



Inter-State Educational Imbalance in India

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Abstract

India is a developing country striving for achieving the status of developed country. But many factors are there due which our country could not achieve that status even after many years of independence. Among them the major factor is education on which all other factors like economic, social, political etc. depend. Our country is educationally backward; one of the reasons of this backwardness is that the level of education is not uniform across all the states. Some states are educationally developed and some are backward. Therefore, in the present research article the author made an attempt to analyze the educational imbalance existing among the state.

Keywords: Education, developing country, educationally backward states, educationally developed states, educational imbalance.

Introduction

Imbalance is not a new problem to India as the whole world is facing the same. No country can evade from this problem. The problem of imbalance is not limited to any particular field, it covers the various fields like: urbanization, industrialization, distribution of income, education etc. But imbalance in any field more or less depends upon the education¹. Thus, it is needless to say that education is a pre-requisite of economic development as it increases the economic opportunities to masses and reduces social inequalities. So we can say that development in the field of education results development of the whole nation. Thus, government should take proper efforts for bringing the educational development in the country but the reality is that for a long time no proper efforts were taken by the government to minimize these imbalances. In the overall planning of the country little importance was given to education. The Commissions (Radhakrishnan Commission-1948 and Mudaliar Commission-1952) appointed by the government immediately after independence focused their attention only on a specific aspect of education; they did not considered the education as a whole. The University Education Commission (1948-49) put forward the numerous significant suggestions for the improvement of education at university level and Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) gave suggestion for the improvement and reorganization of education at secondary level. None of the Commissions gave suggestions for the wholesome development of education till 1964. Then Education Commission or Kothari Commission came in 1964 that considered the education as a composite whole and provided suggestions and recommendations for the development of education in all facets. The report of the Kothari Commission, presented in 1966, for the first time ever acknowledged the importance of education for the national development and emphasized the need for an educational revolution to meet the

purposes of a democratic and socialistic society. The Commission noted the uneven development of educational facilities across the country that gave rise to glaring imbalance of educational development in different parts of the country. Wide differences of educational development in the states as well as in the districts were found. Therefore, Commission made a special study for the year 1960-61 with a view to highlight the problem of regional imbalances of educational development in the country in order to adopt measures to eliminate these imbalances or to reduce them to the minimum².

Kothari Commission (1964-66) was the only Commission that reflected the entire spectrum of education, from its objectives to its financial aspects and submitted a detailed national educational plan for the next twenty years. That was the time when country was facing unfavorable socio-political and socio-economic climate. Thus, major changes given by Kothari Commission did not accepted by the government. That gave rise to many problems such as problems of access, quality, quantity, utility and financial outlay over the years. Then government adopted a new policy known as National Policy on Education-1986 to tackle such arising problems. One of the objectives of the policy was equalization of educational opportunity for the removal of educational imbalance. Since then government is making continuous efforts for educational development to reduce regional imbalances. No doubt, there has been a phenomenal expansion of educational facilities since independence; still there is a long way to go.

In the following tables a glimpse of the glaring inter-state disparity has been presented in terms of the educational factors: Literacy Rate, Growth of Educational Institutions, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Pupil-Teacher Ratio, and Expenditure on Education as percentage of GDP.

Analysis and Interpretation

The state-wise picture of literacy rates for the year 2011 (the latest available data) have been presented in table-1, which states that population of illiterates at state level, though reduced below forty, there still exists a wide variation in literacy rates across the states. The total literacy rate varies from 63.82 in Bihar to 93.91 in Kerala, whereas literacy rate for male varies from 73.39 in Bihar to 96.11 in Kerala and for female it varies from 53.33 in Bihar to 91.98 in Kerala. The bottom ranked states like Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttar Pradesh have more than thirty percent illiterates. On the other hand the top ranked states like Kerala, Lakshadweep and Mizoram are very

close of achieving the 100 percent literacy as illiteracy among these states is 8 or less than 8 percent. These states also have the highest literacy among male and female. The male literacy rate among these states varies from 96.11 to 73.39 and for female it varies from 91.98 to 53.33. Bihar has little better in female literacy than Rajasthan, thus rank second from bottom after Rajasthan. The gender gap in literacy is also not same in all the states. It is lowest in Meghalaya (3.39) followed by Kerala (4.04) and Mizoram (4.32), it is largest in Rajasthan (27.85) followed by Jharkhand (22.24), Chhattisgarh (20.86), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (20.53), Madhya Pradesh (20.51), Jammu and Kashmir (20.25), and Bihar (20.06).

Table-1
State-Wise Literacy Rate (2011)³

States/UTs	Total	Male	Female	Male-Female gap in Literacy
Andhra Pradesh	67.66	75.56	59.74	15.82
Arunachal Pradesh	66.95	73.69	59.57	14.12
Assam	73.18	78.81	67.27	11.54
Bihar	63.82	73.39	53.33	20.06
Chhattisgarh	71.04	81.45	60.59	20.86
Goa	87.40	92.81	81.84	10.97
Gujarat	79.31	87.23	70.73	16.50
Haryana	76.64	85.38	66.77	18.61
Himachal Pradesh	83.78	90.83	76.60	14.23
Jammu and Kashmir	68.74	78.26	58.01	20.25
Jharkhand	67.63	78.45	56.21	22.24
Karnataka	75.60	82.85	68.13	14.72
Kerala	93.91	96.02	91.98	4.04
Madhya Pradesh	70.63	80.53	60.02	20.51
Maharashtra	82.91	89.82	75.48	14.34
Manipur	79.85	86.49	73.17	13.32
Meghalaya	75.48	77.17	73.78	3.39
Mizoram	91.58	93.72	89.40	4.32
Nagaland	80.11	83.29	76.69	6.60
Orissa	73.45	82.40	64.36	18.04
Punjab	76.68	81.48	71.34	10.14
Rajasthan	67.06	80.51	52.66	27.85
Sikkim	82.20	87.29	76.43	10.86
Tamil Nadu	80.33	86.81	73.86	12.95
Tripura	87.75	92.18	83.15	9.03
Uttar Pradesh	69.72	79.24	59.26	19.98
Uttaranchal	79.63	88.33	70.70	17.63
West Bengal	77.08	82.67	71.16	11.51
Andaman and Nicobar Is	86.27	90.11	81.84	8.27
Chandigarh	86.43	90.54	81.38	9.16
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	77.65	86.46	65.93	20.53
Daman and Diu	87.07	91.48	79.59	11.89
Delhi	86.34	91.03	80.93	10.10
Lakshadweep	92.28	96.11	88.25	7.86
Pondicherry	86.55	92.12	81.22	10.90
INDIA	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Table-2
State-wise Growth of Recognized Educational Institutions (2009-10)^{4,5}

States/UTs	Total No. of Primary Schools	Total No. of Upper Primary Schools	Total No. of Sec. Schools	Total No. of Sr. Sec. Schools	Total No. of Colleges#	Total No. of Universities#
Andhra Pradesh	65932	15381	18163	4364	3985	39
Arunachal Pradesh	1841	871	190	117	16	2
Assam	31202	14133	5562	855	485	7
Bihar	43445	20696	2399	1837	642	17
Chhattisgarh	35344	15147	2104	2544	634	13
Goa	1252	444	376	82	54	1
Gujarat	17779	24366	5791	3508	1824	27
Haryana	13073	3439	3493	3278	850	16
Himachal Pradesh	11301	4921	1413	1674	313	11
Jammu and Kashmir	15446	8877	2216	889	328	9
Jharkhand	19818	9996	1429	225	231	10
Karnataka	26254	32041	12453	3644	2942	34
Kerala	6796	3062	3388	2380	967	11
Madhya Pradesh	97800	39227	6352	5161	2022	19
Maharashtra	49101	27271	19711	967	4303	41
Manipur	2579	792	704	120	76	2
Meghalaya	6618	2259	676	124	64	5
Mizoram	1782	1313	521	95	28	2
Nagaland	1662	465	337	69	55	3
Orissa	52972	22209	7799	1144	1086	14
Punjab	16954	9110	2741	2380	853	11
Rajasthan	49538	38889	12460	6675	2354	36
Sikkim	749	244	126	59	15	5
Tamil Nadu	27037	9966	3030	3518	2246	53
Tripura	2379	1139	454	316	33	2
Uttar Pradesh	132403	51948	7889	8547	3827	44
Uttaranchal	15644	4296	1087	1352	361	15
West Bengal	73100	4296	65	9391	850	20
Andaman and Nicobar Is*	207	67	45	53	6	-
Chandigarh	25	18	64	61	25	2
Dadra and Nagar Haveli*	170	127	25	9	1	-
Daman and Diu*	50	24	19	9	4	-
Delhi	2586	583	474	1350	243	20
Lakshadweep*	23	10	3	12	3	-
Pondicherry	300	118	167	108	86	2
INDIA	823162	367745	123726	66917	31812	493

* Figures were not available for the UTs

State-wise growth of educational institutions is presented in Table 2. It is observed from the table that growth of educational institution is not uniform across the country; it varies from state to state. It is noticeable that only 5 states, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa, out of 35 have more than 50 thousand primary schools, out of which Uttar Pradesh is on the top having more than one hundred thousand primary schools. Among the remaining 30 states, about 16 states, which include the states such as Kerala, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Pondicherry etc., have less than seven thousand primary schools. All union territories are poor performer in the growth of primary schools. In case of upper primary schools, only Uttar Pradesh has more than 50 thousand schools. All the remaining states have less than forty thousand schools, among them about twenty four states, including the states such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Kerala, Mizoram etc., show less than ten thousand schools. The UTs, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Daman and Diu, Chandigarh and Lakshadweep show poor performance in the growth of upper primary schools as they have less than 70 upper primary schools in their region. The growth of secondary schools is similar to the growth of primary and upper primary school. There are only four states, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka that show the highest growth of secondary schools among all the states and in these states, the number of secondary schools varies from as high as 19711 to as low as 12453. All the remaining states have less than ten thousand schools at secondary level. Out of which about 16 states have less than hundred secondary schools. These states include Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Pondicherry and all the union territories. In case of senior secondary schools, no state shows more than ten thousand schools. The number of senior secondary varies from as high as 9391 to as low as 9. Seventeen out of 35 states have more than one thousand schools while among the remaining states 9 states have less than hundred senior secondary schools, these states includes Mizoram, Goa, Nagaland, Chandigarh, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar Island, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. In case of higher educational institutions, the number of colleges in the states varies from 4303 to 1 and number of universities varies from 53 to 1. The states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa have more than one thousand colleges; while, in 26 states out 35 have less than 100 colleges in number. In the union territories, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Dadra and Nagar Haveli, it is less than ten in number. In case of universities, the states of Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Gujarat, West Bengal and Delhi are performing better in the growth of universities among all the states and union territories as there are more than twenty universities. Among the remaining states, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Chandigarh, Pondicherry and Arunachal Pradesh have only two universities in number, while Goa has only one university.

Table 3 depicts that the performance of the states in getting more and more students to enroll is quite impressive. Majority of the states at all levels: primary, upper primary and sec/sr. secondary have achieved enrolment ratio above the national average. At primary level, most of the states have achieved 100 percent enrolment, among them Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh have enrolled more than 165 percent students at primary schools. Bihar, the poor performer in literacy rate, recorded the enrolment ratio above the national average (115.55) with gross enrolment ratio of 117.83, while Kerala, the best literacy performer, recorded the enrolment ratio below national average with gross enrolment ratio of 93.65. There are only 13 states out of 35 that recorded the enrolment ratio below the national average, the bottom five of them are Chandigarh (62.75), Andaman and Nicobar Island (73.67), Daman and Diu (79.28), Lakshadweep (82.32) and Haryana (90.10). They were also at the bottom (except Haryana) in the growth of primary schools. At upper primary level, majority of the states (22 out of 35) have registered enrolment ratio above the national average (81.52) and 8 of them have more than 100 percent enrolment. In these states Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Kerala and Uttaranchal are on the top with the values ranges from 113.41 to 104.33. The bottom most states at upper primary level that recorded enrolment ratio below 70 percent are Bihar (55.46), Nagaland (59.89), Jharkhand (60.65), Lakshadweep (63.67) and Chandigarh (64.96). In case of sec/sr.sec level, more than half of the states have enrolment ratio above the national average i.e. 49.26. The highest enrolment ratio at sec/sr.sec level observed is 79.11 by Himachal Pradesh (highest gross enrolment ratio at upper primary level too) followed by Lakshadweep (74.87), Kerala (73.89) and Pondicherry (72.99). While the lowest enrolment ratio is observed in the states: Jharkhand (17.64), Nagaland (22.85) and Bihar (25.46). In these states less than 30 percent students are enrolled.

Table-4 gives the state-wise figures for pupil-teacher ratio in 2010. It is observed from the table that at primary level, most of the states (26 out of 35) are following the norms of having 40 or below 40 pupil-teacher ratio. Among such states, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar, Mizoram, and Karnataka show less than 20 students per teacher. These states also show 100 percent enrolment except Andaman and Nicobar Island. It means there are enough teachers. On the other hand, in four states Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, the ratio of pupil-teacher is more than 50. While in Bihar and Jharkhand (enrolment ratio above national average i.e. 115.47) it is more than 70. That gives rise to the need of recruiting more teachers to bring qualitative improvement in education. The situation at other levels, upper primary, secondary or senior secondary is not much different. Majority of the states at each level (29 at upper primary, 31 at secondary and 28 at senior secondary) have pupil-teacher ratio 40 or below 40. At upper primary level, 10 states out of 29 have pupil-teacher ratio below 20. These states are Mizoram, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, Tripura,

Meghalaya and Pondicherry. They all have 100 percent enrolment ratio except in Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry where it is quite low. The remaining six states, at upper primary level, with high pupil-teacher ratio are Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Chandigarh and Haryana. Among them Uttar Pradesh is the poor performer with pupil-teacher ratio of 78. It is also poor performer in enrolment ratio but is top performer in the growth of upper primary schools. Thus, in Uttar Pradesh there is a lack of teachers and number of upper primary schools that affect the quality of education in the state. At secondary level, all the states are

performing well having pupil-teacher ratio below 40 except Jharkhand, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal where this ratio is above 50. In the well performing states Sikkim, Lakshadweep, Mizoram and Jammu and Kashmir have pupil teacher ratio less than 15. These states also have the same performance at senior secondary level except Lakshadweep where the ratio is 33. At senior secondary level, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Daman and Diu and Gujarat are the poor performing states. Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal are the worst among them with pupil-teacher ratio more than 60.

Table-3
State-Wise Gross Enrolment Ratio (2009-2010)⁴

States/UTs	Gross Enrolment Ratio of I-V class	Gross Enrolment Ratio of VI-VIII class	Gross Enrolment Ratio of IX-XII class
Andhra Pradesh	98.16	77.65	55.41
Arunachal Pradesh	166.77	101.2	55.21
Assam	92.89	68.8	31.24
Bihar	117.83	55.46	25.46
Chhattisgarh	123.46	84.15	40.44
Goa	92.59	79.24	55.96
Gujarat	120.42	86.51	47.92
Haryana	90.10	78.86	62.56
Himachal Pradesh	107.69	113.41	79.11
Jammu and Kashmir	111.41	93.2	52.98
Jharkhand	157.83	60.65	17.64
Karnataka	104.71	89.34	57.06
Kerala	93.65	104.77	73.89
Madhya Pradesh	149.67	101.87	51.66
Maharashtra	103.66	89.32	64.02
Manipur	186.01	103.25	55.12
Meghalaya	172.01	85.92	30.06
Mizoram	168.15	97.93	55.25
Nagaland	99.27	59.89	22.85
Orissa	118.84	83.74	39.04
Punjab	108.09	91.84	48.94
Rajasthan	117.19	84.38	46.64
Sikkim	155.34	78.64	37.58
Tamil Nadu	114.79	113.22	65.65
Tripura	145.29	93.24	47.39
Uttar Pradesh	110.42	70.25	53.16
Uttaranchal	110.12	104.33	69.7
West Bengal	125.59	83.59	41.23
Andaman and Nicobar Is	73.67	75.41	55.62
Chandigarh	62.75	64.96	50.61
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	107.45	96.16	45.69
Daman and Diu	79.28	73.17	45.67
Delhi	121.1	109.01	69.63
Lakshadweep	82.32	63.67	74.87
Pondicherry	98.83	96.40	72.99
INDIA	115.47	81.52	49.26

Table-4
State-Wise Pupil-Teacher Ratio (2009-2010)⁴

States/UTs	Pre-Primary/Primary/Jr.Basic Schools	Upper Primary Schools	Secondary Schools	Sr. Secondary Schools
Andhra Pradesh	32	27	29	34
Arunachal Pradesh	21	23	21	27
Assam	28	21	22	26
Bihar	80	53	59	33
Chhattisgarh	29	23	39	21
Goa	26	29	18	20
Gujarat	30	36	29	41
Haryana	52	41	26	25
Himachal Pradesh	15	13	23	22
Jammu and Kashmir	23	15	14	14
Jharkhand	73	55	60	47
Karnataka	18	29	24	37
Kerala	30	26	27	27
Madhya Pradesh	41	32	32	24
Maharashtra	33	32	34	69
Manipur	33	22	27	23
Meghalaya	45	18	26	21
Mizoram	18	9	13	14
Nagaland	20	15	24	31
Orissa	33	27	22	16
Punjab	35	14	29	37
Rajasthan	44	28	22	29
Sikkim	14	15	8	15
Tamil Nadu	43	49	38	43
Tripura	25	16	25	26
Uttar Pradesh	67	78	57	64
Uttaranchal	24	27	18	15
West Bengal	34	33	51	62
Andaman and Nicobar Is	15	14	16	19
Chandigarh	23	45	38	26
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	40	33	19	29
Daman and Diu	44	27	18	45
Delhi	40	30	33	32
Lakshadweep	25	14	12	33
Pondicherry	21	19	23	27
INDIA	42	34	30	39

Table-5
State-Wise Expenditure on Education as percentage of GSDP (2010)⁶

States/UTs	% of Education and Training Budget of Education and Other Department to Total GSDP
Andhra Pradesh	2.62
Arunachal Pradesh	6.04
Assam	5.51
Bihar	5.47
Chhattisgarh	4.09
Goa	2.75
Gujarat	1.53
Haryana	2.86
Himachal Pradesh	5.25
Jammu and Kashmir	5.71
Jharkhand	3.97
Karnataka	2.92
Kerala	3.1
Madhya Pradesh	3.41
Maharashtra	2.45
Manipur	5.84
Meghalaya	4.9
Mizoram	8.49
Nagaland*	-
Orissa	3.84
Punjab	2.07
Rajasthan	3.68
Sikkim	11.02
Tamil Nadu	2.4
Tripura	5.95
Uttar Pradesh	3.79
Uttaranchal	5.98
West Bengal	2.82
Andaman and Nicobar Is	6.78
Chandigarh	1.87
Dadra and Nagar Haveli*	-
Daman and Diu*	-
Delhi	1.87
Lakshadweep*	-
Pondicherry	3.93
IINDIA	3.85

* Figures were not available for the states

Table 5 presents state-wise expenditure on education for the year 2010. It is observed from the table that Sikkim is the only state that expands the highest on education among all the states. It expands about 11 percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The next is Mizoram that expand more than 8 percent of the GSDP followed by Andaman and Nicobar Islands (6.78) and Arunachal Pradesh (6.04). Rest of the states expand less than 6 percent on education out of which, Gujarat (1.53) is on the bottom followed by Chandigarh (1.87) and Delhi (1.87)

Implications

Government has made several efforts for removing illiteracy in the country like: National Policy of Education -1986, that emphasized on eradicating illiteracy in the country particularly in the age group of 15-35, the National Literacy Mission (1988) making efforts to involve all sections of the community in the literacy strive, the Programme of Action (POA)-1992 under the Education Policy 1986 envisaged free and compulsory elementary education of satisfactory quality to all children up to the age of 14 years. Apart from this the “right to education” Act which was incorporated in the Indian Constitution as a fundamental right in 2000 and enacted on 4 August 2009 describes the modalities of the significance of free and compulsory education for 6-14 years age group children. So, not only the government (Central or State), but people themselves should come forward to perform this national duty for bringing literacy drive to the top in a mass movement.

Central as well as state government should make efforts to control the quality of education. Though, government can't alone fulfill the demand of education of the growing population, private enterprise helps in fulfilling this demand of the population but quality of education should be maintained by the government as well as private enterprise along with the quantity.

The states where growth of educational institutions is low, more institutions (primary to higher as required) of quality education should be opened there in order to minimize the disparity between the states.

High enrolment ratio does not mean better education because this enrolment may be on record but not in actual. In this respect government should enquire the success of such schemes like sarva siksha abhiyan, mid-day meal, residential schools for girls and boys, scheme of ICT at scheme, free ship, free uniform, free books⁷ etc which were initiated by the government for retaining the students in the schools and minimizing the dropout rate.

As we know high pupil-teacher ratio deteriorates the quality of education, so government should appoint more teachers in to reduce the number of students per teachers. This appointment should not be only for advertisement but for actual appointment and for fulfilling the demand of teachers where it is lacking.

More money should be expanded on education sector as education affect the all other sectors like economic, social, political etc. But government should keep check on the use of this money means how and where this money is going to be used by the schools.

Conclusion

India has made significant achievements in the field of education during the past few years. Despite substantial progress in the development of education, the education sector in India faces several challenges. The level of education across the states and UTs is not uniform. There is a significant disparity among the states on the measure of educational considered in the present study. Some states are performing well while others are still educationally backward.

The states like Bihar, Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh are not performing well in literacy rate; they also have the same performance on the measure of other educational variables. Though, they are showing good performance in the growth of educational institutions and gross enrolment ratio but they still come under the educationally backward states. The reason of high growth of educational institutions may be quantitative expansion of educational institutions by private enterprises but this quantitative expansion is deteriorating the quality of education in these states. And the reason of high gross enrolment ratio in these states may be the enrolment of underage and overage children and secondly after getting enrolled in the schools may leave the school before completing that level.

On analyzing the pupil-teacher ratio it was found that most of the educationally backward states have high pupil-teacher ratio

(i.e. more than 40 percent which is considered as standard PTR) which also adversely affect the quality of education.

If we talk about the percentage of GDP expand on the education sector in all the states, it also not uniform across the states. The states performing well in literacy rate are receiving low GDP as compare to the poor performing states. This shows that the states receiving high GDP may not expand the money in the right way where it is required and remain poor performing states.

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