	13	GIRL
11	NOORJAHAN KHATUN	12	GIRL
12	MUMTAS KHATUN	11	GIRL
13	RASIYA KHATUN	11	GIRL
14	IBTHIHAL KHATUN	11	GIRL
15	SHABINA KHATUN	12	GIRL
16	BENASIR KHATUN	11	GIRL

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW-3

SL.NO.	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER
1	PRIYANKA KUMARI	13	GIRL
2	MADHUBALA KUMARI	13	GIRL
3	JWALA KUMARI	14	GIRL
4	VANAJA KUMARI	14	GIRL
5	PINKI KUMARI	14	GIRL
6	RENU KUMARI	13	GIRL
7	MOHINI KUMARI	12	GIRL
8	POONAM KUMARI	12	GIRL
9	ANKITA KUMARI	13	GIRL
10	SUSMITA KUMARI	12	GIRL
11	MEENA KUMARI	10	GIRL
12	AISWARYA KUMARI	12	GIRL
13	SEEMA KUMARI	13	GIRL
14	VASANTI KUMARI	12	GIRL
15	SAVITRI KUMARI	12	GIRL
16	KAVITHA KUMARI	12	GIRL

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW-4

SL.NO.	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER
1	RAJESH KUMAR	10	BOY
2	RAKESH KUMAR	9	BOY
3	PRIYARANJAN KUMAR	8	BOY
4	AJITH KUMAR	11	BOY
5	MITHUN KUMAR	11	BOY
6	KRISHNA KUMAR	9	BOY
7	RENUKA KUMARI	10	GIRL
8	PALLAVI KUMARI	10	GIRL
9	POONAM KUMARI	12	GIRL
10	NEELAM KUMARI	10	GIRL
11	SNEHALATHA KUMARI	10	GIRL
12	SHALINI KUMARI	12	GIRL
13	PENNI KUMARI	9	GIRL
14	PRIYANKA KUMARI	12	GIRL
15	APSARA KUMARI	12	GIRL
16	UJALA KUMARI	12	GIRL

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW-5

SL.NO.	PSEUDONYMS	AGE	GENDER
1	PARINITHA KUMARI	10	GIRL
2	MANSI KUMARI	7	GIRL
3	ANAMIKA KUMARI	6	GIRL
4	KANIKA KUMARI	10	GIRL
5	JUHI KUMARI	12	GIRL
6	JYOTHSNA KUMARI	12	GIRL
7	SITHA KUMARI	12	GIRL
8	RADHA KUMARI	7	GIRL
9	MEENA KUMARI	12	GIRL
10	AISWARYA KUMARI	6	GIRL
11	RENUKA KUMARI	7	GIRL
12	KUNTHI KUMARI	12	GIRL
13	PRADEEP KUMAR	7	BOY
14	KAILASH KUMAR	10	BOY
15	RANJAN KUMAR	9	BOY
16	PRITHVIRAJ KUMAR	14	BOY

APPENDIX-5

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW INFORMATION STATEMENT FORM

A Critical Examination of Values Education Perspectives in Non-formal Education in India

(Document Version..... Dated.....)

You are invited to participate in the research project named above which is being conducted by (Mr.) Shajimon Peter from The University of Newcastle, Australia. The research is part of his doctoral studies, supervised by Prof Stephen Webb and Prof Terence Lovat from the same University.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research is to examine perspectives on values education in non-formal education of children in India and the significance of values education integration in non-formal education of children.

Who can participate in the research?

Children in the age group of 6-14 who participate in Non-Formal Education

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those people who give their informed consent will be included in the project. Whether or not you decide to participate, your decision will not disadvantage you.

What would you be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion. You will be asked to discuss your experiences of, or views on, education in general and the non-formal education in particular. You will be asked to discuss: the values you hold and practice; how the NFE helps you to learn and practice new values; and how you see your future shaping up through the NFE.

How much time will it take?

Up to two hours for the focus group discussion

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

There are no direct risks or benefits of you participating. However, you might enjoy discussing your experience of and views on education and various values you hold and practice with others. Also, it is hoped that the results of this research will inform some future policy interventions in the provision of education to marginalised children.

How will your privacy be protected?

Any information collected by Mr Shajimon Peter which might identify you will be stored securely and will only be accessed by the three researchers named above. Pseudonyms for informants and locations will be used in publicly reporting the findings of this research.

How will the information collected be used?

The transcribed and analysed focus group discussion data will be included in a thesis to be submitted for the PhD degree of Shajimon Peter.

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate by signing the consent form below. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, please speak directly to the researcher. If you would like to participate in a focus group discussion, please sign the consent form below and return to the researcher.

Further information

If you would like further information please ask the researchers,

- (1) Name..... (Student Researcher)
- (2) Name..... (Principal Supervisor)
- (3) Name..... (Co-Supervisor)

Feedback

If you would like to get feedback about the research please provide your contact details to the researchers including your e-mail ID. A summary of the research findings will then be sent to you.

Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No.

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, please write to: The Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The Chancellery, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone +61-2-49216333, email: Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au

Local contacts for complaints are as follows:

Name (Local Contact Person)
Address
.....
Phone E-mail

Thank you for considering this invitation.

(1) Name & Contact Details
(PhD Principal Supervisor)

(2) Name & Contact Details
(PhD Co-Supervisor)

Signature

Signature

(3) Name & Contact Details
(Student Researcher)

Signature

APPENDIX-6: INTERVIEW INFORMATION STATEMENT FORM

A Critical Examination of Values Education Perspectives in Non-formal Education in India

(Document Version..... Dated.....)

You are invited to participate in an interview for the research project identified above which is being conducted by (Mr.) Shajimon Peter and his team from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Newcastle. The research is part of his studies, supervised by Prof Stephen Webb and Prof Terence Lovat from the same school.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research is to examine perspectives on values education in non-formal education of children in India and the significance of values education integration in non-formal education of children.

Who can participate in the research?

A person who is 18 years and above and is the director or in-charge of the Non-Formal Education providing agency/centre.

What choice do you have?

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those people who give their informed consent will be interviewed. Whether or not you decide to participate, your decision will not disadvantage you. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason and have the option of withdrawing any data you have provided.

What would you be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to tell us about your experience of NFE. Moreover, you will be asked to speak about your views on the factors affecting the effective implementation of NFE, moral philosophies underpinning your views on education, and your views on values education perspectives in NFE. After the interview, you will be offered the opportunity to review and edit or erase anything from the recording if you wish.

How much time will it take?

Approximately one hour.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

We believe there is no risk in participating. Although there is no intended direct benefit for participants, we believe that the research results could potentially improve the implementation of NFE in India.

How will your privacy be protected?

Any information collected by the researcher during the course of the interview, which might identify you will be kept strictly confidential and stored securely and only accessed by the researchers. Your interview will be de-identified when transcribed. Personal identification information will not be shared with anyone without your consent. In the written reports of this research, it is possible that some of your words may be quoted, but your name will not be used unless you wish to be quoted by name.

How will the information collected be used?

The information collected will be included in a thesis to be submitted for Doctor's Degree of Shajimon Peter.

Re-imbursement for your costs

You will be reimbursed for any local travel costs due to your participation in the interview

What do you need to do to participate?

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, please ask the researcher. If you would like to participate, please sign the consent form and return to the researcher.

Further information

If you would like further information please ask the researchers:

- (1) Name..... (Student Researcher)
- (2) Name..... (Principal Supervisor)
- (3) Name..... (Co-Supervisor)

Feedback

If you would like to get feedback about the research please provide your contact details to the researchers including your e-mail ID. A summary of the research findings will then be sent to you.

Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No.....

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, please write to: The Human Research Ethics Officer, Research Office, The Chancellery, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone +61-2-49216333, email: Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au

Local contacts for complaints are as follows:

Name (Local Contact Person)

Address

.....

Phone E-mail

Thank you for considering this invitation.

(1) Name & Contact Details

(PhD Principal Supervisor)

Signature

(2) Name & Contact Details

(PhD Co-Supervisor)

Signature

(3) Name & Contact Details

(Student Researcher)

Signature

APPENDIX-7: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

A Critical Examination of Values Education Perspectives in Non-formal Education in India

(Document Version..... Date.....)

- I agree to participate in the Focus Group Interview above and give my consent freely.
- I understand that the Focus Group Interview will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained.
- I acknowledge that my involvement in the Focus Group Interview may not be of benefit to me.
- I understand I can withdraw from the Focus Group Interview at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.
- I consent to a two hour Focus Group Interview and have it recorded.
- I understand that my personal information will remain confidential to the researcher.
- I have had the opportunity to have questions answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree for the In-charge to sign the form for me.

Participant's Name (please print)

Name of the NFE Centre

Centre In-charge's Name (please print)

Signature..... Date.....

Researchers Name (please print)

Signature..... Date.....

APPENDIX-8: INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

A Critical Examination of Values Education Perspectives in Non-Formal Education in India

(Document Version..... Dated.....)

- I agree to participate in the research project above and give my consent freely.
- I understand that the project will be conducted as described in the Information Statement, a copy of which I have retained.
- I acknowledge that my involvement in the study may not be of benefit to me.
- I understand I can withdraw from the project at any time and do not have to give any reason for withdrawing.
- I consent to a 60 minute interview and have it recorded.
- I understand that my personal information will remain confidential to the researcher.
- I have had the opportunity to have questions answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that I will be given the opportunity to review and/or edit my contribution.

Participant's Name (please print)

Signature..... Date.....

Researchers Name (please print)

Signature..... Date.....