

Community Initiative and Education

a case study of Maharashtra

God does not change the condition of the people unless they change themselves.”

Community education, like any other community development project is subject to various conditions. As the success of an economic development project requires the assembly and interaction of four agents of production, so is the case for educational upliftment. In fact there are many factors ranging from policy to plan of action that determine the educational status of any society. It requires, therefore, refreshing ourselves with these basic factors before we deal with the actual topic. These factors may be understood with acronym **I³** that stands for **Initiative, Infrastructure and Introspection**.

INITIATIVE

It refers to a point or process to begin or start. It is a precondition for any change. In fact mono and multidimensional growth and development of micro or macro nature is embedded in initiative and enterprise. It is this initiative that elevates a man from labour to an entrepreneur. It is this initiative that classifies people in the society as leaders and followers. It is this initiative that transforms a corps into captain. Let us remember that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan launched the move for modern education among Muslims and now there are thousands such institution catering to the educational need of the people. Mr. Jamshedji Tata established an industry and facilitated the process of industrialization of India. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule started the social reform movement and Dalits and other oppressed classes became socially empowered. Ashfaqullah Khan along with his Raja friend started the organized liberation movement and India got independence. What it all means is that social changes have occurred due to initiative. Economic advancement owes its existence to initiative of entrepreneurs. Political empowerment occurred due to political will and social action of leaders. In brief initiative may be explained with acronym **D³** that stands for **Desire, Dream and Determination**. Here desire stands for an urge to grow; dream refers to desire to own it. And determination stands for conviction to act and succeed.

It may be noted that in this context what is true for an individual is equally true for group of the people or the society at large. For initiative ensures changes in individuals, communities as well as nations. In the present day socially conscious modern societies, state--- the social governor has expanded its function from simply protector of life and property to ensurer of well being of the people. In the modern world the responsibility of attaining social economic and multi pronged welfare of the people, therefore now lies with the state. But the achievement of this objective is conditioned with initiative.

INFRASTRUCTURE

It refers to the resource base for materialization of the dream. It is explained as **T³** i.e. **Time Talent and Treasure** - the mobilization and the effective use of these resources ensure the required changes on the educational front when used optimally at least it results into —

- 1- Educational awareness campaign
- 2- Establishment of institutions to cater educational needs,
- 3- Setting up of vocational guidance and counseling Centres,
- 4- Funds for educational aid and scholarship,
- 5- Remedial and special coaching for excellence.

The above are few among many objective creation of infrastructure that help determine the level of initiative of any community or group.

INTROSPECTION

D³ and **T³** may not always guarantee optimum results. To ensure it what is required is a constant inward critical looking for what, how and why things happen. This critical process may explain with acronym **A³** that means **Assess, Assure and Accelerate**. It is a kind of swot analysis that brings a self-realization about the strength and weaknesses of upliftment programme and strategies.

STATE AND COMMUNITY* INITIATIVE

As stated earlier the literacy and education is prime responsibility of the central and state governments. Accordingly education ministry now known as ministry of HRD Govt. of India promotes education in the country by way of establishing institutions, granting funds to institutions and state governments directly as well as through social welfare ministry. Similarly state government promotes literacy and education among the people of the state in a similar fashion. It grants permission as well recognition to individual organizational

* Community means people of the state organized in form of NGO's

initiatives in the field of education. However it has been the policy of the government to concentrate more on primary and basic education and encourage the community to come forward for the advancement of higher education. In the changing scenario, education is becoming a job of the private sector particularly in case of higher education. Although primary and secondary education is also feeling the burnt of this change in policy, yet it continues to be basically the duty of state and local self-governments to provide basic education to the people of the state. While literacy is promoted through Balwadi, Anganwadi, adult and continuing education schemes promoted and financed directly as well as indirectly through social welfare ministry of the central and state governments, the responsibility of providing primary and secondary level education through institutional method lies with the state government, municipalities and Zilla Parishads. , Non- government organizations have also now stepped in to share and promote this cause. According to published reports the state and state community initiative (NGO's) is found as under—

It may be noted with pride that Maharashtra stands second only next to Kerala in terms of highest rate of literacy and education. According to Maharashtra Economic Survey* literacy rate in the state is 77.3 percent which is far above the national average of 65 percent. In fact Maharashtra is one of the few developed states of India, which are rated high for its economic and social strength. The published statistical facts reveal that per capita income in Maharashtra is Rs. 23726/- which is higher than all India per capita income of Rs. 16487/- in the year 2001-02. Similarly like any other developed economy its sectoral contribution of tertiary and secondary sectors in the state are respectively 55 percent and 30 percent to the state gross domestic product which is again higher than all India average of 50 percent and 20 percent to the national gross domestic product respectively. Social indicators like population below poverty line, birth rate, death rate, and infant mortality rate narrate the same story.

Needless to say that attainment of various targets is the end product of the joint effort of the state and the state community**. Adequately financed five-year plans have placed Maharashtra on a higher scale among other states of India. But it would be wrong to be presuming that all has happened with sole initiative and effort of the state and its executive machinery. Let us remember the English proverb - **you can bring the horse to the water but cannot make him drink**. Truly speaking it has happened with active and wholehearted cooperation of the community, which comprises of heterogeneous groups with cultural, linguistic and religious diversity. However which group has contributed what and how much is the point of debate. In this paper an effort is being made to evaluate the contribution of state and community in Maharashtra in spreading the literacy and high level of education of the state. Wherever possible effort has also been made to

* Maharashtra Economic Survey 2001-02.

** Community means people of the state organized in form of NGO's

ascertain initiative level and accordingly the share of linguistic and religious communities.

LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTION OF THE PAPER

Initiative cannot be treated as purely objective phenomenon. For the executive machinery of the state implementing five year plans cannot claim to be the sole source of plan proceeds. It has been adequately searched, analyzed and planned by the planning commission - an exogenous agency. Similarly founders of educational institutions--the educational service caterers, cannot claim to be the singular source of the service as establishment of these institutions has become possible because of social motivators and encouraging state educational policy. In view of these subjectivities it would be difficult to determine the exact shares of different groups viz state, community and heterogeneous. For bringing objectivity in our enquiry, therefore, it is essential to assume that educational institutions are the major players as educational service provider. Further the founders and managers of educational institutions are initiators (if not the initiators) responsible for educational progress in the state. Based on these assumptions this humble academic exercise is carried to determine the level of initiative of respective groups in the following pages. It may be noted that the government finances many a private sector educational institutions. But they are treated as part of voluntary sector contribution as the initiative to establish these institutions has come from non-governmental organizations of the community and not from the state government. Further all institutions established and run by municipalities and Zilla Parishads are included in the category of state initiatives.

Table 1* All Medium Primary Schools

Year	(A) Estd. by Govt.			(B) Estd. by NGOs			Grand Total (A+B)		
	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total
1995-96	-	56314	91.33	-	6028	9.67	-	62342	100
1996-97	1.00	56880	89.94	5.50	6360	10.06	1.44	63240	100
1997-98	0.85	57366	89.56	5.09	6684	10.44	1.28	64050	100
1998-99	1.17	58040	89.40	2.90	6878	10.60	1.35	64918	100
99-2000	0.60	58388	89.02	4.65	7198	10.98	1.02	65586	100

The above table (No.1) shows that the share of state initiative is very high in comparison to community initiative (including all heterogeneous groups) with respect to primary education in the state. It is however observed that the

* Education at a glance, a yearly publication of directorate of education Govt. of Maharashtra Pune.

share of community initiative is increasing whereas the share of state government is declining. This is further confirmed with comparative figures of yearly growth rate of primary educational institutions by state and those of community shown in parenthesis. This change might be because of liberalization in education policy.

Similarly the following table (No. 2) records the initiative levels of the state and community in respect of secondary and higher secondary education in Maharashtra

Table 2* All Medium Secondary & Higher Secondary Education

Year	(A) Estd. by Govt.			(B) Estd. by NGOs			Grand Total (A+B)		
	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	Yearly Growth Rate	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total
1995-96	-	1100	8.40	-	11993	91.60	-	13093	100
1996-97	0.82	1109	8.33	1.72	12199	91.67	1.64	13308	100
1997-98	0.09	1110	8.18	2.16	12463	91.82	1.99	13573	100
1998-99	1.17	1175	8.39	2.98	1235	91.61	3.22	14010	100
99-2000	1.87	1197	8.25	3.70	7198	91.75	3.55	14507	100

The above table shows that unlike primary education, share of the community in secondary and higher secondary education is higher than that of the state government. Further community shows that the share of community is showing an increasing trend whereas the share of state government is declining year after year. Moreover the yearly growth in state sector shows fluctuating level whereas in community sector shows continuously an uprising trend.

In case of higher education, in different vocational fields, government has been found serious in establishing universities but leaving the job of establishing colleges for non-government organizations. These colleges and technical institutes cater to the educational need of majority of population. It has not been possible to gather detailed information of all fields and at all levels. However the following table contains information that may be taken as an indicator of participation of state government and private institutions.

* Education at a glance a yearly publication of directorate of education Govt. of Maharashtra Pune.

Table 3 * Medical, Technical and professional Education

Sr. No.	Types of Courses	(A) Estd. by the Govt.		(B) Estd. by the NGO's		Grand Total (A+B)
		Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	Total No. Of institutions	% Share in Total	
1	Medical:					
	(a) Allopathic G/PG	28	55.00	23	45.00	51
	(b) Ayurvedic G/PG	08	10.53	68	89.47	76
	(c) Homeopathic G/PG	00	00	48	100.00	48
	(d) Unani G/PG	00	00	07	100.00	07
	(e) Dental G/PG	08	17.39	38	82.61	46
	<i>Total</i>	44	19.30	184	80.70	228
2	Engineering D/G/PG	57	16.01	299	83.99	356
3	Management Science	08	9.50	076	90.50	84
4	Hotel Management	00	00	08	100.00	08
5	Pharmaceuticals D/G/PG	12	9.37	116	90.63	128
6	Industrial Training Institute	347	56.60	266	43.40	613
7	Nursing (all Types)	056	97.45	62	52.54	118
Total (1 to 7)		524	34.14	1011	65.86	1535

The above table (No. 3) suggests that community initiative plays a major role in providing all types of medical, engineering, management science, hotel management and pharmacy education at certificate, Diploma, bachelor and post graduate levels in the state of Maharashtra. On the other hand gov't's share is below 20 percent. Only in nursing and vocational education, the share of state sector is approximately 50 percent probably on account of government's compulsion to provide and strengthen executive machinery to meet the need of medical and industrial sectors. Taken together the percentage of share of the state government in all types of medical, technical, and professional education works out to 34.14 percent whereas the share of community works out to 65.86 percent.

On the basis of above information and analysis, it may be concluded that-

- (a) The level of initiative of the government in providing primary and basic education is very high (90%) in comparison to the level of initiative of the community at 10 percent.

- (b) The level of initiative of the state government in providing secondary and higher secondary education is exactly reverse and very low (approx. 8%) in comparison to the level of initiative of the community at 92 percent.
- (c) The initiative level of the state government in providing medical, technical, managerial and nursing courses is considerably good (approx. 34%) whereas the level of the community initiative again figures prominently in education and training.

HETEROGENEOUS COMMUNITY INITIATIVE LEVEL

As stated earlier, the state community comprises of various linguistic groups speaking almost 11 to 12 different languages on account of migratory nature of the state population. The linguistic classification of the state population, reveals that about 73 percent of the total population of Maharashtra speaks Marathi, while 7 percent speaks Urdu, about 6.6 percent speaks Hindi, approx 2.66 percent speaks Gujarati and remaining 11 percent speak all other languages. *

Similarly major religious communities in the state, like other part of the country are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs etc. In the absence of any reliable classified published information, it is very difficult to ascertain about the level of initiatives of these heterogeneous groups separately. However on the basis of available information, inferences can be drawn which will show at least the trend if not the exact quantum of initiative.

INITIATIVE LEVEL OF HINDUS AND MUSLIMS

Hindus of Maharashtra speak and study, Hindi, Gujarati, English, Kannad, Tamil, Telgu, Bengali etc. in addition to Marathi. Similarly Muslims in Maharashtra also speak and study all the above-mentioned languages in addition to Urdu. However it may be assumed with reasonable degree of fairness that Marathi is primarily the language of non-Muslim community of Maharashtra and Urdu is primarily or solely the language of Muslim community of Maharashtra. Thus to promote education, all the private sector Marathi Medium institutions have been established on the initiative of Hindus, Urdu Medium institutions on the initiative of Muslims and Hindi medium institutions have been set up by North Indian Hindus. However, these institutions are run on the basis of democratic norms and impart education to all without distinctions of religion and caste. They are perfectly cosmopolitan. These institutions therefore can be treated as indicators of the level of initiative of the respective communities. Table (No. 4) provides details of such institutions. It contains projected figures, which are based on the above findings that 10 percent primary schools and 92 percent secondary and higher secondary schools are established by NGO's. These figures are further compared with total private sector institutions to arrive at the level of initiatives of the respective linguistic communities.

* A Brochure of educational statistics published by school education dept. of Govt. of Maharashtra 1995

The analysis of the data shows that Hindus are far more aware and follow the policy of self-help. Whereas Muslims are found slow in imbibing this type of initiative. It may be noted that their share in institutions is one third of their share in the population at 9.7 percent in the state*. On the other hand contribution of Hindus is much higher and above 81.12 percent that is they're in the state population.

*Table No. 4
 Projection of linguistic community initiative for Primary Education*

Year	Marathi Medium				Urdu Medium			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
	Total Schools	Total Schools Est. by Hindu Community. 10% of A	All Medium Schools Est. by NGO's	% Share in NGO's initiative B/C*100	Total Schools	Total Schools Est. by Muslim Community. 10% of A	Total All Medium Schools Est. by NGO's	% Share in NGO's initiative B/C*100
1995-96	56805	5681	6028	94.24	2329	233	6028	3.86
1996-97	57652	5765	6360	90.64	2399	240	6360	3.77
1997-98	58399	5840	6684	83.37	2450	245	6684	3.66
1998-99	58884	5888	6878	85.61	2568	257	6878	3.74
99-2002	59582	5958	7198	82.77	2541	254	7198	3.53

*Table No. 5
 Projection of Linguistic community initiative for Secondary and Higher Secondary Education*

Year	Marathi Medium				Urdu Medium			
	A	B	C	D	A	B	C	D
	Total Schools	Total Schools Est. by Hindu Community. 92% of A	All Medium Schools Est. by NGO's	% Share in NGO's initiative B/C*100	Total Schools	Total Schools Est. by Muslim Community. 92% of A	Total All Medium Schools Est. by NGO's	% Share in NGO's initiative B/C*100
1995-96	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
1996-97	11427	10513	12199	86.18	622	573	12199	4.69
1997-98	11375	10465	12463	84.00	624	574	12463	4.60
1998-99	11415	10501	12835	81.82	715	658	12835	5.12
99-2000	11978	11019	13310	82.80	698	642	13310	4.82

* Census of India 1991 part IV – B (II)

Similarly the above table (No. 5) shows the initiative level of linguistic communities in terms of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

The figures quoted above belong to two different time periods with a gap of around 3-4 years. But it may be safely assumed that sea changes do not occur in either the number or in the establishment of the institutions. Therefore a comparison can be made. This comparison reveals that initiative level of Marathi linguistic minority, which are predominantly Hindus, is much higher (10%-15 %) than their share in population. On the other hand the level of initiative among Urdu linguistic minority, which are exclusively Muslims, is much less (50%) than their share in state population.

The above table no 3 specifies the separately government and state community initiative with respective to Medical, Technical and professional education. As usual government publications provide no classified information about the initiative of heterogeneous communities of Maharashtra. However a survey of directories of information brochures leads us to draw the following conclusion.

Table no. 6 Muslim initiative in higher education*

Sr. No	Courses	Total NGO's Institutions		Total Muslim NGO's Institutions		
		No.	% of total institution	No.	% Of total NGO's institution	% Of total state institution
1	Medical Colleges	184	80.74	08	4.35	1.75
2	Engineering Colleges	299	83.99	04	1.34	1.12
3	Management Science	76	90.50	02	2.63	2.38
4	Hotel & Catering	08	100.00	01	12.5	12.5
5	Pharmaceuticals	116	90.63	02	1.72	1.56
6	Industrial Training Institutes (ITI)	266	43.40	23	8.64	3.75
7	Nursing	62	52.54	---	--	--

The above table reveals low level of Muslim community initiative and share in medical, technical and professional education in the state. There are seven Unani medical colleges, which have almost half of the intake capacity of other medical colleges. In vocational training the share is sizeable and nearly proportionate to the population of Muslims in Maharashtra.

Therefore the conclusion derived from the above data is that initiative levels among Hindus population (Marathi linguistic minority) is more than

* Maharashtra Economy Survey 2001-02, and the list of private ITI published by of the Dept. of Vocational Education, Govt. of Maharashtra, Mumbai - August 2002.

proportionate to their share in population. Whereas the initiative level of Muslim population (Urdu linguistic minority) much less than its proportion to the state population.

Conclusion

In brief the conclusion can be summarized as below---

- 1- The role of the state Government has been declining in setting up educational institutions.***
- 2- Private agencies are playing more important role in setting up new institutions for education.***
- 3- But the new institutions, which are coming up with the help of NGO's will not be of much help for majority who cannot meet the cost of such institutions.***
- 4- Minorities have been lagging behind in promoting educational infrastructure.***
- 5- Besides motivation and initiative, there may be other factors like vision, mission, management, unconducive educational environment etc., which have not permitted them to go ahead in education along with other communities.***
- 6- There are serious concerns in the mind of thinkers that communities without strong educational background and inadequate professional skills will loose further in the process of development.***
- 7- Communities with such a background will have not only to set up more educational institutions but will have to increase merit based functioning with democratic system.***