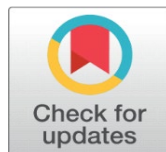


UNDERSTANDING DIMENSIONS OF THE HOME LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WITH TRIBAL CHILDREN AT FOUNDATIONAL GRADE: AN INSIGHTS FROM KANDHAMAL DISTRICT, ODISHA

Mr. Santosh Kumar Swain¹, Dr. Chhabinath Yadav²

¹ Research Scholar in Social Work, MATS University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh

² Assistant Professor, Dept. of Social Work, MATS University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh



DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.4974](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i6.2024.4974)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

This study explores the dimensions of the home learning environment and parental involvement in foundational years of learning of tribal children in Kandhamal District of Odisha. This paper gives emphasis on parents of children in grades 1 and 2 to assess the factors and dimensions of children learning opportunity available or provided by the parents. Through this micro study, the nature of parental engagement in foundational learning is also in part of observation. In addition to, the research sheds light on the challenges and opportunities faced by parents especially in the tribal context of Kandhamal. The study underlined the parental involvement with its related factors to strengthen early education. The respondents of the study were 30 randomly selected parents from 5 different schools and data was collected through self-designed a Likert-scale questionnaire and open-ended interview schedule. The study found that parents show a willingness to support their children's education with limited literacy skills and numeracy skills, lack of resources, and household responsibilities. The result revealed majority of 67% children depend on self-study and text books which is concern for further intervention and studies. The study provided a better insight on home settings, parental contribution, expectations and the area of improvement to be recommended.

Keywords: Home Learning Environment, Parental Involvement, Tribal Education, Foundational grade

1. INTRODUCTION

The “learning environment” and the “role of caregivers” are two significant factors of children’s education across the grades. Children can receive quality educational experiences at institution and home levels. It’s a joint responsibility of teachers, parents, and community to ensure an appropriate learning environment where they can move freely and learn confidently without having any hesitation. In fact, parental involvement in home-based learning activities significantly influences children’s cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development. The National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 emphasizes the importance of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) and recognizes the role of parents or caregivers as key stakeholders in children’s early learning. Furthermore, the NIPUN Bharat Mission also highlights the need for parental awareness and involvement in enhancing early learning outcomes.

As per Census 2011, Odisha is home to 62 tribes and records 22.8% tribal population in the state. The districts like Mayurbhanj has recorded highest ST population i.e. 58.7% followed by Malkanagiri (57.8%), Nabarangpur (55.8%), Gajapati (54.3%), Kandhamal (53.6%). Kandhamal is one of the leading tribal districts of Odisha which is known as “Land of Kondhs”. The district has diverse socio-cultural and economic factors that influence children’s educational practices of at institution and home levels. The UDISE+ 2021-22 data shows that drop-out rate at upper Primary level in Odisha is 7.3% and at the Secondary level it is 27.3% as against the National Average of 3% and 12.6% respectively. Furthermore, it is to be noted that the dropout rate for girls at upper primary level is 6.5% and secondary level is 25% as against the national average of 3.3% and 12.3% respectively. Hence, the UDISE figure indicates to be more cautious on children enrolment in schools along with quality of parental support in education at different levels. The study attempts to examines the dimensions of home-based learning factors, practices, expectations and the process that contribute learning of children’s journey.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To understand learning environment of tribal children, especially in foundational years of learning.
2. To examine the intensity of parental engagement and their understanding of facilitating home learning activities.
3. To identify the challenges within the home environment and individual capacities.

3. RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

The home learning environment and parental involvement play a vital role in education of children, especially in rural and tribal settings, and require significant attention. Kandhamal is tribal dominated district where achieving of children’s learning outcome is essential. This study aligns with these policy frameworks NEP-2020, NCF-FS-2022, NCF-SE-2023 by identifying the challenges parents face in supporting children’s education at home. The findings will contribute to developing inclusive and context-specific approaches that empower parents, enhance home learning environments, and support the effective implementation of national education goals.

4. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature on parents or caregivers’ roles in children education and significance of home environment always encourage researchers’ curiosity to explore new things. The work of noted authors, scholars, institutions, organizations and government reports are also supporting part of the study. Thus, following sources are the relevant to support the intent of study objectives.

Home environment refers to all sorts of moral and ethical values, emotional, social and intellectual climate set by the family members for the child to contribute his/her wholesome development (Anene, 2005). It directly as well as indirectly influences child's development

- **Save the Children (Bal Raksha Bharat) (2020-2022)** implemented project titled Back to Basics: Fostering Continuum in Early and Primary Education of 3-14 Years Old Children across 400 Anganwadi Centers and 150 schools of Boudh and Kandhamal districts of Odisha including Tikabali block. The objective of the project was to improve access to quality early and foundational learning, create a child-friendly learning environment, build the capacity of functionaries and generate evidence of best practices. A key component of the project was “Emergent Literacy & Math at Home” (Save the Children, toolkit 2013) program in order to strengthen home based learning. During this period, mothers were primarily oriented on early learning activities and the readiness of pre-school children for formal schooling.
- **Anene (2005)** describes “home environment refers to all sorts of moral and ethical values, emotional, social and intellectual climate set by the family members for the child to contribute his/her wholesome development”. It directly as well as indirectly influences the process of child’s development.
- **Karali et al., (2022)** have found “home literacy and numeracy environments are related to children's foundational learning. Asian studies on the home learning environment of primary school identified numerous family factors for literacy and numeracy learning.
- **Anders et al. (2012)** expressed that the quality of the home learning environment matters. A supportive climate, the structure of the home as well as better cognitive stimulation at home all influence literacy and numeracy learning.

Moreover, children's cognitive and emotional development are also influenced by the characteristics of the preschool environment but to a smaller extent than the home environment (Belsky et al., 2007).

- **Epstein et al. (2002)** listed out six domains of parental involvement which include parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and cooperating with the community. These domains have been emphasized to ensure the effectiveness of the relationship between parents, school and community.
- **Surfleet (2003)** expressed "It is quite essential to the child's whole development that his family relationship should be well adjusted. Parent can develop any aggressive behaviour, resistance to authority, bad temper in feelings of inferiority, jealousy or hate in less clearly defined ways."
- **Fan & Chen, (2001)** "Parental involvement in their children's learning positively affects the child's academic performance"
- **Tina M. Dietzman (2002)** studied on "the Role of Parental Support in the Home Environment and Student Academic Achievement" The findings suggest that various factors within the home environment, that can have both positive and negative impacts on children's academic performance. Remarkably, students classified as moderate and high achievers exhibited higher mean scores, indicating a potential correlation between certain aspects of the home environment and academic success.
- **Akrofi, O. (2020)** studied on "Academic Achievement of Primary School Pupils: Investigating Home Environment Factors Contributing to Low Academic Performance". The findings revealed that of the home environment factors, the socioeconomic status of parents has the most impact on academic performance of pupils".

Parents play important role in creating an environment that is able to support or weaken adolescent experience to become competent in learning and socializing in school (Skinner dan Wellborn, 1994). Parents play important role in creating an environment that is able to support or weaken adolescent experience to become competent in learning and socializing in school (Skinner dan Wellborn, 1994).

5. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a **descriptive research design** to explore the dimensions of tribal children's home learning environment in Tikabali Block of Kandhamal district in Odisha. A **survey method** was employed to gather quantitative and qualitative data through designed questionnaires. The questionnaire included both **Likert-scale items** and **open-ended questions** to capture the frequency and nature of parental engagement in different learning activities. For the study, a **random sampling technique** was used to select **30 parents** from **five different schools**, ensuring representation from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. The respondents were selected based school locations, especially parents of children in **Grades 1 and 2 from 5 different primary schools**. The collected data were analysed using **percentage distribution and thematic analysis in order** to identify the trends, challenges, and areas for intervention.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Category	Sub category	Frequency (N=30)	Percentage %
Gender	Male	20	67%
	Female	10	33%
Qualification	Under Matriculation	10	33%
	10th	17	57%
	Intermediate	2	7%
	Graduate	1	3%
Occupation	Farmer	23	77%
	Homemaker	7	23%

(Table-1: Demographic Profile of Parents in the Study)

Table 1 shows the details of the parents' demographics. Basically, it presents that 67% of the respondents are male, whereas 33% are female. It is indicated that fathers participated more in the survey. In terms of education, 57% of parents have completed 10th grade (matriculation), whereas 33% have studied below matriculation. Only 7% have completed intermediate (+2) whereas only person is a graduate. With regard to occupation, 77% of parents are farmers. This indicates that agriculture is the primary occupation of the community. Furthermore, 23% are women who are homemakers and engaged in household activities. The table suggests that lower literacy levels and occupational activities might hinder parents from being actively involved in children's education.

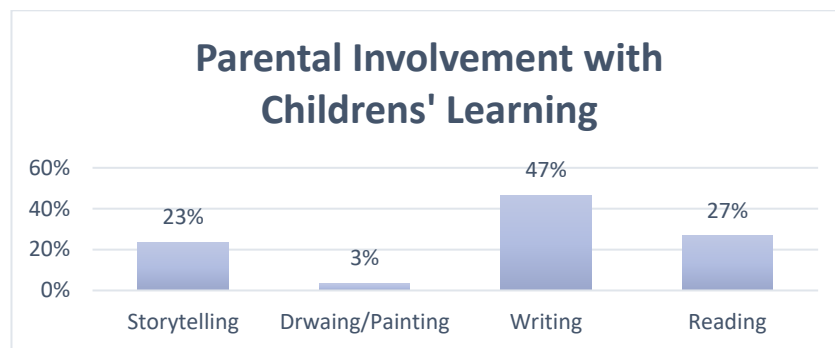


Figure-1

The figure-1 reveals that 47% of children are most frequently engaged in **writing** which indicates that writing is habitual and prioritized by most parents followed by 27% who favour **reading practices**. Surprisingly, **storytelling** comes in third place with 23%, whereas only 3% of parents engage in **drawing**. However, the percentage of involvement creative activities at home is minimal.

The study highlights that children are primarily focused on literacy related activities such as reading and writing, but they are lack sufficient opportunities in creative or expressive activities. There is a need for encouragement to adopt a balanced approach in home-based learning that can lead to overall development of children.

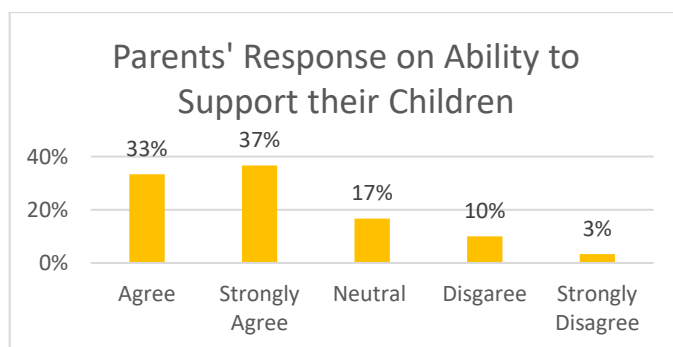


Figure-2

Figure 2 shows that 70% parents feel confident about supporting their children's learning. Among them, 37% strongly agree, while 33% agree. However, 17% are unsure about their role to support children at home, and 13% face challenges whereas 10% are disagreeing and 3% favour strongly disagreeing. This suggests that some parents need more support. Awareness programs can help them become more involved in their children's education.

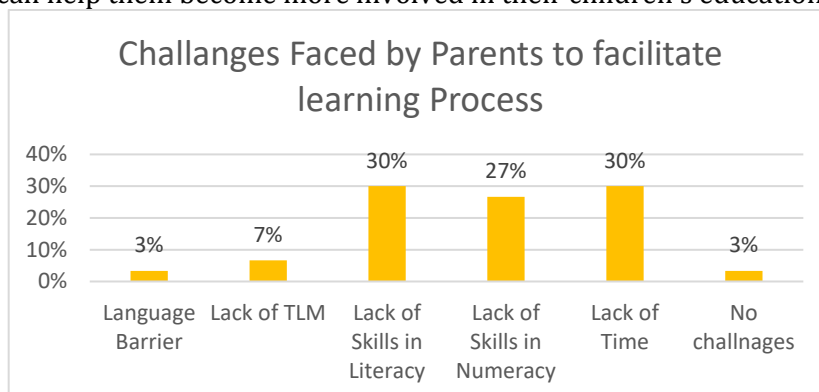


Figure-3

Figure 3 shows there is a significant challenge that parents are facing in facilitating academic activities at home. 57% of parents struggle with articulation of literacy (30%) and numeracy skills (27%). This may be due to a lack of ability to

support children in foundational learning. Only 7% of parents express a lack of Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) as a barrier, indicating resource constraints. 30% of parents cite a lack of time as a reason. Only a small proportion of 3% express language barriers, suggesting that most parents are comfortable with the medium of instruction in schools or are familiar with the Odia language. Remarkably, only 3% reported no challenges; the minimal percentage of parents are very confident in articulating home-based learning skills. However, it is understood that most parents require additional support to actively engage in their children's learning in literacy. Thus, there is a need for capacity-building initiatives and resource support to enhance home-based learning in order to bridge the gap.

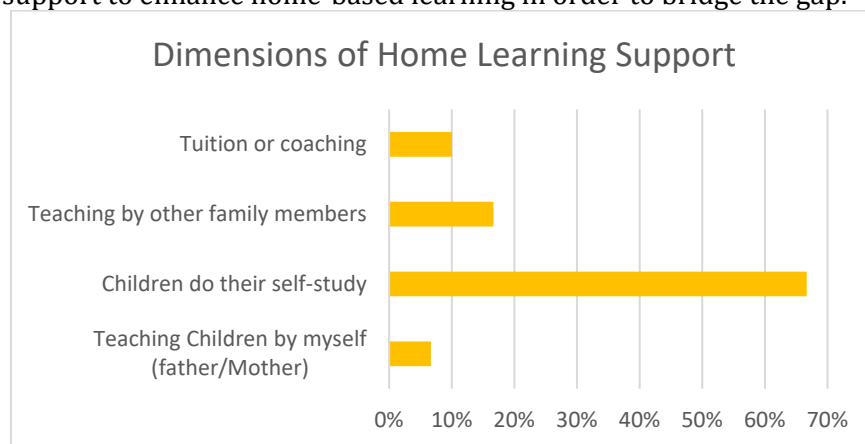
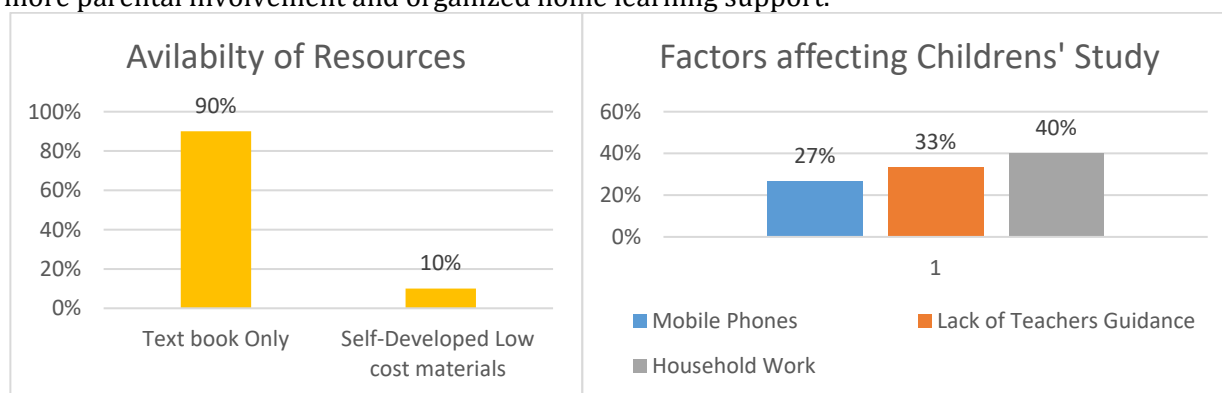


Figure-4

Figure 4 shows that the majority, 67% of children depend on self-study. This may be because of lack of a direct academic support system at home. 17% of children receive guidance from other family members, highlighting the role of extended family in learning support. Only 7% of parents (either father or mother) actively engage with their children; this may be due to factors like low academic competency or understanding, preoccupied livelihood engagement, or a lack of confidence to support children in their studies. Furthermore, 10% of children to tuition and coaching in order to manage day-to-day learning activities. However, it appears that few parents require outside academic support in the form of coaching or tuitions. The results suggest that in order to improve children's fundamental education, there is a need for more parental involvement and organized home learning support.



(Figure-5 & Figure-6)

Figure 5 shows that 90% of parents rely on textbooks as the primary learning resource for their children, whereas only 10% of parents use self-developed low-cost teaching and learning materials at home. It indicates that textbooks are widely accessible, but there is a need to promote the use of creative, low-cost teaching materials to enhance learning experiences of children.

There are several factors that impact children's ability to study effectively at home. Figure 6 shows that 40% of household work is the most significant challenge since children are often engaged in household responsibilities, and it impacts their study time. In contrast, 33% of parents indicate that the lack of teacher guidance also affects learning. In addition, parents indicate that the use of technology, like 27% mobile phone usage, is a factor of distraction. Hence, the above findings highlight the importance of organized learning support and parental awareness programs to minimize the gaps.

7. FINDING AND RESULT ANALYSIS

As far as the findings of the study are concerned, the significant gaps are found in parental involvement and home learning support among tribal families in Tikabali block of Kandhamal. 67% of children depend on on self-study which indicates limited direct parental guidance. Only 7% of parents engage in active teaching of their children, whereas 17% either depend or prefer their family members, and 10% rely on tuition or coaching. It is observed that external support plays an important role in their education. Despite positive responses like engagement in storytelling, writing, and reading, the factual data on parental engagement contradicts the actual level of parent's involvement.

However, the key factors that influence children's education include 40% of household work, 33% of lack of teacher guidance, and 27% using mobile phones. The findings reveals that the division of these causes especially in tribal areas, is alarming. Furthermore, 90% of parents depend solely on textbooks and only 10% about self-developed low-cost materials which reflect a lack of diverse learning resources. It means there is huge shortage of children's literature at home level like story books, pictorial books, poetry and bilingual charts etc. Surprisingly, 13% don't feel confident to facilitate learning activities at home levels.

Eventually, the above issues require sincere attention by the system or NGO functionaries to strengthen capacity-building initiatives, parental awareness programs, workshops, orientations and development of innovative, low-cost teaching-learning materials in light of NEP-2020, NIPUN Bharat, and NCF-FS-2022. These can help strengthen foundational literacy and numeracy and ensure a more inclusive and supportive home learning environment for children in tribal communities.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be adopted by govt. non-govt. organizations or Civil Society organization to create awareness, organize capacity building and development adequate resources for parents to support children in homebased learning.

- Encourage parents or PTA to coordinate with teachers to understand the learning levels of children in different grades and discuss the gaps and needs.
- Communication between parents and teachers, in a manner they can comprehend, and ensure compliance. For instance, displaying the expected learning outcomes for each month in different subjects in every classroom.
- Local resources or requisite learning materials can be developed or collected through parents or caregivers to organize home learning environment.
- Parents/grand parents can contribute or spare their time, knowledge and skills with children in home-based activities.
- Orienting teachers and school forums by NGOs to enhance Parental Participation in school activities through frequent and regular communication with parents to keep them informed about their child's progress and about home-based attentions.
- Actively involving parents in various school activities, including celebrations, and sharing their expertise on relevant topics.
- Create opportunities for parents to contribute their insights and experiences to enrich classroom learning and linkages with home learning activities.
- Promoting a shared understanding among parents about child development, learning domains, and the importance of a conducive home environment. Highlight the significance of basic health, nutrition, and the impact of social factors on a child's development.

9. CONCLUSION

The micro study provides a deep insight to conduct further studies. It extracted very minimal essences on home learning environment of a particular block but it equally important to understand the dimensions of the geography towards children learning efforts. The study provides an overview of parental curiosities, understanding and priorities factors to justify their day-to-day engagement with the child. It is observed, creative and innovative engagement is still lacking which needs appropriate intervention to bridge the gap. There was no such responses on language barriers and need of

mother-tongue based or multilingual education (MLE) may be because low volume of sample coverage. However, it is still essential to give emphasis on mother tongue at foundational stage of learning both at institutional and home level.

The study also found willingness of parents to support their children's education but they face various challenges such as limited literacy skills, lack of teaching resources, and competing household responsibilities that hinder their active participation. Further, children primarily engage in self-learning was the absolute attention of the study. Eventually, the study recommends community-driven interventions, parental capacity-building, and multilingual educational resources especially for tribal context. In line with NEP-2020, NIPUN Bharat, and NCF-FS 2022, there is a need to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment through joint effort and collaborations.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCE:

- Anene, G.U. (2005). Home Environment and the Academic Performance of a Child, *Journal of Home Economics Research*, 6(1), 99-100.
- Anders Y., Rossbach H. G., Weinert S., Ebert S., Kuger S., Lehl S., Von-Maurice J. (2012). Home and preschool learning environments and their relations to the development of early numeracy skills. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 27(2), 231-244. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2011.08.003>.
- Akrofi, O. (2020). Academic Achievement of Primary School Pupils: Investigating Home Environment Factors Contributing to Low Academic Performance. *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 1 (1), 49-57.
- Belsky J., Vandell L., Burchinal M., Clarke-Stewart A., Mc Cartney K., Owen T. (2007). Are there long-term effects of child care? *Child Development*, 78(2), 681-701. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2007.01021.x>
- Dietzman, T. M. (2002). The role of parental support in the home environment and student academic achievement, Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for The Masters of Science - School Guidance and Counseling at The Graduate College University of Wisconsin-Stout
- Epstein, J. (2001). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Karali Y., Aydemir H., Palancoglu O. V. (2022). Examining the factors affecting Turkey's 4th-grade mathematics achievement according to TIMMS 2019 final report: The factors affecting Turkey's 4th-grade mathematics achievement. *International Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 14(1), 424-454. <https://ijci.wcci-international.org/index.php/IJCI/article/download/868/444>
- Ministry of Education. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://www.education.gov.in>
- Ministry of Education. (2021). *NIPUN Bharat: National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy*. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://nipunbharat.education.gov.in>
- Ministry of Education. (2021). *Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) 2020-21*. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://udiseplus.gov.in>
- National Council of Educational Research and Training. (2022). *National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) 2022*. NCERT, Government of India. Retrieved from <https://ncert.nic.in>
- National Council of Educational Research and Training. (2023). *National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023*. NCERT, Government of India. Retrieved from <https://ncert.nic.in>
- Skinner, E. A., & Wellborn, J. G. (1994). Coping during childhood and adolescence: A motivational perspective. In D. Featherman, R. Lerner & M. Perlmutter (Eds.) *Life span development and behaviour*. pp. 91-133. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Save the Children. (2013). *Emergent Literacy & Math at Home: Training of Trainers (TOT)*. Save the Children.
- Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner. (2011). *Census of India 2011*. Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Retrieved from <https://censusindia.gov.in>