

# Implementational Status of Multilingual Education Program in Balasore District of Odisha

Rupali Rachana Patra, Int B.Ed.- M.Ed. Scholar\*

Dr. Ranjan Kumar Rout, Assistant Professor\*

Dr. Amulya Kumar Acharya, Associate Professor\*

\*PG Department of Education, Fakir Mohan University, Vyasa Vihar, Balasore, Odisha

**Abstract:-** Multilingualism plays a crucial role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which involves the use of multiple languages by an individual speaker or by a group of speakers. From NEP 1968 to NEP 2020, Multilingual Education (MLE) approach has been prioritized to create diversified learning opportunities for learners. With the implementation of NCF (2005), the Government of Odisha started implementing the MLE program in the year 2007-08. The current study contemplates the implementational status of the MLE program in the Balasore district of Odisha to get the ground reality of the program. The present study comes under the scope/purview of descriptive survey type research design. Through purposive sampling method the researcher selected the Nilgiri block of Balasore district (Nilgiri block is the only block containing all the multilingual schools of Balasore district) of Odisha. The researcher selected twelve schools through simple random sampling method, out of which ten (having Ho language students) were selected as MLE schools and the remaining two as Non-MLE schools. Again, class-II students from each sample school (both MLE and Non-MLE schools) and the MLE teachers of the sample MLE schools were selected for the data collection process. Two self-made tools i.e. interview schedule and focus group discussion were used in this study. The data was analyzed and interpreted through t-test and content analysis technique. The present study reveals that there is no significant difference between academic achievement level of MLE school students and Non-MLE school students. It also flashes light on the optimistic perception of MLE teachers and students towards the MLE program along with various problems and prospects in the implementation process of the MLE program.

**Keywords:-** Implementational status, Multilingual Education.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language acts as a medium to express human emotions. It is the way of communication through which one can convey thoughts, ideas, knowledge, etc., and can build relationships for life as well. But today's generation demands command over multiple languages to compete with this dynamic society. Hence, Multilingual Education (MLE) is being introduced and implemented worldwide which means schooling begins in the mother tongue and then transitions to additional languages i.e. "first-language-first". Multilingual Education in Odisha was initiated in the year of 2005. There

are 62 different tribal communities and 13 vulnerable tribal groups present in Odisha (India). These communities use 21 tribal languages (Bonda, Bhinjal, Bhumia, Bhatra, Bhuiyan, Bhunjia, Diyadi, Gondi, Gadaba, Ho, Juanga, Koya, Kui, Kuvi, Kishan, Kharia, Munda, Oram, Paroja, Santali, Saura) and 74 dialects as their medium of communication, among which only 7 languages have their own script. From 21 tribal languages, 10 languages are selected for adoption as a medium of instruction at the primary level in the first phase during 2007-08. Again, it has been extended to 11 more during 2012-13 (OPEPA, SC/ST Education). MLE program is operational in 1485 schools in 17 tribal districts of Odisha namely Anugul, Bargarh, Balasore, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Kalahandi, Koraput, Keonjhar, Malkangiri, Mayurbhanj, Nawarangpur, Nuapada, Rayagada, Sambalpur, and Sundargarh (OPEPA, SC/ST Education). As far as the Balasore district of Odisha is concerned, the MLE program is implemented in only one language i.e. Ho. The current study examines the empirical data collected on the MLE program of the Balasore district to explore the ground realities of MLE in terms of the achievement level of students along with the perception of MLE teachers and students, and the problems and prospects of the program.

### ➤ Rationale of the study

The attitude of teachers, parents and students towards Multilingual Education was good but the implementation status of Multilingual Education was not satisfactory (Cristian, 2018, Shresth, 2014 and Mohanty et.al, 2012). The academic achievement level of students in MLE schools of Odisha is better in subjects like language, environmental studies (EVS), and mathematics (Nag, 2018 and Mohanty, 2017). MLE in the tribal school has created a good classroom climate in the school so far as the activeness of the learners, classroom management, and presentation of learning experiences are concerned (Rout, 2021). The achievement level in the language is up-to mark in MLE schools because of the remarkable effect of the MLE program (Rout, 2021). Through MLE, some ethnic groups got equal access to job, employment & self-promotion (Raosaheb, 2016). Though various studies have been conducted by different researchers, the status of the MLE program in terms of the comparison between the academic achievement level of MLE and Non-MLE school students through the school records, perception of students and teachers of MLE schools, and problems and prospects of MLE schools in Nilgiri block of Balasore district are not widely explored. So the investigators are interested to carry out this study in the mentioned locality as this area is having high tribal population.

➤ *Objectives of the study*

Following are the main objectives of the present study.

1. To study the academic achievement of multilingual education and non-multilingual education school students of the Balasore district.
2. To study the perception of multilingual education school students and teachers towards the multilingual program in the Balasore district.
3. To explore the problems and prospects of multilingual education in the Balasore district.

➤ *Hypotheses of the study*

The current study attempts to test the following hypotheses.

1. There exists no significant difference between the academic achievement level in Mathematics subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students.
2. There exists no significant difference between the academic achievement level in Odia subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students.

➤ *Research questions of the study*

The current study attempts to examine the following research questions.

1. What do the multilingual education school teachers and students perceive about multilingual education program in the Balasore district?
2. What are the problems and prospects of multilingual education in Balasore district?

## II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

➤ *Research design:*

The present study comes under the scope of descriptive survey type research.

➤ *Population and Sample:*

All the school students of both multilingual education and non-multilingual schools of the Balasore district constituted the population of the study. For the sample, the researcher selected the Nilgiri block of Balasore district purposefully. From the Nilgiri block, 12 sample schools were selected randomly out of which Ten were MLE schools (having Ho language students) and Two were Non-MLE schools. Again, the class-II students from each sample school (both MLE and Non-MLE schools) and the MLE teachers of the sample MLE schools were selected for the data collection process.

**Tools and techniques:** The following two self-made tools were used in this study.

- **Interview Schedule for Teachers:** For the interview of the teachers a self-made Interview Schedule was used to judge the perception of the teachers.
- **Focus Group Discussion:** In this study, Focus Group Discussion was used for the students to know the perception and problems of multilingual education.
- **Data analysis techniques:** The collected data was analyzed with the help of content analysis technique and t-test to know the educational status of the MLE program in the Balasore district of Odisha.

## III. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULT

### 1. Academic achievement of MLE and non-MLE school students

**Analysis of previous academic records in Mathematics subject:** The mean difference of academic achievement scores in Mathematics subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students given below,

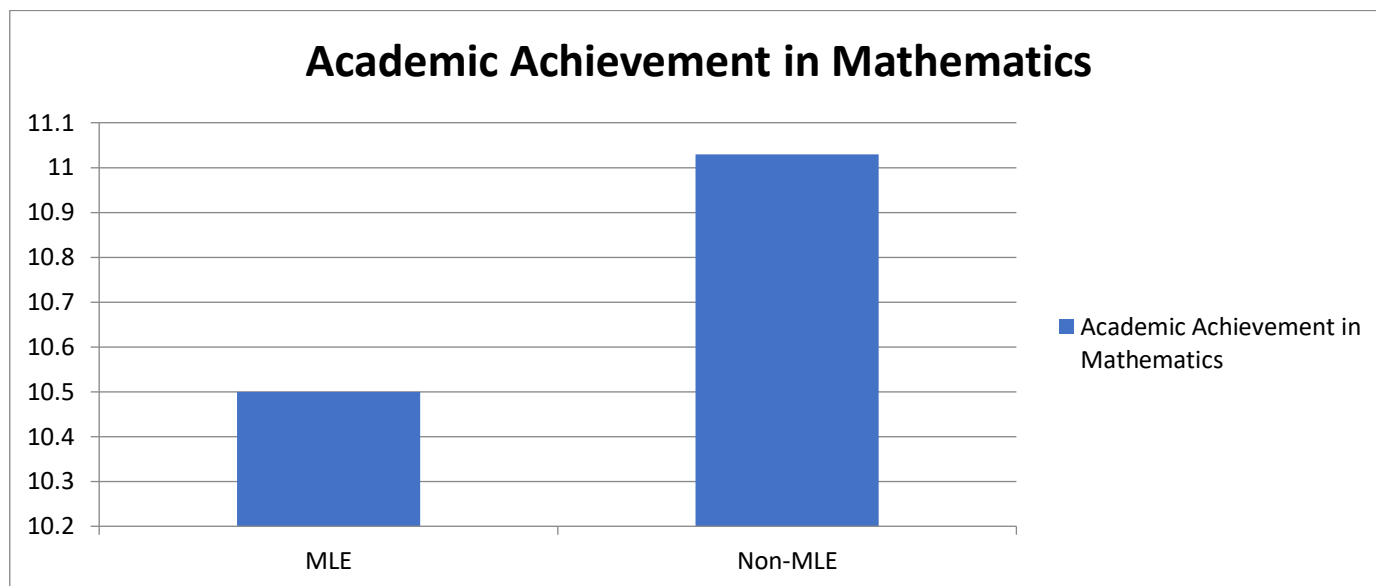
**Table-1.: School wise Mean, N, SD and t- value of academic achievement scores in Mathematics**

Schools	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Result
MLE	132	10.50	3.16	164	0.8305	Not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance
Non MLE	34	11.03	3.88			

Table -1 reveals that the mean value of MLE and Non-MLE students in Mathematics subjects were 10.50 and 11.03 along with the standard deviations of 3.16 and 3.88 respectively. The calculated t-value i.e. 0.8305 is lesser than

the tabled t-value i.e. 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance having df 164. This means both the MLE school students and Non-MLE school students possess the similar level of academic achievement scores in Mathematics subject.

**Fig 1.1 Figure showing mean score of Academic Achievement in Mathematics**



**Analysis of previous academic records in Odia subject:** The mean difference between the academic achievement scores in

Odia subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students given below,

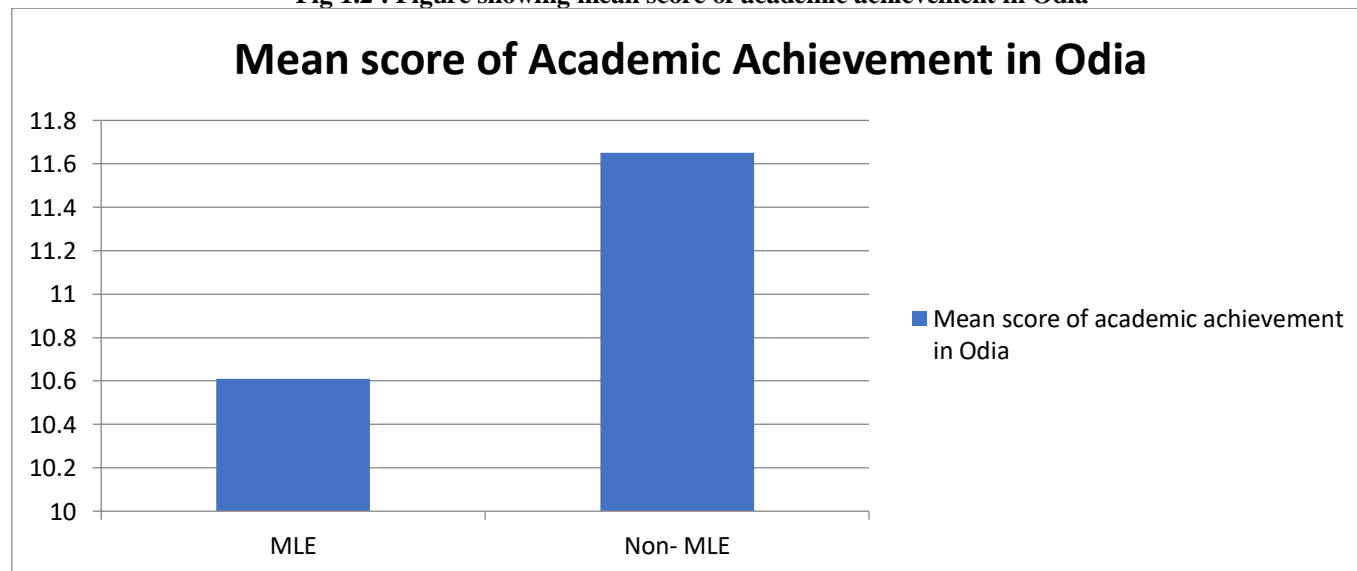
**Table-1.2: School wise Mean, N, SD and t -Value of academic achievement scores in Odia subject**

Schools	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Result
MLE	132	10.61	3.07	164	1.6452	Not statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance
Non MLE	34	11.65	4.04			

From Table-2, the mean value of the MLE and Non-MLE students in Odia subject is 10.61 and 11.65 with the standard deviation of MLE and Non-MLE students in Odia subject being 3.07 and 4.04 respectively. Then the obtained

t-ratio is 1.6452 which is lesser than the tabled value t-ratio (1.98 at 0.05 level of significance) with df 164. It means, both the groups i.e. MLE and Non-MLE school students have a similar level of academic achievement in Odia subject.

**Fig 1.2 : Figure showing mean score of academic achievement in Odia**



## 2. Perception towards Multilingual Education

### **Perception of MLE teachers towards the MLE program:**

From the interview schedule, it was found that MLE teachers were very much clear about the MLE program and its objectives. By the definitions given by MLE teachers, the

MLE program is a process adopted by the government for mainstreaming the tribal students possessing different tribal languages as their first language. It indicates the MLE program is not confining the student's knowledge and outlook rather it makes students feel free and comfortable to share their thoughts.

**Perception of teachers towards MLE trainings/ workshops/ meetings:** The interview schedule reveals that the state-level ten days residential MLE training program was helpful for the MLE teachers. Meetings and workshops were also conducted at the district level and block level which were full of advanced knowledge and ideas helpful in implementing the MLE program.

**Perception of teachers towards MLE curriculum designing process with roles and responsibilities of teachers:** From the interview schedule, it was found that the nature of the MLE curriculum is systematic, forecasting, and focuses on the all-round development of the MLE students. It was found that MLE teachers were very much concerned about their role and responsibilities in the curriculum designing process, and they also take the help of parents, students, and local authorities in this process. According to MLE teachers, the most important role of the teachers is to motivate the tribal learners and their parents towards education and make them feel valued. It indicates that one of the major responsibilities was to adopt new methods, models, and technologies, and become updated in the teaching-learning process for the growth of the MLE students. In addition to this, the primary responsibility of every teacher is to work towards the development of the school along with the preparation and storage of the TLMs, books, student portfolios, etc.

**Perception of MLE teachers towards MLE books and TLMs:** It was found that MLE related materials are advantageous for the MLE students and proved beneficial for the learning of the second language (Odia language). By using the MLE related materials, students feel easy and comfortable to participate in the classroom process. Through MLE books, students become able to know about the tribal materials, count numbers, do mathematical calculations, and able to achieve literacy in the second language (Odia). It was also found that MLE books and TLMs are easy to comprehend and give ideas on tribal culture, customs, and festivals. Further, the researcher found that MLE teachers use TLMs during their classroom transaction process on a regular basis and possesses knowledge on both small books and big books of MLE having no significant difference between these books. This indicates that MLE teachers found MLE books helpful for themselves in the teaching process and favorable for students to learn multilingual education.

**Perception of MLE students towards MLE program:** From the focus group discussion, the researcher concluded that the MLE program is convenient for the MLE students and useful in increasing their outlook. It was found that the students feel cheerful and motivated towards learning through the MLE program. It also makes them feel valued and draws them towards mainstreaming.

**Perception of MLE students towards the medium of instruction:** It is found that MLE students use both Ho and Odia language as medium of instruction during the teaching-learning process. Maximum students found it comfortable to participate in the classroom transaction process which means language is not a barrier for them. Some students frequently use Odia language in their day-to-day life (both at home and

school). Whereas there were a few students who face difficulties to express themselves inside the classroom. It refers that the medium of instruction is no more a barrier for the students rather it works like a bridge for them to become a part of this dynamic education system.

**Perception of MLE students towards MLE books and TLMs:** The MLE students told that MLE books are available in the mother tongue, which are easy to access and easy to understand. Most of the students found MLE books and related TLMs very helpful containing a variety of charts, pictures, concrete objects, and local resources. It was also found that teacher's use of MLE TLMs regularly in the classroom transaction process and students get the MLE books at the beginning of the term/session.

### 3. Problems of teachers and students

**Problems faced by the teachers in MLE implementation process:** From the analysis of the interview schedule, it was found that MLE teachers face many problems in the MLE implication process one of them is the irregularity of the students which leads to low attendance mostly during the harvesting season. Maximum teachers complained about the illiteracy of the parents which leads to their negative attitude towards the MLE program. Again, the rigid tribal culture and isolation of the school from the mainstreamed area are two major problems faced by the teachers. On the other side, teachers face problems on the late arrival of the MLE books and related materials which makes it difficult for them to carry out the coursework on time. Some teachers felt the problem of having less no of training programs on a fixed interval and no incentives for them.

**Problems faced by students in MLE program:** From the analysis, it was found that a few students complained about the late arrival of books and the irregular use of TLMs. Some students have difficulty in reading and writing in the Odia language. Most of the students face adversities inside their families i.e. forced to do agricultural work and household rather go to school regularly. Illiterate parents and low income were also two major difficulties faced by students.

## IV. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference between the academic achievement level in Mathematics subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students ( $N = 166$ ,  $t = 0.8305$ ,  $df = 164$ ).
- There is no significant difference between the academic achievement level in Odia subject of MLE and Non-MLE school students ( $N = 166$ ,  $t = 1.6452$ ,  $df = 164$ ).
- The MLE teachers and students possess a positive attitude/perception towards the educational status of the MLE program in the Balasore district of Odisha.
- The problems and prospectus of the MLE program in the Balasore district are as follows: late arrival of MLE books and related materials, irregular use of TLMs, low attendance of students, bad sitting arrangements, low maintenance of school building, parents' negative attitude, rigid tribal culture, no incentives for teachers, less no of training programs for teachers, isolation of



schools from the mainstreamed area, illiterate parents and other family problems, etc.

## V. CONCLUSION

The present study reveals that the academic achievement of MLE school students is mostly equal with Non-MLE school students in Mathematics and Odia subject. That means the academic achievement level of MLE students is up to mark in the Nilagiri block of Balasore district. The perception of MLE teachers and students is mostly pragmatic towards the educational status of the MLE program. Besides all these meritorious points there are also some negative points present which cause various kind of problems and difficulties both for the teachers and students. Those difficulties can be overcome by taking considerable actions like giving incentives to teachers, proper training programs in a particular interval, adult literacy and community awareness programs, guidance, and counseling programs both for parents and students, etc. Hence, Government of Odisha should take notable measures to ensure quality education, social justice, and equity for the tribal learners to join them in the mainstreaming process.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. Cristain,(2018). Student's attitude and motivation in Bilingual Education. *International Journal of Educational Psychology* 7 (3): 317, DOI: 10.17583/ijep.2018.3558.
- [2]. Elishabeth E. L., (2012) Student attitudes towards multilingual education. *The Encyclopedia of Global Social Issues, Armonk, Newyork/paper, Essay and Review* 3.2, 295-306.
- [3]. Georgia Z., & et.al. (2014). Spelling improvement through letter sound and whole word training in two multilingual Greek & English-speaking children. *Multilingual Education* 5, Article No.20.
- [4]. Gurdun Z., (2013) Multilingual and the language education landscape: Challenges for teacher training in Europe. *Multilingual Education* 3, Article No.1.
- [5]. Hssan & et.al. (2019). Teacher Attitudes toward the principal of Multilingual Education: Advancing Research on Mother-Tongue Education in Turkey. *Journal of Educational Research & Practice*, Vol.9, Issue 1, Pages 202-223.
- [6]. Jane A., (2015). Towards a practical proposal for multilingualism in education in Kenya. *Multilingual Education* 5, Article No.1.
- [7]. Lingual W., & Andy K., (2015). Trilingual education in Hong Kong primary school: an overview. *Multilingual Education* 5, Article No.3.
- [8]. Mohanty, S., (2017). Education in Mother Tongue: Impact of Multilingual Education in Odisha. *Economic & Political weekly*. Vol.52, Issue No.7.
- [9]. Nag, S., (2018) Transformative Potentials of Multilingual Education Models in Odisha, India. *European Journal Of Educational Studies*. DOI:10.5281/Zenodo.1218050, Vol.4, Issue 3.
- [10]. NCERT (National Council for Education, Research and Training) 2011, Programme Evaluation Report, Multilingual Education In Orissa.
- [11]. NCERT, (National Council for Education, Research and Training) 2005, National Curriculum Framework. Anthony J., & et.al. (2015). Multilingual Education: The role of language ideologies & attitudes. *Current Issues in Language Planning*.
- [12]. NCERT, (National Council for Education, Research and Training) 2005, National Curriculum Framework.
- [13]. Rout, (2021). Classroom Process and Learning Achievement of MLE and Non-MLE Schools of Keonjhar District. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)*. Volume.09, Issue 08, Pages EL-2021-1860-1864, DOI: 10.18535/ijrm/v9i08.el03, Website: www.ijrm.in ISSN (e): 2321-3418
- [14]. Rout, (2021). Policies, problems, and priorities of implementing mother tongue based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in Odisha: An analysis. *Aut Aut Research Journal*. Volume XII, Issue VIII, Page No:166, ISSN NO: 0005-0601.
- [15]. Skutnabb, T., (2000). Linguistic genocide in education, or worldwide diversity and human rights? *Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum*.
- [16]. Thomas, W., & Collier, V. (2002) A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. *Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Centre for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence*.
- [17]. UNESCO Position Paper October 2002, Education in a Multilingual World.
- [18]. UNICEF: Education for All: Policy Lessons From High-Achieving Countries, *UNICEF Staff Working Papers, New York, UNI*.