

Review Article

An Economic Impact of Educational Policies among Marginalized Groups in India

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ABSTRACT

The story of Indian education is one of quantitative progress but conspicuous failures in quality. After six decades, India has made notable improvement in the gross and net enrolment ratio and achieved universal enrolment in lower primary education. School attendance improved substantially since the mid-1990 especially among girls. Hence, this research paper mainly focus on to analyse the rural net attendance ratio by social groups and main religious groups in India, to review of policies and programmes related to school education and to analyse the proportion dalits children enrolment in schools. This study uses the secondary data from National Sample Survey Organization, Ministry of Human Resource Development Reports, India Rural Development Report and national Family Health Survey. Primarily major findings of this study about 28 per cent of rural primary school age children attend private schools. Every 100 children enroll first standard about 30 drop out before reaching class V and more than 40 before reaching class VIII. This study highlights to Attendance of public school teacher is low and even teachers who attend often do not teach. Finally, provisionally given recommendations of this study on priority give to girls education, skill development and financial assistance for livelihood support to most vulnerable people, Government of India should be taken an action to ensure to the quality of education given to all the sector of the society and Governments must to be establishing to new skill based training center for Girls in all regions of the country.

Keywords: Educational Policies, Marginalized Groups, Economic Impact, Inclusive Education, Policy Analysis, Social Equity, Economic Development, Access to Education

INTRODUCTION

India's education policies have largely been geared towards increasing school enrolment. Universal elementary education as enshrined in the Constitution's Directive Principles of State Policy. But, while they urged the government to provide free and compulsory education to all children until age 14, the Directive Principles are not binding. In 1976, education was transferred from the state list to the concurrent list through a Constitutional amendment, with the objective of promoting meaningful educational partnerships between the central and state government. The National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1986 was an important landmark with its emphasis on universal enrolment in elementary education. More recently, universal elementary education was reinforced with the 86th Constitutional Amendment 2002 and the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) 2009, which recognized elementary education as a fundamental right. Since the 1980's the Government of India has initiated a number of programme like operator blackboard, district primary education programme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and mid-day meal scheme to achieve enrolment in schools.

Central and state government expenditure on education, which approached 3.5 per cent of GDP in the 2000's backed these policies and schemes, although spending continues to fall short of the 6 per cent of GDP recommended by the Kothari Commission in 1966 and again by the Central Advisory Board of Education in 2006. While central government expenditure has increased, state government spending which still accounts for 80 per cent of total public expenditure on education increased at a slower pace. Spending on education still varies greatly by state.

Review of Literature

The study conducted by Prof. Jensen (2012) government improved job opportunities and increased returns on higher secondary education may have driven higher female attendance, as labour market opportunities have been found to reduce the probability of women getting married or having children young as they opt for further schooling, post-school training or join the labour market. The study by Prof. Tilak (2006) although the government offers free elementary education and a few other incentives, students in rural government schools must still pay for admission, stationery and books, travel, tuition, examinations and library

privileges, which may lead to higher dropout rates among disadvantaged social and religious groups.

World Bank sponsored research work done by Dr. Nambissan (2010) found that dalits and ST's are sometimes discriminated against in schools and, coupled with inadequate parental support in learning, lag behind, lose motivation and have higher dropout rates.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyse the rural net attendance ratio by social groups and main religious groups in India.
- To review of policies and programmes related to school education.
- To analyse the proportion of dalits children enrolment in schools.

Sources of Data

This study makes use of secondary data relating to sex-wise rural net attendance ratio, by social groups and main religious groups, various government welfare schemes in school education and proportion of children attending school level education by religion from National Sample Survey Organization, Ministry of Human Resource Development Reports, India Rural Development Report and National Family Health Survey.

Progress of School Education in Rural India

The story of Indian education is one of quantitative progress but conspicuous failures in quality. After six decades, India has made notable improvements in the gross and net enrollment ratio, and achieved universal enrolment in lower primary education. But universal enrollment for upper primary and other higher levels of education is still far away.

Net Attendance Ratio (NAR), seen a better indicator of children going to school, has improved substantially between the mid 1990's and late 2000's although school attendance is still far from universal in rural India. School Attendance of girls rose sharply during this period, resulting in reduced gender disparity at the elementary level. Although wide gender inequalities persist at higher levels, female attendance at the secondary and higher secondary school level has also increased significantly since 1995-1996.

Table - 1: Sex-wise Rural Net Attendance Ratio (in per cent)

Class	1995-1996			2009-2010			Increase (in Percent)		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
I-V	56	68	63	77	79	78	38	16	24
VI-VIII	32	44	39	56	55	55	75	25	41
IX-X	17	26	22	39	48	44	129	85	100
XI-XII	8	13	11	26	31	29	225	138	164

Source: NSS 64th Round.

Some states have successfully used incentives to increase female students' attendance at higher levels. For example, Bihar and Uttarakhand provide grants for bicycles to incentivize girls aged 14 and above. Tamil Nadu provide bicycle to all the students after completion of upper secondary education and gives laptop to higher secondary students. In this welfare programme has resulted shows 40 per cent increase to girl child enrolment in class IX, and a 10 per cent increase in the number of girls appearing for the class X board examination. Also, in 2008 the central government introduced a pilot conditional cash transfer scheme in 11 blocks to provide a significant cash transfer to families of girls that receive immunization, remain in school at least until class VIII and delay marriage until the age of 18. Many states also have similar schemes for instance, Delhi and Haryana provide transfers to girls through 'ladli' schemes conditional on completing class X. Tamil Nadu implemented special cash incentives to students has been given in the state from 2011-12. Under this scheme, Rs. 1500 per student those studying in X and XI standard and Rs. 2000 per student studying in XII standard in Government and Private aided schools. This resulted reduced to dropouts in all levels of education.

Table - 2: Rural Net Attendance Ratio by Social Groups and Main Religious Groups

Social Group	Primary		Upper Primary		Secondary		Higher Secondary	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
ST	82.4	78.7	58.8	54.9	25.5	25.9	12.7	8.5
SC	81.5	77.4	60.7	55.4	33.3	30	20.6	16.4
OBC	83.3	81	62	55.7	42.8	35.7	26.4	19.9
OTHERS	85.6	83.8	67.2	67.1	47.1	43.4	29.4	24.3
All	83.3	80.5	62.5	58.1	40	35	25	20

HINDU	84.2	81.5	64.5	60	41.7	36.9	26.2	19.09
MUSLIMS	78.7	74.9	48.7	45.3	26	23.5	10.9	11.3
CHRISTIANS	79.1	78.8	63.9	70.9	49.4	42.4	32.5	36.5
SIKHS	85.7	77.5	63.3	57.3	40.8	39.4	24.6	20.9

Source: IHDR (2011) Calculated from NSS 64th Round.

But wide attendance gaps persist across socio-economic groups. Although attendance among the socially disadvantaged groups has increased at the elementary school level, attendance rates of SC's and ST's diverge from that of other social groups at higher levels. Among the main religious group, rural Muslims have lowest attendance rates at all levels (IHDR 2001). Muslim children also make up the highest proportion of out-of-school children of all social and religious groups. The high dropout rates or low completion rates of rural school children is a major concern. Out of every 100 children who enroll in class I, about 30 per cent drop out before reaching class V and more than 40 before reaching class VIII. Fewer girls drop out of primary school than boys, but the reverse is true at the upper primary level. This is probably because girls in the upper primary age group are required to help with household chores.

The high dropout rates among children from socially disadvantaged communities are even more alarming. Almost 45 per cent of SC children and 55 per cent of ST children dropout of school before completing class VIII and this proportion increases to 60 per cent and 70 per cent, respectively, before reaching class X.

An Economic Review of Policies and Programmes

Many government initiatives have failed to yield satisfactory results because they rely too heavily on inputs rather than on identifying and focusing on the factors that determine learning outcomes. This section briefly evaluates the main government schemes and policies.

Right to Education Act

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009, is a landmark initiative that aims to universalize education for children between 6 and 14 years by improving school infrastructure and the number and quality of teachers. The RTE also aims to address social inequalities by reserving 25 per cent of private school seats for disadvantaged students, including Dalits, Tribes and low income groups. The RTE expects students to be placed in age appropriate classes, without considering individual abilities. Its provisions for

automatic promotions until class VIII, without examinations and without completing the syllabus within a defined time period, may actually result in children falling further behind as they move to higher classes.

The RTE mandates School Management Committees (SMCs), also called Village Education Committees (VECs) in some states, to monitor schools' performance and create an annual school development plan. Largely comprised of locally elected representatives and parents, these bodies are supposed to enhance school accountability and bring efficiency at the grassroot level. But with very little control over school expenditure, little decision-making power and low capacity, they have not been very successful.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

A flagship government programme, SSA has operated since 2001 to ensure free and compulsory education to children in the 6 to 14 years age group. SSA primarily aims to strengthen existing school infrastructure and bridge gender and social gaps in elementary education.

Between 2002 and 2009, primary school education improved substantially in terms of infrastructure, access, and enrolment. Primary school coverage improved across all states, although in the upper primary level, coverage decreased in Bihar, Haryana, and Rajasthan. Shortage of funds, delays in receiving them, and poor monitoring and supervision are constraints in the scheme's implementation. After RTE was implemented, SSA was modified and started operating as a vehicle of the implementation of RTE, with funds for setting up new schools, constructing classrooms, providing basic facilities in schools, and recruiting additional teachers. Since 2010, the share of schools with infrastructure such as boundary walls, functioning toilets, separate toilets for girls and libraries has increased, and schools have gradually been meeting the pupil-teacher ratio norms.

Mid-Day Meal (MOM) Scheme

The MDM scheme is an extension of the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, launched as a centrally sponsored scheme in 1995. Although some states initially served only dry rations, by 2005 all states provided cooked and balanced lunches to primary school students. By 2008 mid-day meal scheme was extended to elementary level in government and government-aided school. In the case of Tamil Nadu in MDM all government and aided schools are providing food to primary, secondary and higher secondary school level.

This scheme introduced by former chief minister of Tamil Nadu Mr. K. Kamaraj and Mr. M. G. Ramachandran bring this scheme to under government funded scheme.

MDM has the potential to overcome nutritional challenges. A common critique has been that the food served is deficient in key nutrients in many places, but most states have made progress on this front. For instance, Rajasthan, which served mainly wheat boiled with salt or sugar it is called 'ghoogri' in 2002, now provides balanced meal with fruit twice a week and even poorer states like Odisha serve eggs twice a week. In Madhya Pradesh the MDM has been found to improve the nutritional intake of children with the daily nutrient intake increasing by between 50 and 100 per cent which helped reduce protein, calorie and iron deficiency. One concern that remains is that infrastructure constraints persist apart from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, schools in most states lack a clean source of water, kitchen sheds and storerooms, making it difficult to ensure that the food served are hygienic. There are concerns relating to pilferage and adulteration of the food, and most states do not follow PDS guidelines, which sometimes compromises the quality of food and threatens the health and safety of children.

Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

As compared to elementary education, India has shown little progress in secondary education. The regional, gender and social disparity in access and participation are even greater than at the elementary school level. Against this backdrop, the RMSA scheme was launched in 2009 to make quality secondary education accessible and affordable to all children. The scheme aimed to raise gross secondary school enrolment from 52 per cent in 2005-2006 to 75 per cent within five years of implementation and universal access by 2017.

Under RMSA over 9,500 new schools were approved nearly 60,000 teachers were added and all teacher received in-service training. But so far the achievements have fallen far short of the goals. Similar to RTE, the RMSA is not outcome focused and the scheme lacks effective assessment mechanisms. It also does not address the variation among secondary school standards across states or create uniform, quality education in India. Secondary level learning outcomes, therefore, remain very poor.

Enrolment and Participation in Educational Institutions

The proportions of children on enroll or actually attending educational institutions is a good measure of current participation in and utilization of deduction opportunities. Table -3 presents a little more detailed account of levels of participation in educational opportunities.

Overall, seven out of 10 children in the age group of 6-18 attended schools during the school year 2006. As expected, the level of participation in schooling was higher at lower ages than at upper ages. For instance, while eight out of 10 children attended schools in the age group of 6-14, the corresponding ratio for age 15-18 was roughly 5:10. This implied a higher incidence of discontinuation or dropping out from school at the elementary level.

Table - 3 : Proportion of Children Attending School

Age (in years)	All	Muslims			Hindus			
		OBC's	Others	All Muslims	SC's	OBC's	Others	All Hindus
6-10	76.5	61.6	66.6	66.1	75.4	78.2	87.1	78.4
11-14	80.0	64.6	67.9	67.2	77.0	83.3	91.5	82.3
15-18	47.4	33.4	34.1	34.1	41.4	49.6	64.3	49.6

Source: National Family Health Survey, 2006. IIPS, Mumbai

At one extreme are the children of Hindu-other, of whom nine out of 10 in the age group of 6-14 attended schools, indicating that they are on the verge of attaining universal elementary education. On the other extreme stand the children of Muslim OBC who are least likely to attend school in the relevant age group, although even the children of Muslim other are not better-off as compared to the SCs, leave alone the Hindu OBC or Hindu other. This calculus, however, takes a heavy toll among Muslims as compared to others.

Recommendations of this Study

- ❖ The following recommendations are made on a pragmatic basis and with a view to provide a new base-line of action.
- ❖ Priority to give girls education, skill development and financial assistance for livelihood support to most vulnerable people.
- ❖ There is need for revision in the prevalent unit cost of scholarships and doing away norms and eligibility criteria (marks, domicile, income and caste certificates and two child norms) making them uniform scheme to all the marginalized people.
- ❖ Increase to the awareness about the interventions cut across beneficiaries and service providers about all government scheme related to education sector.
- ❖ Focus must be given on small towns, rural areas, remote villages and backward regions where Gross Enrollment in Higher Education is very low compared to the urban area.

- ❖ Government of India should be taken an action to ensure to the quality of education given to all the sector of the society.
- ❖ Governments must to be establishing to new skill based training center for Girls in all regions of the country.

Conclusion

The quality of school education is central to the progress of a nation. It has several benefits other than labour market productivity and the income it generates. It is through formal education that societies pass on knowledge and expertise from one generation to the next. Educated population offers a more valuable human capital base to the economy. A developed economy has the maximum concentration of jobs in the tertiary sector that requires highly skilled work force which has expertise in specific fields. It is need based on quality of school education. Strong education system help to more social benefits of through education include a more educated and better informed electorate, lower rates of crime and violence, lower rates of poverty, better health and nutrition, and generally a more smoothly functioning society. Formal education is instrumental in changing the perspectives and mindsets of people. It helps eradicate superstitions and augment scientific temper. It strengthens networks and institutions necessary for individual and group interactions. The immediate need is to address crucial problems in our education systems such as teacher absenteeism, teacher - pupil ratios, inadequate teaching material and infrastructural facilities, particularly in rural areas.

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