

**Tracer Study of Successful Products of NIOS in U.P.
(Academic Stream)**

**Summary
Of
Research Project Submitted**

TO

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By

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1. Introduction:

Open and distance learning caters to decrease the pressure on existing educational infrastructure and increase the literacy rates by fulfilling the specific expectations and educational demands of people of all ages who did not attend or continue formal education due to various reasons.

NIOS earlier known as 'Open School' aims to cater to the needs of a heterogeneous group of learners at school education level in India. For imparting distance Education at school stage, NIOS was established. The NIOS offers the courses in primary, secondary, senior secondary stage and various life enrichment programmes.

NIOS is an open schooling system where children decide at what pace they want to learn and which class they want to study in. Nobody pushes them into exams or forces them to subjects they are not keen on. It is ideal for homeless children, institution based children who are unable to focus in schools where other children, from well anchored families offer them competition.

The present study is concerned with exploring where about of the products of NIOS, studying their experiences of open schooling and its contributions towards various dimensions of life and personal development will also act as a parameter of judging worthiness of open school system.

The products as the key stakeholders of the system are the best judges of open schooling. Understanding their views and experiences of open schooling system will indicate the credibility of the system and making it realistic, need based and life oriented. Hence, the problem of Investigation is geared towards gathering empirical evidences on where about of the products of NIOS in one of

the most populous states (U.P.) in the Country and to study their perceptions of Open Schooling.

Objectives of the Study:

The study has been conducted with following objectives:

1. To trace where about of the products of the NIOS (2005- 2008)
2. To explore the perception of products on fulfillment of their expectations from NIOS.
3. To elicit their suggestions to strengthen academic and vocational programmes with futures directions.

Hypotheses:

1. There is significant difference in academic benefits derived by NIOS passouts in the context of gender, courses opted, employment status and locality.
2. There is significant difference in extent of fulfillment of objectives of NIOS passouts in the context of gender, courses opted, employment status and locality.
3. There is significant difference in problems faced by NIOS passouts in the context of gender, courses opted, employment status and locality.

Delimitation:

1. The research work is delimited to passouts of academic stream of NIOS only.
2. The research work is delimited to passouts of Eastern and central U.P. only.

Methodology: Exploratory method of investigation has been used.

Population: All the successful products of class X, class XII academic courses of NIOS in eastern and central UP state during 2005-2008 constitute the population of the study.

Sampling procedure: Random sampling method was used for tracing the products of the NIOS from Allahabad, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi), Jaunpur, Sonbhadra, Pratapgarh, Lucknow districts. Purposive sampling method was used for selecting sample of case studies.

Sample size: 230 pass outs (Products) of various Accredited Institutes (AI) of Allahabad, Varanasi, Mirzapur, Sant Ravidas Nagar (Bhadohi), Jaunpur, Sonbhadra, Pratapgarh, Lucknow districts were selected. In depth Interviews were conducted with pass outs and 30 case studies have been done.

Tools: 1.Questionnaire for passouts of NIOS.

2. Unstructured interview Schedule for NIOS Passouts.

Statistical Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

Percentage Analysis, t-test and chi-square test have been used for analyzing the data. The analysis of response of passouts have been done in the context of their locality and employment status. Case studies of passouts have been done to understand their needs and expectations in a qualitative manner.

1. Major Findings:

The comparison of Boys and girls passouts on academic benefits derived from NIOS lead to following results-

- Larger numbers of boys (97%) were benefitted more on knowledge component as compared to their girl student (92%) counterparts.

- Larger numbers of boys (74%) joined the vocational courses after obtaining NIOS course as compared to the girl students (64%).
- On the other hand larger number of girls (97%) got opportunity for admission in desired courses as compared to boy students (93%).

The comparison of passouts opting more than one course and only one course on academic benefits derived from NIOS indicated to following results-

- The students opting more than one course (86%) were benefitted more for getting chances to study, even if not admitted in other board regular schools as compared to their counterparts who opted only one course (77%).
- A large chunk of students opting both courses (65%) got scholarship for higher studies after obtaining NIOS course as compared to students opting one course (55%).

The comparison of employed and unemployed passouts on academic benefits derived from NIOS indicated following results-

- Employed students were benefitted more on knowledge component (98%) as compared to unemployed students (95%).
- Employed passouts were benefitted more (96%) by studying at their own pace after obtaining NIOS course as compared to unemployed students (93%).
- Larger number of unemployed students (72%) availed the benefit of joining more than one course at the same time as compared to employed students (59%).
- A larger chunk of unemployed passouts of NIOS got admission in reputed institute due to certificate obtained by NIOS (84%) as compared to the employed passouts (75%).

- Employed passouts were benefitted more on social aspects (88%) as compared to unemployed students (81%).

The comparison of urban and rural passouts on academic benefits derived from NIOS had following results-

- Rural students were benefitted more on knowledge component (98%) as compared to their urban counterparts (95%).
- Students of urban background (95%) were benefitted more in getting desired subject for pursuing their studies as compared to their rural counterparts (92%).
- The NIOS is providing better opportunity to rural students in getting admission in their desired course (99%) as compared to urban students (93%).
- More number of rural students were able to study at their own pace after obtaining NIOS course (97 %) as compared to the urban students (91%).
- Larger number of urban (81%) students of NIOS agreed that they got the chance to continue their studies through NIOS even if they do not get the admission in regular schools of other boards as compared to rural students (72%).
- Urban students (74%) were benefitted more on joining more than one course as compared to their rural counterparts (56%).
- A large chunk of urban passouts (82%) of NIOS got admission in reputed institute due to certificate obtained by NIOS as compared to the rural passouts (74%).

The comparison of boy and girl passouts on extent of fulfillment of expectations from NIOS gave following results-

- Boy passouts were benefitted more in expanding their own business (34%) as compared to their girl student counterparts (14%).
- Boy passouts (38%) of NIOS were benefitted more in expanding the scope of their employment opportunities as compared to girl students (24%).

The comparison of passouts opting one course and both course on extent of fulfillment of expectations from NIOS indicated following results-

- Both course students expectations were fulfilled more on the objective of earning money from more than one sources (26%) as compared to the one course students (14%).
- Both course passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in expanding their own business (34%) as compared to one course students (26%).
- Both course passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in expanding the scope of their employment opportunities (41%) as compared to students opting one course only (31%).
- Both course passouts of NIOS were benefitted more on becoming elite person by their education (42%) as compared to one course students (34%).

The comparison of employed and unemployed passouts on extent of fulfillment of expectations from NIOS lead to following results-

- Employed students expectations were fulfilled more on continuing the studies (66%) as compared to their unemployed counterparts (59%).
- Employed students expectations were fulfilled more on easy availability of professional opportunities (51%) as compared to their unemployed passouts (32%).
- Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in expanding their own business (39%) as compared to unemployed students (24%).

- Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in expanding the scope of their employment opportunities (51%) as compared to unemployed students (27%).
- Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted in making their own identity in community (59%) as compared to unemployed students (48%).
- Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in making better educational conditions at home (64%) as compared to unemployed students (56%).
- Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted to be treated as educated person in their locality (60%) as compared to unemployed students (50%).
- Employed passouts of NIOS agreed that people gave them priority due to their studies (53%) as compared to unemployed students (41%).
- More number of employed passouts of NIOS felt proud of their success (54%) as compared to unemployed students (43%).
- Almost moderate size of Employed passouts of NIOS were benefitted more on becoming elite person by their education (47%) as compared to unemployed students (31%).

The comparison of passouts of Urban and Rural background on extent of fulfillment of expectations from NIOS lead to following results-

- Rural students were benefitted more in continuing their studies (69%) as compared to their urban counterparts (59%).
- Urban students were benefitted more in earning money from different sources at the same time (69%) as compared to their counterparts of rural background (59%).

- Rural passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in making better educational conditions at home (67%) as compared to urban background students (53%).
- Rural passouts of NIOS were benefitted more as their reputation increased and they were treated as educated person in their locality (64%) as compared to urban students (44%).
- Rural passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in making educated friends due to their education (56%) as compared to urban background students (43%).
- Rural passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in increasing other family members' educational status (56%) as compared to urban students (48%).
- Rural passouts of NIOS agreed that people gave them priority due to their studies (49%) as compared to urban students (36%).
- Urban passouts of NIOS were benefitted more in developing employable personality due to their education (48%) as compared to rural background students (31 %).

The comparison of problems faced by Boy and girl passouts of NIOS had following findings:

- Boys faced more problems due to unavailability of co-ordinators at study centers (51%) as compared to their girl students counterparts (44%).
- A large size of boys faced problem in getting the printed matter timely (53%) as compared to that of girl students (44%).
- A large number of boys faced problem in understanding the course content as personal contact programs (PCP) was not organized regularly (61%) as compared to their girl students counterparts (54%).

- A sizable number of girls students agreed that they do not need much support of printed material of NIOS (59%) as compared to their boys students counterparts (52%).
- A majority of girls use printed material of NIOS for getting information of syllabus only (60%) as compared to that of boy students (52%).

The comparison of problems faced by passouts opting one course and both course of NIOS had following findings:

- Students of both course faced more problems as important information were not conveyed timely (54%) as compared to their counterparts who opted one course only (48%).
- More number of students opting single course expressed that they do not need much support of printed material of NIOS (55%) as compared to both course students (49%).
- A large size of students opting one course use printed material of NIOS for getting the syllabus only (57%) as compared to both course students (51%).
- Majority of students opting one course expressed that attending PCP at AI of NIOS is not important for passing the exams (56%) as compared to their counterparts opting both course (50%).
- A large chunk of students opting both course agreed that Assignments should be an integral part of examinations (80%) as compared to their counterparts opting single course of NIOS (71%).

The comparison of problems faced by employed and unemployed passouts of NIOS leads to following findings:

- Unemployed students faced more problems due to difficulty of course content (53%) as compared to their employed counterparts (41%).

- A large number of unemployed passouts found the printed matter difficult as it was in other language (55%) as compared to that of employed passouts (44%).
- Almost a moderate size of unemployed students faced more problems as important information were not conveyed timely (50%) as compared to their employed counterparts (44%).
- A large majority of unemployed passouts faced problems in getting admit card (56%) as compared to their employed counterparts (48%).
- A large size of unemployed passouts used printed material of NIOS for getting the syllabus only (58%) as compared to that of employed passouts (50%).

The comparison of problems faced by urban and rural passouts of NIOS leads to following findings:

- A moderate number of urban students faced problem in getting the printed matter timely (52%) as compared to that of rural students (47%).
- A majority of urban students agreed that printed matter was difficult as it was in other language (55%) as compared to their counterparts of rural area (46%).
- Urban students faced more problems as important information were not conveyed timely (51%) as compared to their counterparts of rural areas (43%).
- More number of urban background passouts agree that PCP is not essential for passing the exams (55%) as compared to that of rural background passouts (49%).
- More number of urban students expressed that attending PCP at AI of NIOS is not important for passing the exams (59%) as compared to their rural counterparts (51%).

- A large proportion of urban background students agreed that assignments should be an integral part of examinations (75%) as compared to their rural counterparts (67%).

The analysis of open ended items on responses of passouts of NIOS leads to following findings:

Suggestions of passouts for improvement of NIOS:

1. Examination centers should be given in cities.
2. NIOS should be made familiar to all persons.
3. Mark sheets and certificates should be given at scheduled time.
4. Separate marks should be decided for assignments.
5. Coordinators should be made more co-operative.
6. Practical classes should be organized properly.
7. Information should be conveyed timely.
8. Books should be provided timely.
9. Infrastructure should be increased at AI.
10. Study material should be provided timely.
11. Evaluation of assignment should be done properly.
12. NIOS is very beneficial for students who are not very bright as they can learn at their own pace.
13. More Accredited institutes should be established.
14. Number of employees should be sufficient at AIs.
15. Some institutes (AIs) are charging extra fees for admissions. This practice should be checked immediately.
16. For expansion of NIOS more study centres should be established in rural areas.
17. Proper orientation and self study is required either student cannot gain content knowledge in open system.

18. Examinations should be conducted in fair manner.
19. Study material should be provided timely.
20. Duration and frequency of PCP should be increased.
21. Practical classes should be organized on study centers.
22. Workshops should be organized by co-ordinators to motivate the students.
23. Language of course content covered in study material should be more meaningful and simple.
24. Provision of scholarships for meritorious students should be done.
25. Subject experts should also be available on study centers for counselling of students.
26. Girl students and differently abled students should be given more facilities.

The passouts are willing to join the following courses of NIOS in future-

1. Vocational courses
2. Diploma courses
3. Course that can help in enriching the ITI qualifications.

The courses suggested by the passouts that can be introduced by NIOS-

1. Professional courses
2. Technical courses
3. Courses related to internet
4. Computer courses
5. Course related to small scale industries

The reasons given by passouts for joining the NIOS by other students-

1. Dropouts can continue studies.
2. It is time saving and best for preparations of competitions.
3. Course content is comparatively easy than C.B.S.E. and I.C.S.E. boards.
4. Students can pass the exams in less efforts i.e. learner friendly course content which is suitable for all.

5. Senior secondary courses are more beneficial because preparation of competitive exams can be done with the studies.
6. The course content exerts fewer burdens as compared to CBSE and ICSE.
7. The courses offered by NIOS in Mathematics, English and Science are easy to understand.
8. Education can be continued with the work.
9. Education can be continued along with other courses.
10. The students who are not very bright in studies also get benefitted.
11. The students become self dependent.
12. Students learn at one's own pace.
13. Most of the passouts are satisfied by the studies.
14. Students can secure throughout first class marks in less efforts.
15. Students can do their business also along with the studies.
16. The students get desired subjects for their studies.
17. Students who fail in other board examinations can pass the examinations.
18. It is economic and time saving.
19. The student's social status is increased due to their education.
20. Students can score good percentage and in competitions and entrance exams the selections are made on the basis of percentage.
21. Students do not worry about daily school going.
22. There is no bar of time, age and place.
23. It is a reputed institute.
24. Students face no fear of being fail in exams.
25. Facility of on demand exams is very beneficial.
26. Learning is joyful because course content is easy.

The reasons for which the passouts will like to serve the NIOS-

1. For removing the lacunae of the system
2. For making people aware of NIOS.

3. To improve the system of NIOS.
4. For the expansion of NIOS
5. To provide more educational opportunities to poor students.
6. The NIOS helps in increasing the scope of education.
7. It is a government recognized institute.
8. To serve the society by educating children.
9. For getting the experience of working in open education system.
10. To help the dropouts to join the education system again.
11. More persons can be educated by the open schooling system of NIOS.

The methods that passouts are willing to adopt for serving the NIOS-

1. By motivating other persons for joining it.
2. By helping in advertisement of NIOS.
3. By communicating the benefits of NIOS to other persons.
4. By serving as a teacher or coordinator at NIOS AI.
5. Inspiring other persons about getting admission in NIOS.
6. Students can get better education in less money.

Findings of Case Studies

1. Specially abled students:

- The especially abled group is very much benefitted due to NIOS.
- The especially abled passouts of NIOS are confident due to their education.
- The students are also able to use technology like SMS, Face book, 3G services and internet.
- The re-examination system of NIOS is appreciated very much by the students which enables them to study without the fear of being failed.
- Residential facilities for the students with special needs should be made so that they get better chance for education.
- The passouts are also willing to pursue higher studies but they are not getting proper institutes for their studies.
- Recruitment of trained and experienced teachers is recommended who can improve the expressive power of such children so that they can be able to express their ideas and thoughts
- The personal contact programme of NIOS needs to be enriched for these students with special needs.
- The number of SAIEDS needs to be increased.
- Orientation of parents is also required so that they can know that what the teachers are teaching as some teachers are trained properly to perform their duty.

2. Self Employed Group

- The autonomy provided by the NIOS in studies, helped the passouts a lot.
- Most of the students of self employed groups are also continuing their higher studies from the open education system.

- All the passouts of self employed group got sufficient time to do the job and they also continued their studies due to NIOS.
- Some of the students of this group also completed technical training courses on the basis of certificates provided by NIOS.
- The self employed group passouts became more skilled as NIOS gave them the required certificate.
- On the basis of qualifications provided by NIOS the passouts got self employed.
- Science and IT based courses will make NIOS more popular among students.

3. Employed Students

- The employed students of NIOS were able to continue their education along with job.
- NIOS helped employed passouts in solving their economic problems and earn money for livelihood.
- The employed students are very much influenced by the flexibility of education system of NIOS where he can do his regular work.
- Employed students also availed the facility of studying their desired subjects.
- The employed passouts suggested that proper advertisement campaign for spreading the information about NIOS should be organized so that more people come to know about NIOS.

4. Students pursuing Higher Studies

- NIOS helped the students pursuing higher studies a lot as it saved their time and money.
- The autonomy and flexibility provided by NIOS helped them in preparing for the competitive exams.
- The students pursuing higher studies suggested that the syllabus of NIOS should be in accordance with the various competitive exams for being more relevant.
- The students pursuing higher studies suggested that printed matter should be made available in time so that students can prepare properly for their exams.
- NIOS helped students pursuing higher studies in self study and studying at their own pace.

5. Girl passouts

- The girl passouts of NIOS are very much satisfied with their education.
- The girl passouts found the syllabus of NIOS very easy to understand.
- Some of the girls felt relaxed due to opportunity of appearing in exams for more than one attempts at single registration so that they can study without tension.
- Some of the girls are shy and they are ashamed when they could not pass the exams of other boards and then they are not willing to go back in the same school. In this condition NIOS helps them to continue the studies and supports them mentally and emotionally.
- The girl passouts of NIOS told that it was possible to join the higher studies due to the qualification and confidence provided by the NIOS.

6. Minorities

- The members belonging to minorities are getting aware of educational benefits by the NIOS.
- If proper information is provided to persons belonging to minorities, they can also get more benefit of this institute.
- NIOS certificate gave opportunity to members of minorities to increase their qualification and strengthen their knowledge base by self study.
- The minorities are motivated to join the NIOS for saving their time and money.
- Some persons belonging to minorities are also willing to start an AI for the students of their own area.

3. Recommendations

- NIOS is a very reputed institute but very few persons are aware of this open schooling system in India. More and more people of all groups should be made familiar with the institute by adopting suitable advocacy strategies.
- Advertisement campaigns should be organized in rural areas so that more rural students can get information about NIOS.
- Majority of urban as well as rural students are not aware of NIOS. The AIs should initiate for spreading its message by organising workshops and seminars.
- More number of subjects should be offered for the students so that they can select their desired subject for their studies.
- Counseling sessions should be organized for girl students so that more girls can join the vocational courses after completing their studies from NIOS.
- Provision scholarships should be made for meritorious students of NIOS during the studies.
- Students passing out of the academic courses of NIOS should be encouraged for joining its vocational courses for getting employed.
- The rural students are benefitted more in continuing their studies by joining NIOS so it is recommended that more AIs should be established in rural areas.
- The employed students are benefitted a lot in their promotions and increasing their social status by their education from NIOS. More and more employed persons should be made aware of open schooling system.
- The co-ordinators should remain available at AIs, so that important information can be conveyed to the students in time.

- Printed matter should be provided timely so that students can study conveniently.
- Personal contact programmes (PCP) should be organized regularly and more frequently for better education.
- The communication processes should be made more effective so that important information can be conveyed timely to the students.
- PCP should be organized in a systematic manner and subject experts should be available, so that students can get maximum benefit of these contact classes to strengthen their knowledge base.
- Precautions should be taken at the time of dispatch of printed material to avoid the inconvenience.
- Examination centres should be allotted at reasonable distance of students residence.
- Practical classes should be organized and timely at AIs.
- Basic infrastructural facilities should be made available at AIs. The students coming from far flung places face problems due to lack of the basic amenities.
- Evaluation part should be made more systematic. The assignments and the answer sheets of exams should be evaluated properly.
- Proper supervision of examination centres should be done by the authorities to avoid the use of unfair means and fair conduction of exams.
- Students who are not very bright have been benefited by NIOS; hence it should be made more familiar to all sections of society.
- **Some institutes (AIs) are charging extra fees for admissions.** This practice should be checked immediately.
- Workshops should be organized by the coordinators at AIs for better performance of students.

- In open learning system proper orientation of students is required for self study to acquire content knowledge.
- Girl students of NIOS need more orientation regarding studies and vocational education. They should be encouraged and motivated by counsellors.
- The differently abled students need trained and motivated teachers who can work with them in accordance with their requirements.
- The specially abled students are very keen in pursuing higher studies but they do not get ample opportunities for the same. NIOS should have liaison with different institutions of higher education for this purpose.
- Some computer based courses should be introduced for specially abled students which will make them more confident.
- Residential facilities should be available during PCPs for students with special needs so that they can get better chance for education.
- Recruitment of trained and experienced teachers is recommended who can improve the expressive power of such children so that they can be able to express their ideas and thoughts properly.
- The personal contact programme of NIOS needs to be enriched for students with special needs.
- Orientation of parents is also required so that they can know the status and academic progress of their wards.
- The syllabus of NIOS should be more prone to various competitive exams.