



Troubling Paradox: Child Poverty and Child Wellbeing in India

A Research Paper presented by:

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(India)

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Major:

Social Policy for Development

(SPD)

Specialization:

Child Youth Studies

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The Hague, The Netherlands

December 2014

Disclaimer:

This document represents part of the author's study programme while at the Institute of Social Studies. The views stated therein are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Institute.

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Gandhi's Talisman

“I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test.

Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain any thing by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and yourself melt away.”

—M. K Gandhi

Source: Mahatma Gandhi [last phase vol.II (1958: 65)]

Acknowledgement

At first, I would like to share my sincere appreciation and thanks to my supervisor Dr. Amrita Chachhi for her guidance, suggestion and discussions. I am deeply indebted to her for showing confidence in me and for her kind advises. My indebted gratitude to my second reader Dr. Loes Keyzers for her comments and interactive discussion. I am really thankful for her valuable time and insights.

My deep appreciation goes to all children and their parents for sharing their valuable inputs. I am also thankful to entire Save the Children Dungarpur Team for allowing and supporting the data collection process.

I would like thanks to my colleagues for sharing their valuable input during my research design and draft presentation. To my all SPD faculty member for their critical perspective, my deep gratitude to them. I am also thankful to Des Gasper for providing me last moment guidance.

I would show special gratitude to my family back in India for their support, for patiently waiting for my successful completion of Master, and for bearing the pain of my physical absence.

Finally, Aekta, because of you I able to accomplish this course, I really owe this to you. My deep hearted appreciation and acknowledgement for your continuous support and also for your critical inputs on this paper.

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List of Acronyms

3-D	Three Dimensions
AAP	Aam Aadmi Party
AE	Actual Expenditures
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BE	Budgeted Expenditures
BJP	Bhartiya Janta <i>Party</i>
BRICS	Brazil Russia India China and South Africa
CBGA	Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability
CLPRA	Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CPI	Communist Party of India
CRC 20 BS	Combined Report on Convention Twenty Years Balance Sheet
CSSP	Child Sensitive Social Protection
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECD	Early Childhood Education
FGDs	Focus Group Discussion
FYP	Five Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOI	Government of India
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
INC	Indian National Congress
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisation
INR	Indian National Rupee
ISS	International Institute of Social Studies
JJ Act	Juvenile Justice Act
MDM	Mid-Day Meal
MNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NCC	National Charter for Children
NCP	National Child Policy
NPE	National Policy on Education

NHP	National Health Policy
NPAC	National plan of Action for Children
NSAP	National Social Assistance Programme
OBC	Other Backward Caste
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Project
RTE	Right to Education
SC	Scheduled Caste
SC/ST	Scheduled Caste and Scheduled tribes
SJE	Social Justice Empowerment
SP	Social Protection
SSA	Sarva Sikhsa Abhiyaan
ST	Scheduled Tribes
UEE	Universal Elementary Education
UN	United Nation
UNCRC	United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund
USD	United States Dollars

Abstract

This study seeks to address a paradox - despite many laws, policies and programmes for ensuring child wellbeing and reducing child poverty, the indicators for children show an alarming situation of deprivation. In order to find the answer, this study has taken a new path by looking into the underlying assumptions of child focused policies, their interpretation by various stakeholders at different levels of policy implementation chain and prioritisation in budgetary allocations. As an answer to the paradox, the study found that at one end Government's intent in translating the policy assumptions into reality is low and at other end children in India seems to be not recognised as right holding citizens. Moreover, the study also argued that both the ends are interrelated.

Relevance to Development Studies

The following study is relevant to development studies particularly Child and Youth Studies as it investigates the broader context for conceptualisation of child wellbeing in child focussed policies in India. Further, this study examines the interpretation and translation of wellbeing by the different stakeholders in the entire policy implementation chain. The paper contributes to fill the conceptual gap in the field of Social protection studies in India, arguing for the importance of translation of policy ideas in the realisation of development outcomes and achievements.

Keywords

Child Wellbeing, Childhood, Social Policy, Child Sensitive Social Protection, Translation

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

This study seeks to address a paradox - despite many laws, policies and programmes for ensuring child wellbeing and reducing child poverty, the indicators for children show an alarming situation of deprivation. To find answers to this paradox this study has taken a new path by looking into the policies with child sensitive lens and framing the assumption of the policies and programmes with these lenses. The study tests the hypothesis that the assumptions underlying social protection policies around children are not well conceptualised and this is one of the reasons for this paradox. The study goes further to investigate the translation of and prioritisation given to these policies as perceived by various stakeholders.

In order to frame the policy assumptions and its translation down the policy implementation chain, a broad analytical framework of child wellbeing and a social policy framework has been used, to look into the content of the policies. The study also includes empirical research on the perception of stakeholders about these social policies/programmes from Dungarpur district of Rajasthan-India

1.2 Relevance and Justification:

In India, there are Constitutional bindings, international commitments, multiple laws, policies, and programs which focus on the realisation of child rights but still a large numbers of children are not able to avail and access those rights. The Constitution of India guarantees fundamental rights to all children and the directive principles in the Constitution guides the State to provide enough opportunities and facilities for Child wellbeing (NPC 2013). Additionally, by ratifying International treaties on Child rights, the Government of India has reiterated its commitment for securing the rights of the children (GOI 2011). But, the home of 440 million children comprising approximately 42% of the country's population (Census 2011), India still has two third of its children suffering from two or more deprivations (Ortiz et al. 2012: 271).

In fact for safeguarding the children's right, there is also a list of legal tools which are meant for child protection like, free and compulsory education, prohibition & regulation to child labour, ensuring juvenile justice, prohibiting domestic violence, corporal punishment, ensuring juvenile justice and trafficking (GOI 2011: 9). Yet, in between 2001 to 2012 the crimes against Children has increased by 253% and similarly, crime by children has also increased sharply (CRC 20 BS collective 2012: 25). Additionally, the reported incidence of trafficking of girl children, which is also a symptom of the effect of child poverty, has increased by thirty percent in between 1999 to 2009 (Haq 2011: 196). Further, the child sex ratio (0-6 years) has dropped 13 points to 914 girls from 927 girls in 2001 (Census 2011). Also, the Child labour percentage has increased by 11.62% during this period on official records (Haq 2011: 246) however the reality is a lot more disturbing as a large numbers of child labour

are still not in count (Haq 2011) and moreover the retention rate in the school has decreased (Haq 2011, ASER 2013).

The country also has a considerable number of social policy tools that are available for protecting and realising the child rights and the wellbeing of the children (GOI 2011: 5-6). To translate these policies into practice, the government has been running various programs, some of them are considered as 'Universal' (GOI 2011: 15-20). In addition there are also programmes which are not directly focusing on child poverty but they have intended or unintended effect on Child Wellbeing such as MNREGA and pension programs (Adato and Bassett 2009). But sadly despite all these arrangements, the vast range of quantitative and qualitative statistics narrate the story of deprivation in terms of child wellbeing. The severity of malnourishment and insecurity about food among the children in India is much more than the children in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNICEF 2007). One-third malnourished child in the world are from India and 150 million children in the country are at risk of becoming malnourished (Haq 2011: 112). In the age group of 6+, the malnourishment percentage is more than 55% (Children in India 2012). Due to preventable causes about 1.83 million children die annually before completing their fifth birthday – most of them die" (UNICEF 2011: 4). Similarly, in education more than fifty percent of India's children are either not attending school or dropping out before class eight (Haq 2011: 150). Alarming, the proportion of girls dropping out, especially in the age group of 11-14 years, has increased in the recent past (ASER 2013). Children of the minority communities, scheduled castes and tribes not only have a low enrolment ratio but they also have a high dropout rate (Haq 2011: 150). Almost two third of the school going children reported being subjected to corporal punishment (Haq 2011: 203).

1.2.1 Problem Statement

Despite having so many laws, policies and programmes focussing on child wellbeing, the paradox is that child wellbeing indicators are either stagnant or declining. This means that there are some discrepancy (ies), due to which the Social Protection policies around children might not be functioning properly or are not appropriate. This discrepancy (ies) could be at three levels (at level of policy design, at the level of its interpretation and at the level of implementation). At the policy level, the discrepancies might be in the underlying assumptions in designing and defining child poverty, childhood and the wellbeing of children. Due to these assumptions it could be possible that the policy prescription or the kind of the solutions provided might be inappropriate.

Secondly the discrepancies might be at the *level* of interpretation. How are these policies interpreted and prioritised in the public political discourse and budgetary allocation and how are they translated into programmes and perceived by service providers and seekers'?

Another level is of course of gaps in implementation-poor planning, inadequate infrastructure and resources, corruption etc. However, there is a lot of literature available focusing on the gaps and discrepancies of implementation level. In contrast, limited studies are available on the underlying assumption of the policies and in their interpretation. Hence for this study the focus is on the

levels of policy design and on its interpretation and not at the level of implementation.

To understand these discrepancies at the policy design and their interpretation in policy implementation chain the approach which, this study has adopted, is to do a content analysis of policy documents and ‘unpack’ the assumptions underlying the framing of current policies. Further, this study has looked into the political manifestos of leading political parties in India and budgetary allocation for three years (2014-15, 2013-14 and 2012-13) on child wellbeing to understand the political priority and interpretation. Moving further this study has looked into programme documents of child focussed schemes as well as other schemes which are meant for the caregivers to understand the translation of policies assumptions into operationalization. In addition this study has also taken and analysed the perception of children, their care givers, duty bearer’s and local governance representative from the field on policy assumptions and program objectives. This entire analysis has been done through a holistic framework of child wellbeing and child sensitive social protection, which is elaborated in Chapter-2. There are very few studies available that have used this approach.

1.2.2 Objective of the Research:

The main objective of the study is to fill a conceptual gap in literature on social protection studies focusing on child wellbeing in India. Rather than assessing the problems of implementation, my research investigation is on the conceptualisations, assumptions and perceptions underlying policies and the views of various stakeholders down the policy and implementation chain. It could contribute towards further understanding of the reasons for the limited impact of child protection policies and programs.

1.3 Main Research Questions:

What are the underlying assumptions and conceptualisations of child poverty and wellbeing in the child social protection policies in India, how are these prioritised and how are the objectives of policies and programs perceived by various stakeholders down the policy and implementation chain?

1.3.1 Sub questions:

- a. How do these policies in design and in translation conceptualise childhood, and child poverty and child wellbeing?
- b. How do these policies, in design and in translation, acknowledge intersectionalities of child wellbeing?
- c. How much priority is given to these policies in budgetary allocations and public political discourse?
- d. How do the program implementers on these policies and program perceive these policies?
- e. How do children and caregivers as the recipients of these programs experience these policies?

1.4 Research Methodology:

The study has used multiple qualitative and quantitative methods, using both primary and secondary data set, to address the different levels of enquiry.

1.4.1 Policies and Political Manifestos- Content Analysis

The central focus of the paper is to understand the policy assumptions underlying the child wellbeing and child poverty policies. So to do this content analysis has been used for analysing the text and to frame the policies. Content Analysis is one of the well-established methods for analysing text (Flick 2009: 323). This procedure can be used for wide range of text – ranging from primary interview data to policy text. The objective of the analysis is to find out the various agendas, influences and desired impact of the programs (ibid), which further help in understanding the frame on the basis of which the policies are designed.

As a process for undertaking content analysis, at first codes were generated, on this basis of study framework, for expressing information and phenomena in the form of concepts. Later, those codes were categorised and tried to form a relationship between them, and those relationship the key codes were selected. The selected key codes are childhood, child wellbeing, rights and intersectionalities and these are based on the research questions. (See Appendices 2 for list of codes and their relationship)

a. Policies-

As per the holistic definition of child wellbeing¹, the study has purposely selected two types of policies for content analysis. The first type of policies is child focused and the second type is of policies which have effect on child wellbeing. The policies selected for the study are National Child Policy 2013 and 1974, National Children Charter 2003, National Plan for Children 2005, Health policy 2002, and Education policy 1986.

b. Political Manifestos-

To understand the political public discourse on child wellbeing, the study has analysed the content of the political manifesto of four leading political parties. The manifestos have been for 2014 general election. The parties whose manifestos are purposefully selected for this study are Indian National Congress, Bhartiya Janta Party, Communist Party of India and Aam Aadmi Party. The first three parties are of national stature (Election commission of India 2014) while Aam Aadmi party is one of the newest formed party whose formation is from a social movement (AAP 2014b). Indian National Congress has been the largest political party of the India and was in power for more than five decades after Indian independence, Bhartiya Janta Party is another big political party and has currently formed the Government after 2014 national election. Communist Party of India remained the third largest national party in the national election for so many years (Election commission of India 2014).

¹ Discussed in Chapter -2

1.4.2 Budgets for Child wellbeing: Quantitative Statistical Analysis and Secondary Studies

The study has used the statistical techniques for analysing secondary data of the national budgetary allocation, disbursement and expenditures on the above mentioned policies and programmes. Looking into scope of the study, I preferred to limit myself to study only three years (2014-15, 2013-14, 2012-13) budgetary and financial documents. But to understand the trend of budget allocation and expenditure for last seven years, I also referred to some previously analysed reports by various social agencies on child budget and triangulated those figures with Government budgetary documents. The budgetary documents are taken from the official website of Government of India on budget.

1.4.3 Programmes: Content Analysis, Primary data and Secondary Studies

Similarly, to understand the operationalization of policies into programmes, this study has done content analysis, of child focussed programmes and the programmes which tend to focus on child wellbeing through purposive selection. These programmes are: Integrated Child development Scheme, Integrated child protection programmes, Sarva Sikhsa programmes, Midday meal programme, *Palanhaar* (Cash transfer programme for promoting community based foster care), Cash transfer (scholarship, disability pension scheme, promoting institutional delivery for promoting child survival) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme and Widow Pension. Other than MNREGA and widow pension which have spill over effect on child wellbeing (Uppal 2009), the rest of the programmes are child focused and are designed to attain their wellbeing. In addition the study have drawn on primary data on these programmes (see 1.4.4 below) and also referred to secondary studies.

The key secondary sources that are referred: Government of India's report to UNCRC, UNCRC India Shadow report, reports and data from The World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF. Implementation evaluation and study reports of the Government, Civil societies and various scholars' research work and reports.

1.4.4 Perceptions of various stakeholders-Primary Data

The study has also gathered primary information from field to understand the perceptions, experiences, views of children and their care givers as the recipients of the programs and also the views of duty bearers and local governance officials on the objectives/assumptions of the SP schemes.

For taking the views of people, I purposefully selected Dungarpur, District of Rajasthan state, India. As Rajasthan has few good child focused program and additionally, I have some contacts with local NGOs which helped me in getting a local access and data collection during the study. Moreover, the situation of children in the district is grim as per the Human development indicators and the district has extreme cases of child right violation (Sjoblom and Pant 2012). The child illiteracy, IMR, malnutrition figures of Dungarpur district are low in comparison to the national and state average (Census 2011).

The duty bearers and local governance official were purposefully selected as they were focusing on the delivery, management and monitoring of child

focussed programmes. 15 interviews of those officials took place. Out of these fifteen respondents, four were of District level, two of them were at Block level, two were from panchayat level, five were school teachers and two ICDS workers, and besides two local governance official's views were also taken. With this group, I did semi-structured interviews.

The Children and their parents were selected through snowball method. With children, initially I had a Focus Group Discussion and from those group discussions children were identified for interviews. The children who were accessing some SP benefits or those children who were entitled but for some reason they weren't able to access SP benefits were taken for interviews. FGD were more focused on the overall view of the group however, for understanding specific cases or point of views of children, the semi-structured interviews were held. These interviews were always followed after the FGDs. **Twelve children were interviewed.** These children belong to age group 8 to 16 years. Figure 1-1 presents the categorisation of children on the basis of their caste and sex.

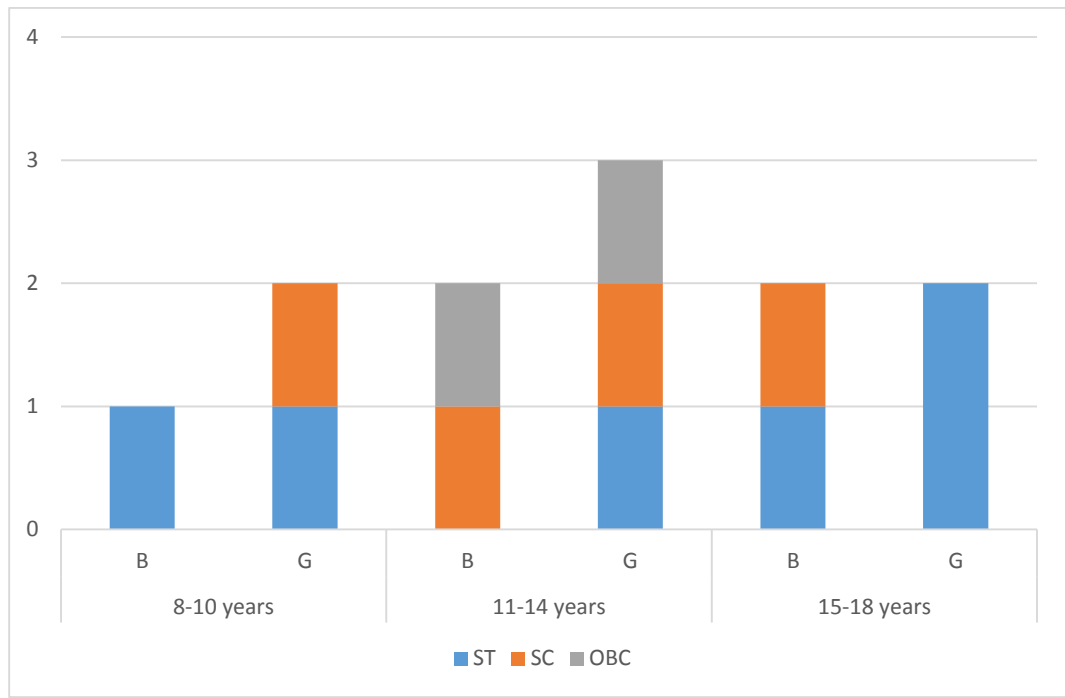


Figure 1-1 Categorization of Children on basis of their age, caste and sex

To understand the point of view of parents, six family members were interviewed. These parents were basically the either parents of children with whom I interacted or they were parents of those children who left village for work. Table 1-1 shows the categorisation of the parents

Table 1-1 Categorization of care givers on the basis of their caste and sex

	M	F	Total
ST	1	2	3
SC	1	1	2
OBC	0	1	1
Total	2	4	6

1.5 Reflexivity, Dilemma and Accountability:

My motivation to do this study came from the concern that despite so many policies, programs and funding, the violation of child rights is high in India. Being a child rights practitioner for almost ten years helped me in witnessing gaps and corruption in the implementation of the programs. Additionally, the past one year of study at ISS also helped in visualising that there might be gaps at the level of policy and program design as well. So, initially my focus was on exploring the policy assumptions as the scope of my study. But, later on as readings were done and the initial field visits were also taken up, I realised that whereas there are certain gaps and contradictions at the policy level but the problem seemed to be more in interpretation, translation and prioritisation of the policy assumptions. Therefore the scope of this study then had to be widened to encompass the interpretation, translation and prioritisation of the policy assumptions along with the framing of policy assumptions.

While analysing I was in dilemma that I might bring out my own perspective while analysing the text, instead of presenting the more authentic discourse based on the given set of time and space. So while working on this study I have made genuine efforts of positioning myself as an academic researcher, and at reducing the effects of my own preconceived notions to shadow the findings of the study. Therefore I also even entered into the field for first hand and fresh look at the knowledge while collecting the people's views.

It wasn't for the first time that the issues of the children were being discussed at the field level by me, but this time while interviewing with a fresh and open perspective, I confronted a lot of contradictions in the views expressed by many of the respondents, especially those of the government employees. However, getting these deeper views was not an easy task. Initially only the superficial and politically right answers were coming out. To get to a deeper level of perceptions certain commitments had to be made to the respondents on keeping their identity and the views expressed by them as completely confidential. Moreover I also felt accountable towards keeping the respondents identity confidential. So, to adhere with the commitment of maintaining anonymity of respondents, the names of the respondents have not been used in the document.

1.6 Limitations of the study:

The scope of the study has been largely divided into four critical sections. This itself became quite vast and comprehensive. The study also had a limited

timeframe. As a result, the study could not extend into a discussion of state level policies and politics despite its significance given the federal nature of the country.

Additionally the political manifestos too had to be limited to four big political parties and could not include many other small parties active at National as well as state level.

2 Conceptualising Child Wellbeing and Child Sensitive Social Protection

The chapter presents an analytical framework for this study and it has two components. The first component of this analytical framework develops a holistic child sensitive lens. This lens helps me in framing and analysing the assumptions of social policies and programmes around children and it is based on broad framework of holistic child wellbeing and social policy (transformative and child sensitive social protection) framework. The second component of the framework helps me in contextualising the entire process of translation of these policies down the implementation chain.

2.1 Development of Child Sensitive lens:

This holistic child sensitive lens is composed of combination and reconstruction of concepts and theories: theories of Social Protection and a holistic perspective on Child sensitive social protection linking with household/family, holistic child wellbeing, intersectionality, childhood & citizenship.

2.1.1 Theorising Child Sensitive Social Protection:

Social Protection can be seen as a measure to tackle poverty and increase wellbeing, which is particularly crucial for children as poverty may have short and long term effect on them. The concept of Social protection emerged in late 1980's and early 1990's after a critical response to the 'Safety Net' discourse (World Bank 1990, Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004). Safety Nets - the highly criticised approach of the World Bank, was the part of structural adjustment program to tackle absolute poverty or for 'attacking poverty' (Mkandawire 2001). The definition and conceptualisation of Social Protection in last five years comprised mostly of protective and preventive measures (Sabates-Wheeler and Roelen 2011). Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler has tried to explain the protective, preventive, promotive and transformative form of social protection and their importance (2004). Drawing from their explanation, in case of children, fee waivers, school scholarship and school feeding programs are few examples of protective measures of SP. Similarly, fee waivers for health insurance of children is an example of the preventive measures. Whereas the promotive form of SP, like MNREGRA in India and PSNP in Ethiopia, have direct and indirect spill over effect on children (Adato and Bassett 2009, Zibagwe et al. 2013, Uppal 2009). Right to Education and Right to Health, that strives for equality, equity, justice and rights, are example of such transformative social protection instruments.

Child Sensitive Social Protection has also been seen as one form of transformative social protection (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012, Sabates-Wheeler et.al 2009), which has been advanced by UNICEF in a joint statement signed by various international development agencies and INGOs (2009). The joint statement has argued for the need to have social protection which is more children sensitive and has also provided seven guiding principles to do so (UNICEF 2009). Like UNICEF, various other scholars have tried to define

CSSP, however Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler argued that these definitions are not able to provide a practical and tangible idea on CSSP. Moreover, they feel that the pointers in UNICEF joint statement are also very common prescriptions and can be fitted in any form of social protection (2012).

Extending their argument for providing a direction to CSSP, Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler have argued that a framework for practical implementation of CSSP should address three distinct sets of vulnerabilities – “physical/biological vulnerabilities, dependency-related vulnerabilities and institutionalised disadvantage” (2012: 294). They explained physical/biological vulnerabilities as many forms of the negative effect of physical deformities, malnutrition, diseases and under-development that a child at different ages is susceptible to. They explained dependency related vulnerabilities by the positioning of children in a state where they have to depend on adults and have very little autonomy for their wellbeing. They further argued that because of the nature of relations children might mis-use or abuse or their care givers might have wrong or partial information or inadequate resources for adequate care and thus children again are in a vulnerable situation (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2012: 294-5). Lastly, institutionalised disadvantages refer to, “the devaluation of certain groups in society based on the perception of who they are perceived to be” (ibid), that are based on cultural and social norms/structures of society which Kabeer (2005) also termed as ‘cultural devaluation disadvantages’.

On the basis of the above mentioned vulnerabilities, Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler (2012) have suggested framework for transformative CSSP. This framework is different from social risk management framework (Holzmann and Jorgenson’s 2001) which is based on ‘risk’ management and provides economic measures to address them (Sabates-Wheeler and Devereux 2007). And also from asset based framework which is based on promotive social protection measures and largely focussed on the long run livelihood stability of a household or community by forming assets (Moser 2008). Though, the asset based approach has the ability to break the intergenerational poverty (ibid), but it takes long time, might not be child sensitive and can have adverse effect on child wellbeing (Zibagwe et al. 2013).

The transformative form of CSSP framework however, acknowledges the multiplicity of child poverty as well as vulnerability and it does not merely form its view on economic angle. It acknowledges universality of vulnerability in children, hence believes exclusively focusing only on a targeted group of children might be a narrow approach to SP; moreover, the framework also responds to the underlying structural causes of multiple dimensions of child poverty; further, it adds that there should be an effort to break intergenerational cycle of poverty; additionally, it adopts a life cycle approach; suggests legal reforms; emphasizes on recognition of children’s intra-household position and their relation with direct and indirect caregivers and is recognisant of wider context in which children live, which is not a too narrow and exclusive view on children. (Roelen and Sabates-Wheeler 2011: 16-17).

Drawing on the above discussion in this section, the CSSP framework seems to be more holistic, having child sensitive lens and the scope for justice, equality and equity. So, I would prefer the use of transformative framework of CSSP. Further, it seems that the framework for CSSP has all components for

actualisation of child wellbeing. So let's look the concept of holistic child wellbeing.

2.1.2 Conceptualising holistic child wellbeing

The conceptualisation of child wellbeing historically began with looking into child poverty narrowly but today it involves multiple facets of deprivation. In the early years of 20th century, B.S. Rowntree on the basis of his thorough research on absolute poverty defined poverty as “minimum necessary for maintenance of merely physical health” (Rowntree, as cited in Saith and Wazir 2010: 388). However, since then a lot of studies showed that the material deprivation can be seen as only one indicator among many other indicators for child wellbeing (Ben-Arieh 2006). Sandra made an important advance in the argument that the child's experiences of poverty are not only absolute but they are also relative (Danziger 1995: 1). Various scholars and several organisations have also described child poverty as a multidimensional concept (Saith and Wazir 2010: 388-89). However, an important advancement in the conceptualisation of child wellbeing was made by Gordon. He argued that the child poverty can be understood as per the right based framework principally defined and described on the basis of UNCRC. He further urged that children's experience of poverty is very much different from the experience of the adults, child poverty results into the stunting and destruction of the development of physical and mental processes, reduces the access to the chances of fulfilment, including the role they are expected to play (Gordon et al. 2003: 3). But, Gordon's approach still remained silent on the prospect of protection and participation in detail, especially where poverty is because of unequal distribution of resources in the household. Thus the framework is limited in acknowledging the aspects of the new age of child poverty where there are care deficits, rural-urban disparity, unequal and inequitable distribution.

Another important framework for conceptualising child wellbeing was suggested by Andy Sumner. Like Gordon's framework, Sumner's framework is also based on the child right principles, he extended his framework by mapping the UNCRC's articles with White's three dimensions of wellbeing materialistic, subjective and relational (Sumner 2010, White 2008). Table 2-1 suggests the way we can practically describe the three dimensions of the wellbeing in right based framework.

Table 2-1 Mapping the UNCRC articles and 3-D child well-being

Material well-being	Relational well-being	Subjective well-being
Child survival (nutrition, health, water and sanitation) (6, 24, 27)	Child participation (in community decisions that affect children's lives) (12, 13, 31)	Child psychological and emotional development (13, 14, 28, 29)
Child development (education and psychological development) (6, 28, 29)	Child protection (from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect) (19, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37)	Child participation (12, 13, 31) and child protection (<u>19, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37</u>)

Source:- (Jones and Sumner, as cited in Sumner 2010: 1065)

Drawing on this relationship between UNCRC and three dimensions of wellbeing, I am using this framework for developing a holistic framework of wellbeing. These three dimensions allow in bringing up the multiplicity in conceptualisation of child wellbeing. The material dimension involves practical welfare and standards of living; the relational dimension relates with personal and social relationship; whereas the subjective dimension encompasses values, perception and experiences (White 2008: 7). Table in Appendices-1 highlights the details of the three dimensions of the wellbeing.

White extended her work on wellbeing as a ‘process’. At first, she explained that the three dimensions are interrelated and dynamic. She explained wellbeing as a process that overlaps the three dimensions with two more dimension – space and time. She explained that the space connotes geography on which the capacities and understanding achieve wellbeing and the understanding of wellbeing changes over the period of time (White 2008, White 2010).

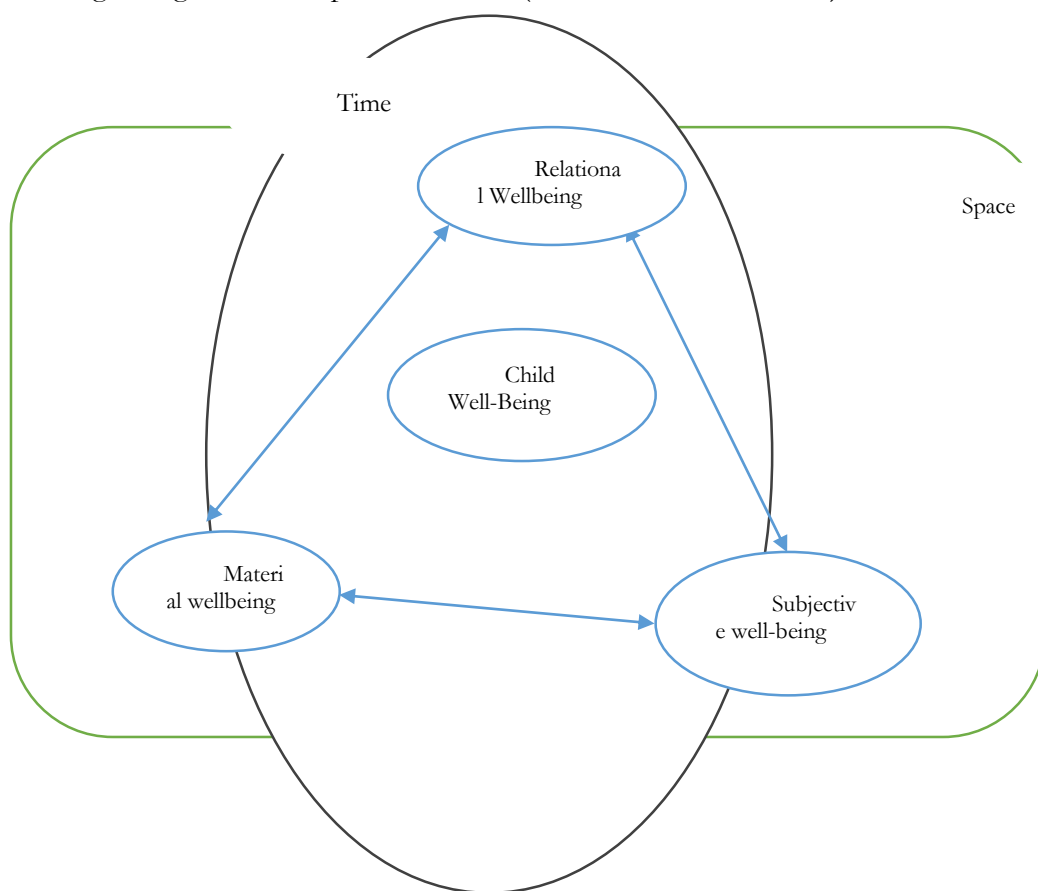


Figure 2-1 Framework for Holistic Child Wellbeing

Source: - (Sumner 2010, White 2008, White 2010)

In addition to Sumner’s framework (Table 2-1) for analysing the Child wellbeing I am also using the fourth and fifth dimension of Wellbeing suggested by White to make a holistic framework for child wellbeing. Figure 2-1 represents the adapted framework from the Sumner and White’s study, which I will use in this study for the analysis of underlying assumptions in policies. Further, to look into the child wellbeing holistically, it is also essential to understand the intersectional approach.

2.1.3 Intersectionality- the approach:

The study is using an intersectional child right based approach as a tool to understand and analyse multiple discrimination, exclusion and inequalities. This approach has been used to understand or dismantle the violent capacities in gender inequality, caste & class based discrimination, or of multiple face of discrimination (Yuval-Davis 2006). Intersectionality can help in understanding the various facets of child poverty and how policy is striving to address the same. These are linked with the grounds of discrimination (e.g. gender, class, disability, caste, age, generation) and the social, economic, political and legal environment that contributes to discrimination as well as the structures, experiences of oppression and privilege (Yuval-Davis 2006). In respect to this study, it is important to understand how policies in their assumptions, operationalisation, translation and prioritisation acknowledge intersectionalities. Further, the approach sharpens the lens to understand the extent of child wellbeing is not only absolute but relative and subjective as well.

2.1.4 Concepts of Childhood and Citizenship

The wellbeing of children seems to be highly related to the notion of childhood however it has been seen that childhood as a marginalised stage of life. The concept of childhood has changed historically (Ariès et al. 1996) and today children are viewed as citizens (Invernizzi and Williams 2008).

Ben-Arieh (2006) has argued that child wellbeing should be measured on the basis of the right based framework and he further considered childhood as a unique stage of life. However, the needs, capacities and wants of children differ on the basis of their stages of childhood and the meaning of childhood depends on the prevailing context and culture (Sumner 2010). Moreover, Qvortrup, (as cited in Närvänen and Näsman 2004) argued that childhood is perceived in a society as how they perceived adulthood, and according to him, this perception of childhood render the entire stage to be ‘marginalised and paternalistic’.

There are various documents and State’s policy prescriptions emphasize on the need for investments to make children become a citizen and not for children as ‘beings’. This notion of State’s thinking has been criticised by scholars. Qvortrup (1994) argues that childhood is a unique stage of life in itself, looking for the future we shouldn’t overlook the legitimate requirements and necessities of childhood. In his further work, Qvortrup argues that investment for child being is as important as investment for child becoming. Developing on the argument of Qvortrup’s, Ben-Arieh suggested that ‘child being’ should be given more importance than to ‘child well becoming’. (2006: 9).

The notion of childhood gives a picture about how State, policy, and stake holder’s frame wellbeing of the children and further the notion also becomes important determinant for wellbeing of the children as they are dependent on adults for the realisation of rights, needs and wants. So whether, children feels marginalised and are treated paternalistically or enjoy citizenship rights, seems to be also based on the underlying assumption for conceptualising childhood. Drawing on this discussion, I endeavour to build an argument, and show how the Indian policies on children conceptualise childhood and thus how those assumptions affect the way in which the policies are interpreted.

2.1.5 Positioning children in Households/ Family:

Family/households are the closest and considered to be safest institution for children's development (Science of ECD 2012), however in fact the state, policies and programmes are considering 'family as black box' for child wellbeing. The neoclassical model of household assumes that all the members in the household have same taste and identical preferences (Agarwal 1997). The model presumes that the household welfare is based on maximisation of goods by ensuring that all users made best use of the resources (ibid). It has been assumed that at household level there is no struggle, competition, self-interest and exploitation on the distribution (ibid). However, the assumption that the household members have common interest is highly problematic. Folbre argued that the neoclassical model ignored gender and generational differentiation within the household (1984). Sen's bargaining model sites household as 'cooperative conflict' (1990) which acknowledges power differentiation. Households that comprise of multiple actors and are a co-residence for production, reproduction, consumption and resource allocation (Agarwal 1997: 3). Further Sen argued that the decision making is based on a negotiating process between different parties, led to distribution and the distribution is based on the interest of whoever has the greater bargaining power (Sen 1990). Being a powerless entity at the household level as children's are economically dependent on adult, their relation with adults and their position at household seems to be important for their wellbeing. The study will examine the ways in which policies looked into the positioning of children within family/household in relation to their wellbeing.

2.2 The process of 'translation' down the policy implementation chain

2.2.1 Vernacularization

To understand and analyse the assumption as well as the entire flow and translation of policy ideas down the implementation chain, I am using the concept of 'vernacularization'. It is an important process to understand how the policy assumptions are translated and adopted into 'local setting' (Merry 2006: 39), which might have different socio-cultural contexts. As explained by Merry, "As ideas from transnational sources travel to small communities, they are typically *vernacularized*, or adapted to local institutions and meanings" (2006: 39). The concept was first used in 19th century for explaining the process by which national languages in Europe moved away from the medieval translational use of Latin (Anderson 1991). Merry, in her work, showed that how human rights languages/vocabularies are extracted at the global level and translated or adapted into national and local communities (2006: 39). Merry further used, "the term '*indigenization*' that refers to shifts in meaning—particularly to the way new ideas are framed and presented in terms of existing cultural norms, values, and practices. Indigenization is the symbolic dimension of vernacularization" (2006: 39).

2.2.2 The levels in policy implementation chain:

In the entire process of vernacularization, the key role is played by the stakeholders who are responsible for translating the ideas from transnational source into the local context (Merry 2006). They play a very crucial role in the process of translation as they are aware of transnational and national notion as well as the local setting. For this study's point of view and to understand how the policy ideas translate at various levels, I am using the levels in the policy implementation chain². In this chain, at the macro level I have positioned national policies; at the exo level I have positioned prioritization given to the child wellbeing in political discourse and how their wellbeing are operationalized in programme; at the meso level I have looked into views of duty bearer's and people's representative and finally at the micro level, I have placed family, school and children.

2.2.3 The way to understand the process of translation: Framing

To understand the translated discourses at the above mentioned levels, I am using Framing. Framing is one of the techniques to understand the discourses of rights and has been developed by social movement theorist (Merry 2006: 41). Frames show how beliefs, motivation, strategies and action are represented to describe ideas (Snow et. al. 1986). Further, Schön and Rein “see policy positions as resting on underlying structures of belief, perception, and appreciation, which they call frames” (1994: 23). Thus Frames represents a ‘perspective’ to see ideas and policy position. However, the frames of ideas and belief might get changed in the process of translation or they can be perceived differently in social and cultural context, which itself provides another frame (Merry 2006). In the entire process of translation and interpretation, the framing technique helps me in understanding the frame in which the policies are framed and assumed. And further it helps in comprehending the gaps and variations in translation that is created by various stakeholders at the different levels.

2.3 The Child Sensitive Lens and the process of translation:

Drawing from the entire discussion the analytical framework provides- 1) a child sensitive lens to understand the assumptions and their interpretation. The lens which is based on a transformative framework of CSSP, conceptualises five dimensions of holistic child wellbeing and considers child right based intersectionality as an approach for looking into the policy assumptions and their operationalization of childhood and wellbeing. This lens, further, helps in analysing position of children in household setting and more importantly how they are recognised as citizens. 2) And the concepts of vernacularization and framing helps me in understanding the translation at different layers of policy implementation chain.

² Bronfenbrenner Ecological Model also talks about similar levels however for the scope of this study I am using Policy implementation Chain.

3 Framing Child Focused Policies in India

The chapter undertakes content analysis of the policy documents for understanding the underlying assumptions and framing the conceptualisation of childhood, child wellbeing and their intersectionalities. To visualize the bigger picture, the chapter attempts to present historical shift that has occurred in the assumptions for conceptualisation of childhood and child wellbeing as well as in the recognition of the intersectionalities for child wellbeing. The content analysis is based on the coding elaborated in Chapter 1. Before discussing the analysis of policies, a brief contextual background of the political-economic scenario in India at the time of the policy development has been elaborated.

Indian politico-economic regime is very complex (Kaviraj 2004) and for this study I am trying distinguish the entire regime into three phases. The initial phase, which started after India's independence in 1947 and lasted till Nehru's death in 1964, followed a reformist form of Industrial Development (ibid). It has been considered that during this time the policies were coherent and had a well-reasoned structure (ibid). The Kothari commission for education reform, which had recommended for 'common school system' in India, belonged to this regime. In this period the first education policy was formulated. The second phase that stayed for more than two decades was marked by subtle changes in the character of policies (ibid). These changes led to various serious unintended and undetected changes in Indian economy (ibid). It lasted till 1991, when than new government adopted liberal economic policies (ibid). The first child policy which is termed as National Child Policy – 1974 was drafted in this era. In this period the first education policy was reshaped to form a National Education Policy 1986, which was further amended in post liberal era (the third phase) of Indian politico-economic regime, i.e. in year 1992. In this liberalisation era, globally, India entered into UN conventions and other optional protocols related to children. And nationally, it drafted a children charter in year 2003, formulated a plan in 2005 and finally came up with a new child policy in year 2013.

3.1 Conceptualisation of childhood in policies:

In Indian policies, the conception of children have changed over time. Older policies recognised children as supremely important assets (NCP 1974: 1, NCC 2003: 4) The NCP 1974 urged for children program for them , to become robust citizens, physically fit, mentally alert and morally healthy (1974: 1). Although NCC had intended to adopt right based approach and committed its intent to secure for every child, its inherent right to be a child and enjoy a healthy and happy childhood (2003: 3), however most of its policy directions reflected a welfare approach similar to NCP 1974. But moving ahead from that mind-set, the NCP 2013 also states that “the children are not homogeneous group and their different needs need different responses, especially the multi-dimensional vulnerabilities experienced by children in different circumstances” (2013: 2). It further moves on to stating “children need to be safeguarded, informed included, supported and empowered- as individuals and as a national asset” (NCP 2013: 2). Similarly, NPAC (2005: 3) also states that children are assets with human rights. Overall, the current policy recognises every child as an individual

and as national assets. However, it seems that the assertion that children are assets could be based on the assumption that the children are seen as the future human resources. Further, it appears that the NCP 2013 is echoing with the argument of Qvortrup, that the focus of child as 'being' is as important as 'becoming' (Qvortrup 1994).

It was also observed that in policies and programmes there is a limitation in categorisation of different phases of childhood. Only, NCC 2003 considered that the adolescents need specific education and skill for turning into productive citizens. Even though, the NCP 2013 recognises that children heterogeneous group, but it, hasn't categorised the phases of childhood and hence has not segregated their needs accordingly. In the entire policy document, the terms like 'youth or adolescents' have not been used at all and thus it seems that the policy believes the entire phase of childhood is in-differentiable.

3.2 Framing of Child Poverty and Wellbeing in policies:

NCP 1974 was more focused on material wellbeing of the children, however it did considered protection as one of the components but it was very narrowly conceptualised (NCP 1974: 2). It assumed children as beneficiaries and acknowledged that the child wellbeing can be attained by ensuring health, nutrition, education for 6 -14 years old children, and protection from labour, neglect, arm and cruelty (ibid). Similarly, NCC (2003: 3) recognised that child wellbeing can be attained by education, food and health and stated a basic minimum need is required for the development of the child and her faculties. However, it remained silent in quantifying the basic minimum need. Like NCP 1974, NCC affirms that the need for protection of children is important and hazardous work is dangerous for child wellbeing (2003: 4). Though, moving a step ahead, NCC also increased the scope of definition for protection by including new terms like neglect, maltreatment, injury, trafficking and physical abuse (2003: 4). However, the policy remained silent on the process of achieving the same. Overall, NCC 2003 recognised that the child survival, development and protection were important components for child wellbeing and realisation of child rights, however these components seems to be narrowly defined and moreover, the importance of child participation was totally ignored.

In the latest policy on children, NCP (2013: 3) stated "every child has the right to life, survival, development, education, protection and participation". The policy further declares "every child has universal, inalienable and indivisible human rights" (ibid). Additionally, the policy feels " a child needs mental, emotional, cognitive, social and cultural development" and " the child rights are interrelated and interdependent and are important for child wellbeing" (NCP 2013: 3).

Specific to survival rights, NCP, in its principles, expresses "right to life, health and nutrition are inalienable rights of a child and are vital for their wellbeing" and "encompasses right to identity and nationality" (2013: 4). However, in detailing those principles, the policy focusses on the reduction of malnutrition, maternal and child mortality and on food security (NCP 2013: 4-5) and it hasn't given any importance to address issues of birth registration and

on the legal membership of the state. Thus, it appears that while the policy accepts food security and malnutrition are critical presuppositions for child wellbeing in survival rights but it seems that it neglects the aspects of child registration as formal membership as citizen in that assumption.

Similarly in developmental rights, NCP states that every child has equal right to learning, knowledge and education. In fact, it considers, education as fundamental right for children of age group of 6-14 years (2013: 6). NCP has given importance to ECCE, skill based education training, sports, recreation, leisure, cultural and scientific activities, good health, hygiene and sanitation practices as vital components for the development of a child (2013: 7-8). It further specifies that all out of school children or children who are subjected to any form of risk need to be given a special attention for their development (ibid). So the policy presumes that equal, universal, equitable and quality access to ECCE and education is important for the child development, and in turn for their wellbeing.

NCP believes that the children need a protective and child friendly environment for the realisation of their rights and the state is responsible for providing a protective environment (2013: 9). In defining protection the policy acknowledges the protection of children from abuse, harm, neglect, stigma and deprivation (ibid). The policy further states the need for broad child protection mechanism and environment moreover it has used terms like ‘child friendly’, progressive, responsive and preventive, effective and punitive for elaborating the broad system (NCP 2013: 10). The policy also feels that the grievances of the children should be addressed at the local level (NCP 2013: 10).

NCP (2013: 10) presume that children are capable of forming and framing their views and thus their views need to be incorporated. It further acknowledges “the state’s prime responsibility is to ensure that children are made aware of their rights and are provided with an enabling environment, opportunities and support to develop skills, to form aspiration and to express their views in accordance with their age, maturity and evolving capacities” (NCP 2013: 11). However the policy hasn’t cited any benchmark for age, maturity and capacities. Further, it states that the views of girl child as well as children from marginalised and disadvantaged communities should also be given importance (ibid). However, the policies lacks to provide any direction that how children’s view would be considered in decision making.

It seems that the conceptualisation of child wellbeing is a journey from material deprivation to a holistic approach of looking into the childhood deprivation. Moreover, the content of NCP 2013, appears to be presuming that the realisation of child rights might attain the wellbeing for the children. But the policy has objectively given emphasis on material concerns of wellbeing like health, nutrition, and other survival needs and given very little emphasis on subjective aspect of those material concerns like access, satisfaction of access, assessing and comparing one’s wellbeing with other (White 2008). Similarly, the policy has put emphasis on human capabilities aspect of wellbeing by ensuring ECCE, education, leisure and ensuring other developmental rights leaving behind the subjective aspect of wellbeing on (dis)satisfaction, developing perception of sense of competence, (in) capabilities, self-confidence, faith, culture and self-concepts (White 2008). Also, the child wellbeing is very

depended on the ‘space and time’ of the where children growing up (White 2008).

3.3 Acknowledging Intersectionalities of deprivation amongst children in policies:

In Indian policies, the age differentiation for children has always remained highly contentious, NCP 1974 and NCC 2003 did not provide any age specific definition for child however both the directives specified that children under 14 years of age shouldn't be working in any hazardous form of work and the state take steps to provide free and compulsory education for which time bound programmes would be designed as per the availability of resources (NCP 1974, NCC 2003). However, the NCP (2013: 2) recognised “all persons under the age of 18 years as child” but, the definition for child in NCP 2013 is contradictory with the CLPRA (1986: 1) which specifies any person below 14 years of age as child.

Other than age, over the period the policies have started addressing the other intersectional issues related with children and their wellbeing, however all the policies assumes that ‘equal opportunity’ would reduce the discrimination (NCP 1974, NCC 2003, NCP 2013). NCP 1974, didn't provide any specific directives for children on the basis of age, caste, disability, gender and space and it seemed that it assumed children as homogeneous group. Though, the NCC 2003 had recognised various ways of child discrimination, gender, disability and caste, of children (NCC 2003). It reasserted that the child should get an equal opportunity for development irrespective of caste, race, sex, language and religion (NCC 2003: 5). Further, NCC stated that children with disabilities need special care and protection (ibid). Thus a clear distinction in the recognition and assumption of intersectional issues between NCP 1974 and NCC 2003 showed that the frame for visualising childhood issues might have changed over the period of three decades.

Moving further, NCP (2013: 2) acknowledges that there is discrimination and it promises for “special measures and affirmative action” for eliminate it. Similar to NCC, NCP (2013: 3) states that every child irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth, class, language and disability, social, economic or any other status should get equal opportunity for development. In addition it argues that the voices of girl child and children from the marginalised communities need to be heard (NCP 2013:11). Although the policy also assumes that equal opportunity would minimise the differences however the policy seems to ignore the existing structural factors and power relations in the society, which might be considered as vital component for the overall development of the child.

3.4 Assumptions in Other Child focused Policies:

Education and health policy can play a pivotal role in achieving the aims of the child focused policy as children are among key stakeholders and recipients of the policy benefits in both the policies. The NPE (1986: 4) states that “education is essentially for all and fundamental for all round development - material and spiritual”. The policy adds “education contributes to national cohesion, scientific

temperament, independence of mind and spirit” and “it develops manpower for the different levels of the economy” (NPE 1986: 4). Thus it seems that NPE assumes education is meant for human development and nation building. It affirms “irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex all students have access to education of a comparable quality” (NPE 1986: 5) and to promote equality irrespective the accident of birth (NPE 1986: 6). Although, the NPE states that there should be a common school system and National curricular framework (1986: 3), however still there are minimal efforts in policy for achieving common school system. Other than ECCE, the NPE does not specify any benchmarks for age in categorizing education. It states that education can help in bringing change in the status of women and SC/ST community, by eliminating gender stereotypes in courses and jobs and reduce caste based inequalities respectively (NPE 1986: 8). It assumes that incentives to poor families of these communities should be given to send their children to school regularly till they reach the age of 14 years (NPE 1986: 8).

Furthermore, it gives emphasis on the promotion of recruitment of caste specific teachers would help in increasing child enrolment and retention (NPE 1986: 11-12). For achieving equality and social justice for minorities the policy states that minorities should administer their own schools to protect their culture and language (NPE 1986: 13). Both believes might be responsible for enhancing discrimination in the society. The education policy also endeavours to integrate physically and mentally handicapped students with the mainstream so that they can be prepared to function as a productive citizen. However there still are some questions on the assumptions in the policy, which are yet to be answered like; 1) does current education or school system strive for equality? 2) Can equality bring change in society and 3) is the goal of equality reachable?

National Health Policy 2002 concerned on nutritional deficiency of macro and micro -nutrient, especially among women and children (NHP 2002: 4). Furthermore, it states that the girl child needs a clean and healthy environment for their development (NHP 2002: 20) and it urges to promote health seeking behaviour among children (NHP 2002: 33). NHP 2002 accepts that the access and the benefits from the public health system has been unevenly distributed and further, it considers that social, cultural and economic factors inhibit women and children from the access of Health (2002: 11, 18). In entire policy, the term child has been used for only five times. In fact the policy seems to superficially diagnose issues of child health and oversight the root causes for inequalities in availing health benefits and prescribed solution that seems to be influenced from MDGs goals.

3.5 Overall Assessment of Child focussed Policies:

Overall, the current National Child Policy 2013 shows a major shift and change from previous policies and laws. Nevertheless, it seems that the policy feels that the attainment of child wellbeing would be achieved by the realisation of their rights and echoes with argument of many scholars (Sumner 2010, Gordon et al. 2003). As pointed out in the previous sections of this chapter, it appears that the policy doesn't differentiate the phases of the childhood and it considers the children below age 18 years as child. However, for the first time the policy also acknowledges child as 'being'. Further, the policy seems to be focused on only

objectively defined indicators of child wellbeing whereas it has been realised that the subjective and relationally defined indicators of child wellbeing are difficult to find in the policy document (White 2010).

Additionally, NCP 2013 acknowledges survival, developmental, protection and participation rights are important for child wellbeing and it provides a comprehensive guidelines for designing child sensitive social protection programs. The guidelines seems to be approximative with CSSP framework that has been described in chapter-2, and moreover acknowledges intersectional issues for the realisation of child rights.

The content analysis shows that the latest policy, despite some shortcomings is oriented towards child wellbeing. Then the question arises if the policies acknowledge children as right holders and commit for the provisioning of their rights than why are the children on the ground not availing the benefits of the same? The next chapter deals with how the child issues are visualised and framed in the political party discourse and translated into the budgetary allocation.

4 Political Priority Setting

This chapter discusses the content of the manifestos of political parties and also presents a picture of budget allocation for the realisation of child wellbeing in India. The chapter attempts to highlight the way child wellbeing has been prioritised at the political public discourse level and how these ‘priorities’ have been translated in the form of budgetary allocation at the national level. The first section of this chapter will present the analysis of 2014 election manifestos of four key national parties – BJP, Congress, AAP and CPI (ML). The second section presents an analysis of trend of child budget for last seven years.

4.1 Child-wellbeing in political public discourse:

Currently in India, the political power is primarily concentrated with two big political alliances. The first one is Congress led United Progressive Alliance, which continuously governed India for a decade till last elections held in 2014. In the 2014 general elections National Democratic Alliance led by Bhartiya Janta Party formed government.

The manifesto of BJP referred children-‘as the future of the Nation’ and have further stated that, ‘the indicators related to welfare of the children are the indicators for the progress of the nation’ (BJP manifesto 2014: 19). It seems that BJP, the current ruling party, conceptualises children more as ‘becoming’. However, the views of other parties on conceptualisation of children are not clear from their manifestos.

For protection, all the party manifestos focus on the improvement of the implementation of a few children focussed schemes and laws. CPI, BJP and Congress manifestos promised to review CLPRA Act 2012, and ICPS however both the manifestos lack their own stand on these issues (BJP manifesto 2014, CPI 2014, INC manifesto 2014). Further political parties have shown concern on child protection by including the issues of child trafficking in their manifesto and also by emphasising the strict implementation of child labour and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act's (ibid).

For Education the parties’ stances seem to be narrow, just focussing on one or two components of education. Congress promised to give priority to strengthening of the National middle school system (INC manifesto 2014) whereas BJP’s manifesto promised to improve the implementation and management of SSA and MDM and reviewing curriculum (BJP manifesto 2014). More importantly, other than Aam Aadmi party none of the leading political parties, discussed or talked on equitable and equal quality education (AAP 2014a) and only CPI has urged to expand RTE Act 2009 from 3 to 18 years (CPI 2014). Surprisingly, none of the political parties have spoken on the current influence of privatisation on education and schooling system which various reports have been continuously highlighting (ASER 2013)

For health, BJP and CPI manifesto focussed on improving the access, as well as quality and lowering the cost of health services (BJP manifesto 2014, CPI 2014). However, the Congress and Aam Aadmi party pledged to come up with

Right to Health (AAP 2014a, INC manifesto 2014). All political parties' manifestos focused on the improvement in the access of health facilities but none of the political manifestos spoke clearly on the existing inequalities, privatisation, and about other irregularities and more importantly no one bothered to focus on specifically child health issues.

Child Participation was not in the agenda of any political party. In fact all the manifestos were promising only preventive or promotive form of social protection for children.

4.2 Translating priorities into budget allocation:

Budgetary allocation for social protection programs and projects highlights Government's priority and their consciousness towards the attainment of citizen's rights. This section will briefly outlay the findings of the allocation of resources for children in last seven years to understand the priority that is given to the children and to their issues in the governmental agendas. In India almost 40 % of population is of children, yet the budget for children has never been more than 5% which seems to be a serious concern. In the 2013-14 budget, the allocation for the child budget is mere 4.52% of the annual budget where as 12.75% of total budget has gone for defence and 14% of the total budget outlay for subsidies (Union-Budget 2014). In past few years, it has been noticed that the major chunk of these subsidies goes to the large corporate and manufacturing units (Haq 2014). And in terms of expenditure, the picture is grosser, as the total share of expenditure on child budget has never been more than 0.65% of GDP (CBGA 2014).

Further, on analysing Statement 22³ of Annual budget, one notices that in last seven years annual budget there has been considerable increase in the number of ministries /departments and child focussed schemes, however the percentage share of the child budget outlay has almost remained the same. In the year 2007-08, there were 10 ministries and departments, a total of 49 schemes and programs for children for the entire 4.45 % of financial resources for children (Haq 2014, Budget-speech 2007). However in next seven years the number of ministries and departments rose to 19 and the number of schemes and programs increased to 91 but the percentage of the budget outlay still remained similar to that in the year 2007-08 (Budget-speech 2014). Thus it seems that administrative cost of ministries and schemes has increased in comparison to the cost of actual benefits. Such fluctuations and considerations raise serious questions on the political will towards the realisation of the rights of the children.

³ Statement 22 of Union Budget provides data on budget provisions for Schemes for the Welfare of Children

		2012-13	2012-13	2013-14	2013-14	2014-15	Percentage allocation of Budget in 2014-15 to Annual Projection in 12 th
Universal Schemes	Annual Projection in 12 th FYP	BE	AE	BE	AE	BE	
ICDS (including ECCE)	6.10	2.64	2.64	2.95	2.72	3.03	50%
ICPS	0.18	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.07	38%
SSA	6.42	4.26	3.94	4.54	4.43	4.63	72%
MDM (in school)	3.01	1.99	1.92	2.20	2.03	2.20	73%
Amounts - in Billion USD							
Source:- Information taken from (CBGA 2014: 62) and triangulated from (Union-Budget 2014, Planning Commission of India 2013)							

Table 4-1 National Budgetary requirements, allotments and expenditures on key Universal Child focused schemes

Likewise, the annual budget for the 2014-15 raises several questions on the new Government's will for realisation of the rights of children. The new BJP led government promises to improve the implementation of SSA, ICPS, RTE and other child development schemes and programs (BJP manifesto 2014), however the allocation for such initiatives seems to be insufficient. The reflection of the same can be seen in the way one of the key universal scheme for early childhood development – the integrated child development scheme has received budget allocations. It caters to 0-6 years old children and has hardly received 50 percent of the amount needed for its effective implementation. Table 4-1 shows the picture for last three years of national budgetary requirements, allotments and expenditures on key universal child focused schemes.

Similarly, Integrated Child Protection scheme, received the annual budgetary allocation of around 400 crores [70 million USD]. But this allocation of budgetary expenditure is actually only 38 percentage of the required amount as mentioned in 12th five year plan (CGBA 2014). Thus the budgetary allocation for the child protection seems to be a joke especially in a country where the percentage of child labour, child abuse, trafficking and other substantial abuses is very high (CRC 20 BS Collective 2012).

Further, the budgetary allocation for the expenditures on the Universalisation of Elementary Education -a fundamental right in India, seems to be inadequate. The percentage of budgetary allocation for achieving free and compulsory quality education for every child is 72% in comparison to the projected requirement as mentioned in 12th FYP (Planning Commission of India 2013: 122). Similarly, the budgetary allocation for the expenditure for the commitment for providing quality afternoon meal to all children at primary schools is merely 73% of the requirement 12th FYP projected annually (ibid).

The above discussion shows that the intention and allocation for the realisation for child rights is low and further Table 4-2 shows that the allocations aren't holistically allocated for the realisation of child rights. On one hand, the allocation for the child budget has never been more than 4.5% and, on an average 72% of total child budget has always been allocated to education sector. Thus, protection, development and health seems further less prioritised.

Table 4-2 Percentage allocation to Child Budget in India and percentage Sectorial distribution of total Child Budget

Year	Total % share of Child Budget in Total Annual Budget	Total Percentage Share of			
		Education in total Child Budget	Development in total Child Budget	Health in total Child Budget	Protection in total Child Budget
2008-09	3.9	72	17	10	1
2009-10	3.7	71.8	16.2	11.2	0.8
2010-11	3.8	75	20	4	1
2011-12	4.6	76.4	18.6	3.6	1.3

2012-13	4.8	72	23	4	1
2013-14	4.6	72	24	3	1
2014-15	4.5	72	23	4	1
Source :- Information customised from (CBGA 2014: 61) and triangulated from (Union-Budget 2013-14, Union-Budget 2012-13, Union-Budget 2014-15)					

The budget allocation and expenditure analysis in India's Shadow report to UNCRC states, "in the Central Government's Budget, the share of budget allocations for children has increased very marginally from 5.08% to 5.09% between 2007-08 and 2011-12; and the share of expenditure on children has gone down from 4.28% to 4.11% between 2007-08 and 2009-10, reflecting underutilization of even the meagre funds allocated for implementation of child rights" (CRC 20 BS Collective 2012: 20).

It has been argued by the Government that resources aren't sufficiently available but, it has been noticed that the public contribution in the form of education cess has increased continuously. (ibid). Despite of that, the recommendation for investing 6% of total GNP on primary education too remained unused (Kothari Commission 1966). In fact, the total expenditure on overall education section is mere 3.8% of total GDP which is much lower than the investment made by other BRICS countries like Brazil (5.8% of total GDP), China (4% of total GDP), Russia (4.9% of total GDP) and South Africa (6% of total GDP) (UNDP 2014, CBGA 2014).

4.3 Overall Assessment on the Prioritisation of Children's Issues:

The political manifesto of all the parties are very much the same and seemed to have similar views on the characteristic of social protection, i.e. welfare based, targeted and non-inclusive that merely ensured their own vote bank. Further, the political parties have limited and zero focus on child protection and participation respectively as an important agenda in their manifesto. Additionally, it seems that most of the political parties are focussed on increasing the number of schemes and ministries, rather than investing on improving equitable services, strengthening efficacy and efficiency of institutions. Even though, some political parties have pledged to improve right to education and promised to come with Right to Health, but it seems that they lack their insights on the right based approach. Further it seems that the political manifestos lack the political will in translating the assumptions of National Child Policy 2013 into reality. On one hand, the above discussion highlights that the children and their issues aren't holistically prioritised in the political parties' agenda and on the other hand it seems that the parties' approach towards children is more welfare based than right based. Further, the commitment and promises that the political parties made in the manifesto seems to be only for vote politics. The new BJP government, in their manifesto made promises to improve the implementation of ICPS and SSA, however, in its first budget the allocation is mere 38% and 72% respectively in comparison to their annual financial requirement.

The above analysis raises concerns on the approach that the political parties are taking for looking into child wellbeing. It seems that most of the parties are focusing on Education for the overall development of the children and still even that has not gained complete attention that it deserved. The inadequate allocation of resources on child protection, development and health for translating the policy promises into reality further raises concerns on the political will and understanding on the child wellbeing.

5 Translation of Policies into programmatic intervention

To translate the promises of policies mentioned in chapter 3, the Government of India has come up with various programmes. These programmes seem to be designed to achieve holistic development of children in all age groups. The objectives of these key programmes were to ensure protection, survival, development for different age group and support their family in the form of cash transfer. This chapter highlights a critical analysis of programme documents in terms of their assumptions, my field observation and findings from secondary studies.

5.1 Integrated Child Protection Schemes

The fundamental objective of this flag ship scheme is to create a system for protecting children (ICPS 2007: 20). The scheme states that the primary responsibility for child protection is in the hands of family and it emphasizes that child is best cared in the family (ICPS 2007: 21, ICPS 2014: 8). Family would be supported by Community, Civil Society and Government in ensuring child protection so the scheme major thrust is on strengthening the family capabilities to care for and protect the child (ibid). However, it hasn't given any emphasis on the intra-household disparity and on recognising the position of the children in the family. It seems that the scheme assumes that the intra-household distribution is always in favour of children. Further, the scheme presume that prevention and reduction of vulnerabilities of family is central to child protection.

The scheme endeavours that each child irrespective of circumstances, as well as socio-economic, cultural, religious and ethnic background should be treated equally and in a dignified manner (ICPS 2007: 21, ICPS 2014: 9). However, most of the intervention and benefits seem to be rural focused and targeted which implies that the children are safe in the urban areas and in the well-off families.

The scheme further states that the planning and implementation of the scheme would be child centred and it accepts that child reports are important for making a transparent and accountable system however the entire scheme has no mechanisms to involve child voices in the process of planning and implementation (ibid).

The scheme states that the child protection services should be provided by technical and professional staffs (ICPS 2007: 23). But, the interviews at the field level highlighted that the department lacks staff and more importantly trained staffs for the issue of child protection. In addition, the scheme has not specified the target age of children, thus the complexity with age specific protection problem, gender specific problem and certain problems that are particular to rural – urban disparity are ignored.

5.2 Integrated Child development Scheme:

One of the oldest and one of the biggest social protection scheme of India, specially designed universal access of early childhood development (ICDS 2014). The programme aims at improving the nutritional and health status of children in the age group of 0-6 years, as this age is very critical for a child's holistic development (ibid). Further, the scheme also feels that providing health and nutrition education related knowledge to adolescent girls and mothers will help them in taking care of themselves, their child and their family (ibid). However, the scheme also seems to miss out position of women and children in household and that might affect distribution of nutritional resources. The scheme believes that early childhood care is pivotal for laying the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child and so it undertakes nutrition, immunisation and educational support that intends to reduce the incidence of drop out, mortality and malnourishment (ibid). Even though the scheme is based on the supposition of universalisation but its focuses on rural parts of India. And till March 2013, the benefits were targeted to only 98 beneficiaries in an ICDS centre's catchment (ibid). Besides, the scheme seems to adopt a paternalistic view by recognising the benefit receiver as beneficiaries and leaving the process of selection in the hands of service provider.

5.3 Mid-day meal Scheme:

The Mid-day meal scheme, primarily named as the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education was launched in 1995 (MDM 2014). Before looking into the scheme's assumption, let's see what the Government thinks about this scheme. In the budgetary speech in the year 2004, then Finance Minister stated "The poor want basic education for their children: we shall provide it... We shall also make sure that the child is not hungry while she or he is at school..." (Budget Speech 2004)

The speech brings out a critical assumption of the government, that this scheme is for poor people and it would be complementary for the completion of primary/basic education. In a way, the assumption in the budgetary speech itself is contradictory with the scheme's objective that, mid-day meals have an important social value and foster equality which is based on the notion that as children learn to sit together and share a common meal (MDM 2014). In my field visit, I observed that children of higher caste prefer to eat at home whereas the children of SC/ST eats at school (See Chapter-6).

The scheme believes that it would contribute in reducing hunger and malnutrition and improve enrolment in school and contribute in Universalisation. Secondary reports have shared mixed views on these areas. Moreover, they also cited that this programme is for poor and thus can be seen as safety net. (Singh et.al 2012, Shukla 2014)

5.4 Sarva Siksha Abhiyaan (Education for all mission):

SSA is one of India's flagship programmes for universalizing elementary education. Its overall goals includes universal access and retention, bridging of

gender and social category gaps in elementary education, and enhancement in learning levels of children (SSA 2014). The mission endeavours to achieve the commitments of Right to Education Act 2009 making free and compulsory education available for every child of the age group 6-14 years of age (ibid). The programme assumes that free means no money would be involved in accessing education, but is it really free, is itself a big question? Moreover, compulsory specifies the obligation of state and family for ensuring the primary education for children. The programme assumes that opening of new schools and alternate schooling facilities, construction of schools and additional classrooms, toilets and drinking water, provisioning for teachers, periodic teacher training and academic resource support, textbooks and support for learning achievement can be helpful in achieving its goal of UEE (ibid). However, the programme has limited or no say on the mushrooming of private schools, on enhancing its quality and on the inequitable character of Indian education system.

5.5 Conditional Cash Transfers:

To promote education at primary level, the Government of India and the respective State Government's provide cash support to the children to cover the incidental cost incurred towards their education. The Schemes assume that the child education should be absolutely free and thus the cash transfer in the form of scholarship would reduce the family burden and foster equality. However, this cash transfers are targeted on the basis of family income, caste, gender and physical disability; are directed from different of state or central government; and are in various forms for example in Bihar there are schemes for free uniform and bicycle (Scholarship for OBC students 2014, Scholarship for SC Students 2012, Scholarship for Minority Students 2014, Scholarship for Students with Disability 2014, Education Department 2014).

5.6 Palanhaar:

The **Palanhaar** a conditional cash transfer scheme aims to promote family based or community based foster care for disadvantaged children⁴ in entire state of Rajasthan (Palanhaar 2014). It supposes that the best place for the development of a child is their family (ibid). Further, this scheme assumes that cash transfer would contribute in reduction of childhood vulnerabilities and thus children can avail a healthy childhood (ibid). The scheme presumes that it is state's responsibility to take care of disadvantaged family and the families whose income is less than 1.2 lakh Rupees annually are eligible for Palanhaar (ibid). The scheme states that the children should be in school and aganwadi to avail this cash benefits. However, the scheme has limited consideration on the household disparity and position of the child in the family and hence it has been observed in the field that the children are enrolled but they are not going school and are working to support family where they are staying.

⁴“the disadvantaged children have been categorised - orphans, children of a widow, whose both or single parents are convicted by law, whose mother left them to go with other male (cultural and traditional phenomena commonly known as nata), parents are suffering from AIDS or leprosy “(Palanhaar 2014).

5.7 Widow and Old age Pension:

Both the schemes have evolved from National Social Assistance Program. However, the individual State Government has the authority to change its manifestation and reach. The Government of India considers NSAP as a significant step for fulfilling the Directive Principles of the Constitution specified under Article 41 of the Constitution of India (NSAP 2003: 1). It directs the State “to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement and in other cases of undeserved want within the limit of its economic capacity and development” (NSAP 2003: 1). Thus NSAP through providing pension to widows and old people is a way to undertake a number of welfare measures and “these are intended to secure for the citizens adequate means of livelihood, raise the standard of living, improve public health, and provide free and compulsory education for children etc.” (ibid). However, the amount are too meagre for the intended outcome (Pension Parishad 2014).

5.8 MNREGA:

MNREGA is based on the presumption that livelihood security of the household can contribute to the wellbeing of the family and as such the scheme has limited scope to affect the life of children directly (MNREGA 2013: 3). But the assumption of the scheme that livelihood security can contribute to the family’s wellbeing has an indirect impact on the wellbeing of the children. Many studies have shown that the income from MNREGA has reduced child labour, migration and increased family income that resulted in increased enrolment and retention (Uppal 2009). However, from my field observations especially in Dungarpur Rajasthan, it has been witnessed that MNREGA might have reverse effect on child wellbeing. It has been noticed that older children, especially girl child, have to leave school to look after their younger siblings and to complete other household chores. During the field visit it was observed that children are working on site, on asking them they told that they are helping their parents in completing their work. Moreover on some occasions their parents weren’t even present at the working site.

5.9 Overall assessment of the assumptions of the programmes:

At the very first go, the package of programmes seems to be complete package but looking into those programme assumptions, these programmes seem to be promoting materialistic wellbeing of the children, are targeted to a specific section of the society, have limited scope for people’s participation in sharing their view on access, quality and satisfaction with the programmes. Moreover, it seems that the majority of programmes intend to develop human resource for different level of economy and seem to achieve the indicators set by the Development Goals. The programmes have very limited scope to develop child as a right holder who can demand her/his rights, rather the programme view of looking at child as a beneficiary seems to be more paternalistic. Even though, some of the programmes aims for universal access but their thrust and focus

seems to be limited to rural and slum areas. Few programmes have the potential to fall into transformative form of social protection but their targeted nature and poor and irregular services further make them narrow form of social protection. So, currently in India the social protection programmes are only categorised into preventive and protective form of social protection. The poor quality and target based implementation of these programmes contribute in commodification of basic services to their citizens. Moreover, the programs are assuming family as a unit for holistic child wellbeing, however sex ratio data, child labour incidence, gender discrimination and also from my field observation raise the question if the family is the best protector of child wellbeing.

6 People's perception of policies in Dungarpur Rajasthan

This section of the study highlights people's perceptions, thoughts and feelings on the assumptions of the social protection programmes and initiatives. The people's perception are categorised as - the voices of children, views of their care giver's, duty bearers and representative of local governance. In each sub-section, the initial portion has been devoted for discussing voices from the field level conversation, which is followed by an analytical depiction of their perceptions, thoughts and feelings on social policies and their benefits. This section helps us to reflect on how these policy assumptions are translated by the duty bearers and perceived by the recipients.

6.1 Children's Perception

Discussions were held with children at Mandwa and Surata village on the various social protection. The discussion points included their perception of their wellbeing, schooling, quality of education and other social services, the behaviours of their teachers and parents towards them and their role in family & school.

The views of children on their wellbeing are mixed. Children have mostly emphasised on education, food and playing time with friends as the important component for their wellbeing. A 13 years old girl expressed that getting good education, play time with friends and food would be important components for her wellbeing. However few children have projected their secure and respected adulthood as their wellbeing. A 12 year old boy wished to start earning as quickly as possible as that would earn him respect in society so he had already planned to migrate. He further told that it is a trend in his village. A 16 years old young girl however, felt that if she gets an educated husband who can take care of her needs and at the same time would not divorce her than her wellbeing will be taken care of.

On asking about the hindering factors in their wellbeing, one girl shared that she did not get enough opportunity to interact with peers and to complete her schooling as she had to take care of her younger siblings and household chores while her parent went for work. On being asked whether her consent was taken for this she replied that she was never asked about her wishes. Another girl felt she would have completed her education till tenth standard, but the fear of teacher's punishments and discouragement from parents in going to school stopped her from doing so. Children have shared other incidences like being forced by the teachers to wash utensils of MDM, clean toilets and fill water for drinking and being beaten on refusing. On being asked whether they complained about the teacher's behaviour to their parents or to other teachers, a 13 year old girl replied grimly "Nothing happens so why should we complain, my parents were reluctant and apprehensive to talk to the teacher and they feel girls should learn all these tasks". Similarly a boy of age around 12 years said, '*hum kisse bole, teachers ko bol nahi sakte aur mata pita humme hi daath dete hai?*' [to whom can we complain, we can't complain to teachers and parents scold us only]. He further

added, '*humari baat koi sunta hi nahi*' [No one listens to us]. Similarly a girl studying in a private school of village Surata reluctantly shared that few teachers in her school came drunk for teaching and misbehaved with them. Further, she remained silent and her silence felt like an indication that the girl children in her school might also be facing other forms of abuse. On being asked that whether she complained, she told that she did but her grandmother refused to talk with the teachers in fact her grandmother suggested her to avoid talking to those teachers. On talking to her grandmother she said complaining would defame her grand-daughter only and that might restrict her future schooling.

Further in the discussion it came out that the teachers hardly spend less than an hour on teaching. The children of Surata Primary School shared that they face a lot of difficulties in learning and understanding lessons. They shared that due to lack of teacher's and their availability in the class room, they have to manage with inferior quality of education. Further children said that if they request teachers to teach than they were asked to do self-study or peer learning. However, in the discussion there was a contrary view as well. One child also shared that he felt 'grateful' that his class at least gets an hour of teacher's time in a day and they get one time's food in the school as well. Another girl of age 12 years, belonging to OBC community, shared in a discussion that she liked going to school as she got opportunity to study. She is availing 'Palanhaar-benefits' and annual scholarship, but she doesn't like eating MDM as she feels that those meals are for lower caste (SC/ST) children. On exploring, I noticed and was also told that MDM in school is seen as a meal for lower caste children.

Further, a children group told that some of their friends are also studying in the private school where they felt that the quality of teaching is better than their Government school. They shared that they would prefer to go to private school, but at same the time felt helpless as their parents cannot afford the expenditure of the private school. One boy said, 'we don't have choice to choose schools'.

Few Children expressed their gratefulness for the benefits and services that they are availing while, most of the children felt that they have no or limited choices. The discussion pointed out to a situation where the children appeared feeling helpless and powerless in their position for demanding their entitlements. Further, in the local setting it seems that the children are feeling that education and food are the only two critical requirements for their wellbeing however many children shared their projected wellbeing as the way the local setting perceived respected and secure adulthood. It seems that the poor parents are reluctant in raising questions in Government schools and it seems that parents, or caregiver are not raising demand on the violation of child rights. The reason might also be that they are assuming that the benefits and services that are reaching to them are gifts and mercy and not a right of their child. More importantly, it seemed that the notion of rights is lacking among the children and their care givers.

6.2 Views of Care Givers: The Family

Availing benefits is also a struggle, a widow of Surata Village, is struggling to enrol her three children for the Palanhaar schemes since past six years and finds herself clueless about reasons of delay and vague replies of front line service provider. She finally felt that these schemes are meant for rich people or for

those who have time and money to bribe the service providers, So, she ultimately decided to quit enquiring as it involves a lot of opportunity cost which she can't afford in this case. However, she had once bribed INR 4000 for receiving INR 10000.00 as accidental compensation for her husband's death. She said "at least I got something in that case". Another widow belonging to ST community expressed some relief that at least her children are receiving some education, food and money from the scholarship under Palanhaar Scheme even if there are irregularities in receiving the same. She also seemed less bothered about the quality of school and said that the teachers rarely teach the students in Government school but we can't expect more and complain about something we are not paying for. However, most of the parents blamed the quality of education in Government school and felt their children mightn't learn anything by going there. On being asked about the prospect of complaining, most of the parents replied that they weren't heard and they can't monitor the school every day. They also sounded unaware about various other benefits and service that their child might get on attending the school regularly. This low level of unawareness was also there for other schemes like ICDS and ICPS. In fact none of the parents are aware of child protection committee that has been constituted under ICPS.

The discussion with parents clearly brought out that that the primary focus of parents is on the tangible benefits like scholarship, MDM, etc. and not on the benefits that enhance the protection and participation of the children. More critically it seemed that they have made up a mind that Government services are gifts or welfare services not a right or entitlement for them, one has to pay for the quality services. This further reinforced the belief that people at the local setting might lack the notion of rights and hence might not want to demand them. Further, it raises question on the role of duty bearers and why they don't provide information about the rights and entitlement to the people.

6.3 Perception of Duty bearers and local governance members

In this section the views of teachers, Panchayat Secretary, block level officials and district level officials are considered as views of Duty bearers, whereas the Panchayat Sarpanch's views are taken as the views of local governance members.

In the views of duty bearers a dichotomy was noticed, at one hand they appreciated all the Government services and on the other hand they don't want to avail those services for their own children. Panchayat secretary of Surata Panchayat felt that all the government programs are very well planned and are providing lots of benefits to the families and their children. He cited the example of Mid-day meal and said that the children are coming to schools for food and in the process they are able to study too. He acclaimed that government schools are doing a very good job. But at the same time found the private schools better for the education of his children. On being further probed about not sending his children to the government school, he smiled back and said – "*you trapped me*". Later he shared that a little well off people want to avail private facilities. But he could not provide any reasons for this. Similar preference for private schools came out in an interaction with other Government employees. They preferred to remain silent on reasons for choosing 'Private schools' for their

children and appeared to be clueless on being asked about the reason of paying 'twice' for the education of their children. When it was explained to them that at on one end they are paying 'Education Cess'⁵ to the Government and on the other hand they are paying fees in the private schools, most of them remained speechless or silent.

Correspondingly, the Government Officers of Dungarpur District also felt that the Government programs are quite good for the development and welfare of children, however they shared certain contradictions in the policy which hinders proper implementation. A Welfare officer from Directorate of Child Empowerment, highlights the contradiction on child age in between NCP 2013, JJ Act and CLPRA Act. Besides, he also shared that in policies there is limited scope for adolescents group and the policy directions aren't contextualised with the social and cultural settings. He cited the example of the policy directives which state that any person below 18 years is a child but in tribal cultural society starts considering children as adult on the basis of their physical change, which may possibly start at 14 years of age.

As the NCP 2013 focused on child rights , the Government of Rajasthan renamed the Department of Social welfare as Directorate of Child Rights, but the officers still seem to be operating with the 'welfare' mind-set. The Asst. Director of ICPS viewed ICPS as an integration of many child welfare programmes. He in fact kept on using the term 'welfare' while discussing about the programme. Similarly another Asst. Director, felt that the Government 'welfare' programmes are providing a lot of assistance to SC and ST students as these programs are basically for the poor and backward caste. But he also admitted that despite targeting, the programmes are not able to reach to the poorest of poor. He felt that this is due to the poor people's unawareness however he felt proud that some of children are doing well.

Paradox was also noticed in the views of local village representatives. The village council leader of Panchayat Surata, felt education is vital component for child wellbeing and development of the children. She too remained quiet on the question about people not wanting to avail the services of government school and ICDS. According to her, scholarship and MDM are providing supports but she felt that the quality of teaching in government school is of poor quality. On being asked about her role in improving the execution, she replied that she monitored frequently, but she felt that there is scope for improvement. Moreover in discussion it came out that village level meeting of the Child Protection committee had never happened in last two years since its formulation. Two child members of the Panchayat's CPC are not even aware that they are part of any committee.

Even though the schemes are universal, are made for the realisation of the fundamental rights for which citizens are specifically paying in form of direct and indirect taxes, still the schemes are not of 'universal nature' in reality. It seems that somehow the association with those schemes is stigmatised and thus it becomes self-targeted and meant for specific group in terms of their income and caste. Moreover, it appears that at the ground level the schemes are not seen

⁵ It is form of direct tax.

as an entitlement but seen as welfare measures for children both by the service providers and seekers.

6.4 Incongruity in Perceptions

It seems that there are two set of incongruities - the first can be seen as lack of notion of citizenship rights for children. As it appears that people (children and their caregivers) instead of demanding for quality and equal services for children have either expressed their 'helplessness' on the irregularities and on quality governmental services and shown 'ignorance or powerlessness' on their capacity for demand for change. Hence they perceive no point in complaining, they are rather striving for getting an opportunity for availing paid services of better quality. The second incongruity emerges from the services providers who felt that the government services are 'good' but also expressed that they themselves prefer to avail private services as government services are meant for 'poor and backward class people'.

These incongruities raise serious questions on Government's mentality because at one side their policies take up a child right based framework and on the other side the efforts for translating the same into reality are minimal. Further, these contradictory perceptions not only show the paradigm of inequality and inequity in terms of income and caste but at the same time these incongruities also bring out that how the extreme poor people visualise 'themselves and their child as citizen' and the 'State'. These sets of contradictory perceptions help me in arguing further that it might not be only the 'implementation failure' which is responsible for the poor outcome but the translation and interpretation gaps at every level is also responsible for poor outcome. These incongruities set the tone for the final chapter in which I try to analyse further for unveiling the reasons for this paradox.

7 Unveiling the paradox

In chapter-1 I argued that the poor state of child wellbeing in India might be because of the discrepancies at the levels of policy, its interpretation, in the implementation. Numerous studies have discussed the implementation failure as a reason for the poor outcome, however in this study my focus is on investigating the assumptions behind the policies and their interpretation in conceptualising child wellbeing and its intersectionalities. I view this as a more critical reason for poor state of child wellbeing in India. This gap in the interpretation of policies, easily understood by the contradictions in practice and perception (as discussed in chapter 6) seem to be a vital reason for the poor implementation of the projects implemented for child wellbeing. This chapter presents the overall conclusions from the analysis of different levels.

7.1 Understanding the paradox:

The current child wellbeing policies in India seem to have taken a right based approach for the realisation of holistic child wellbeing (as discussed in chapter-3) however the entire policy idea of 'rights based' gets vernacularized into welfare base or charity base by the time it reaches the ground. Merry, in her work has shown "how transnational ideas such as human rights approaches to violence against women become meaningful in local social settings" (Merry 2006: 1). In her study 'the translators' are community leaders, nongovernmental organization participants, and social movement activists.

However, in this study the gaps-in the interpretation and translation of 'holistic child wellbeing'- can be visible at each and every level of policy implementation chain. The idea of looking holistic child wellbeing into right base framework has viewed partially at political discourse level and prioritised inadequately at the budget allocation level. Further at the level of operationalisation, the social protection programmes for children lacks sensitivity in realising their holistic wellbeing. And thus the incongruities in the perception of duty bearer's and services seekers can be seen as an upshot of this translation gap. Further, these incongruities question the intent of the Government's mentality (as in this case they are the 'key translators') in bringing change in the life of children and on the notion of viewing children as citizen's. Let's try to diagnose these incongruities that would help in demystifying the paradox further.

7.1.1 Lack of Government's intent:

A deep look into the evidences suggests that the intention of Government in translating the assumptions for holistic child wellbeing seems to be low. But then the question is that why did the Government of India (GOI) come up with such a holistic conceptualisation of child wellbeing and its intersectionalities in a form of right based policy? Particularly when this has a few contradictions and is a major shift in comparison to the previously existing laws and policies and can also be seen as too progressive in comparison to the 'local setting'. Although,

GOI took more than twenty years⁶ to come up with this policy after the ratification of UNCRC which itself also questions its intention. But did GOI take twenty years to understand the importance of such a commitment in the form of policy? Or was the delay due to some other reasons like external or administrative factors. If GOI understood the importance of holistic child wellbeing as their commitment than there would have been genuine efforts in translating the same into reality. But evidences (in the chapter 4 and 5) show its low intent at the macro, exo and meso levels. Particularly, its intentions for operationalization of programs are not transformative and child sensitive. In fact, most of these programs are in form of targeted programs and have taken a welfare based approach which is intended for actualisation of materialistic wellbeing. Further, there is an increase in the administrative expenditures by increasing the numbers of the scheme, ministry and departments whereas the expenditures for the actualisation of child well-being seems have remained the same if not reduced (as the overall percentages of child budget remained the same in last seven years). These evidences point at the probability that international bindings, pressures and the concern for its own administrative face saving at the global level (after being part of UNCRC, Government has to show some progress), have made the GOI to come up with this policy. And if the above mentioned assumption proves out to be a fact than one can easily understand the reason for the gap in translation of policy in action which again is a responsibility of the Government.

This, in fact appears to be an act of ‘art of governing’ which in Foucaudian sense, is more focused on the management of population rather than the attainment of holistic wellbeing (Jessop 2007). Moreover, this management of population can also be interpreted as what Foucault called ‘bio-politics’ where he described mode of power, that operates through the administration for both individually and collectively controlling the population (Foucault, as cited in McKee 2009: 466). The explanation for controlling the power which operates through the administration can be justified by the second incongruity. The incongruity in the mind-set of the program implementors and front line service providers towards the social protection programs that - the programs are good but they are meant for poor or backward caste’, actually questions the way government and service providers’ view the intersectionalities of child wellbeing. Their vision towards these intersectionalities seems to be more for controlling/managing the population than attaining their wellbeing. Thus, at one end the programs are termed as “Universal” and “for All” but at the other end the quality of ‘rights’ and ‘service’ are discriminated on the basis of context in which the child is born (i.e. gender, caste, class). So the policy promises and constitutional commitments for attaining ‘equality’, ‘equity’ and ‘justice’, get diluted at various levels. The Universal schemes⁷ on papers get transformed into targeted schemes in practice. It has been argued that the targeted services are more often of poor quality as they don’t cater to the middle class which is generally more vocal and can raise questions on the issues of quality (Mkandawire 2005, Devereux 1999). So, it seems that the types of social protection in India for child wellbeing are designed in such a way that it would further maintain the existing class division and responsible for commodification

⁶ India ratified UNCRC in Nov 1992.

⁷ See Appendices-4 Appendices 4 for more examples of such Universal schemes.

fundamental services – like education and health- in the name of quality. In Indian context this can also be seen as symbolizing the *quota* politics which is based on caste system (Corbridge et al. 2005: 83) where the political parties, who run the government, try to maintain this discrimination for their vote bank and for managing the population.

7.1.1 Children as Citizens:

Now let's try to unpack the other incongruity that instead of demanding for the rights of children, children and their care givers have shown diverse feelings like – helplessness, ignorance and gratefulness (as discussed in chapter -6). One way of understanding these diverse feelings could be based on Gough & Wood analysis for welfare typologies in the context of South Asia. They argued for hierarchical, asymmetrical, and patriarchal relationship which moreover deduced into patron-cliental relationship in the regime of welfare process (Wood and Gough 2006: 1704). And the entire “notion of right, and correlative duties” evolved in this patron-cliental relationship are define as “short term, personalized, segmented, preferential, discretionary and clientlist” (ibid).

On other way, these diverse feelings express that there might be lack of consciousness about citizenship of children. But then the critical question is that - why does the unconsciousness about the children's citizenship exist?

The child protection policy in India has recently started to recognise children as 'being' and assumes that actualisation of child rights can be helpful in realisation of child wellbeing however the programmes and other policies are still visualising children as 'future productive citizen'. Similarly, the current policy has given more stress on the role of state in realising the rights of children, yet the programmes and duty bearers still assume that family's role is more critical than the role of a state. Moreover, the current policy has limited emphasis on article 12 of UNCRC and focuses only on materialistic wellbeing rather on subjective and relational wellbeing. Drawing from the above analysis, it seems that there is some perplexity in recognising children as citizen.

This perplexity can be understood by various debates of scholars for non-recognition of 'children as citizens'. Some authors question that if children are considered as citizens than would such a definition of citizenship, retain the basic building block of the concept (Lister 2008), like - membership of the community, rights, responsibilities and equality of status- (Marshall, as cited in Lister 2008: 9). In addition to this the scholars have also argued around various reasons for non-recognition of children as citizens like- their roles are different (Lister 2008: 11), non-voting rights (Cutler and Frost 2001), economic dependence (Jones and Bell 2000: 60), lack of recognition and respect for the responsibilities that children and young people exercise and in wider sense children are not respected and hence they do not enjoy the equality of citizenship (Lister 2008: 13). However the feminist critique have a parallel view point, as they criticise the prescribed template of citizenship as being an adult centric view that ignores the particularities of children (Lister 2008: 14). They argued that children's roles, non-voting rights and economic dependence do not mean that they can't enjoy a social, active and participating citizenship (Lister 2008: 15). Further, the argument was that “children's citizenship is predicated in part on a fundamental sameness and equal worth as human being” (Lister 2008: 16).

Above mentioned analysis can help in understand the local settings and on debate for non-recognition of children as citizen but entire findings of the study also argue that the Government intent in reducing the reasons for this perplexity and to change socio-political setting of patron client relationship is bit low or negligible, seem to be responsible for lack in recognition to children as citizen.

7.2 Concluding Remarks

Evidence shows that the Government's intent in translating the policy assumptions into reality and giving children a practical recognition as citizen seem to be low. And thus the progressive new policy is in a sense just formal, created for international recognition and donor support without any mechanism that could lead to a real translation and proper implementation. Their low intent and formality can also be understood by the time lag they had taken to draft a progressive policy after ratification. Further, it appears that there is also some 'intended purpose' of Government in creating a perplexity on notion of the 'child as citizen'. Recognition of child as citizen is a pertinent determinant in the actualisation of the holistic child wellbeing. But this entire deduction open up the scope for further investigation, might be using a broader framework for analysis, that why the government have low intention in translating policy assumptions on child wellbeing into reality?

References

Abbreviation

BD- Budget documents for quantitative analysis

PD- Policy document for content analysis

PrD- Program document for content analysis

PM- Political Manifesto for content analysis

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Appendices

Appendices 1 Table for Explaining three dimension of Wellbeing

Well-being	Material well-being	Relational well-being	Subjective well-being
Involves	Practical welfare and standards of living	Personal and social relationship	Values, perception and experiences
Explanation	Income, wealth and assets; employment and livelihood activities; education and skills; physical health and (dis)ability; access to services and amenities; environmental quality	Relations of love and care; networks of support and obligation; relations with the state -law, politics, welfare; social, political and cultural identities and inequalities; violence, conflict and (in)security; scope for personal and collective action and Influence.	Understandings of the sacred and the moral order; self-concept and personality hopes, fears and aspirations; sense of meaning/meaninglessness; levels of (dis)satisfaction; trust and confidence.
Source:- Sumner 2010; White 2008, 2010			

Appendices 2 Coding Tables and Chart

Wellbeing		
Subjective Well being	Relational Wellbeing	Material Wellbeing
Values, Perception, Experiences	Views, participation, involvement, decision making, protection, (in)security Abuse, violence, neglect, harm, personal and collective action and Influence	Nutrition, health, water, sanitation, cash, income, wealth, education, skills, ability, disability, access to services, fees, scholarship, feeding, ration,

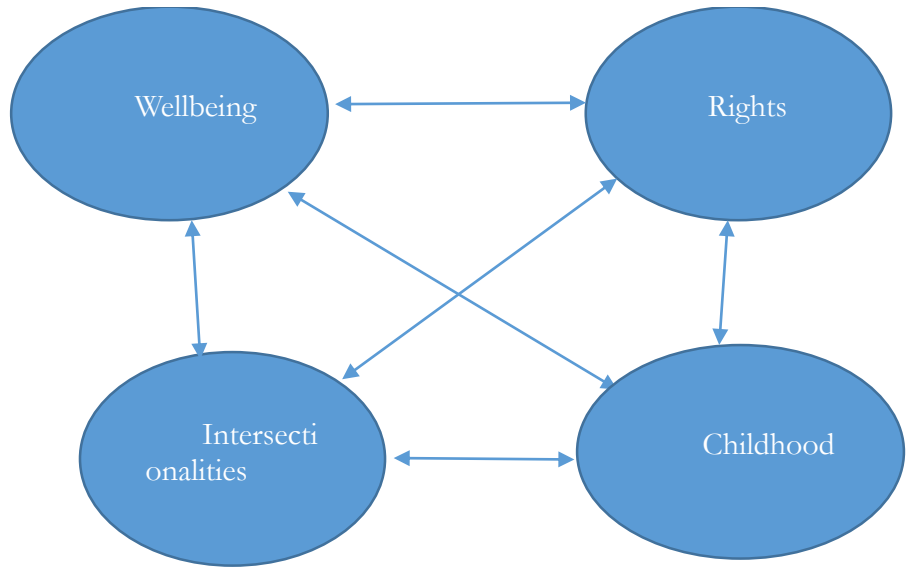
Right			
Survival	Protection	Development	Participation
Nutrition, Health, Health Services, access to health, live, life, survive, identity, nationality, birth registration	Abuse, violence, neglect, harm, child labour, work, exploitation, abduction, corporal punishment, alcohol, conflict, juvenile justice, (in) security, protection	Education, early child hood education, cash, income, wealth, education, skills, freedom of thoughts, expression, identity, nationality, birth registration, leisure, sports, employment, livelihood, development	Views, decision making, opinions, personal and collective action and Influence, participation

Childhood		
Being	Becoming	Phase
Individual, right bearer, citizens, human rights, child rights	Future, assets, human resource, robust citizens, physically fit, mentally alert, active citizens	Age, adolescent, adulthood, youth, childhood

Intersectionalities					
Caste	Age	Gender	Class	Disability	Generation

Caste, Minority, reservation	Age	Gender, Girls, Boys, male, female, sex, reservation	Income group, Below poverty line, Above poverty line, Private, public	Disability, mentally challenged, physical disability	Phase, youth, adulthood, caregivers, parents
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Appendices 3 Relationship of Selected Codes



Appendices 4 Critical remarks on the spread, reason for access of four Universal SP scheme for children in India

Schemes	Objective	Current spread	Reason for access	Remarks
SSA/RTE	Education for all	Mostly accessed by the poor people	Poor income	Even teachers or a little better income parents want to send their children in private schools.
ICDS	Early childhood Development (stimulation and nutrition) to All	Focus on rural areas; till 2013 the spread was for 99 beneficiaries	Free ration and MDM to poor children	The children of little well-off people avail private services. Service provider took paternalistic way to identify beneficiaries
ICPS	Protection to All	Rural Areas	No specific intervention other than CCT	Yet to be known by the common people.
MDM	One time afternoon meal for all	In SSA schools	Poor income	The MDM seems to be availed by low income and backward caste children. Thus one of the critical objective of the scheme for bringing social justice and equality fails.
Source:- Researcher's own field observation and (ASER 2013, CRC 20 BS Collective 2012)				