



Development of school education in India: a look at statistics for upper primary school education

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ABSTRACT

Education is one of very important component of development. Progress of any country principally reflects with literacy level of the population. The Government of India has assigned high priority to the education sector not only to achieve the Univerlisation of Elementary Education by 2010 but also to improve the quality of education at all levels. Some of the initiatives such as District Primary Education Programme (1994), the Mid Day Meal Scheme (1995) and the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2001) have led some positive impact in elementary education, specifically in rural areas. But most of the work or research carried out for primary school education and educationist or researchers concentrated on primary education only. Therefore it is an attempt a look out to the development of upper primary school education in India.

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Introduction

Education is one of very important component of development. Progress of any country principally reflects with literacy level of the population. After independence of India in 1947, education became the responsibility of the States and Central Government's. It is jointly responsible for the formulation of education policy and planning. National Policy of Education (1986) and revised Programme of Action (1992) envisioned that free and compulsory education should be provided for all children up to 14 years of age before the commencement of 21st century. Government of India made a commitment that by 2000, 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will be spent on education, out of which half would be spent on the Primary education. Further, Elementary education being made a fundamental right by the 83 Constitutional Amendment, and the Supreme Court's insistence on States to provide hot cooked meals in schools, are improving enrolments, especially among girls. The Government of India has assigned high priority to the education sector not only to achieve the Universalisation of Elementary Education by 2010 but also to improve the quality of education at all levels. Also due to policy of economic liberalization and globalization it becomes all the more necessary to improve the quality of human capital to face the new challenges and competition in the world of work (NCERT, 2006). Some of the initiatives such as District Primary Education Programme (1994), the Mid Day Meal Scheme (1995) and the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2001) have led some positive impact in elementary education, specifically in rural areas. The 86th Amendment of the Indian constitution makes education a fundamental right for all children aged 6-14 years. The access to pre-school education for children under 6 years of age was excluded from the provisions, and the supporting legislation has not yet been passed.

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) is a constitutional provision and a national commitment in India. Universalisation implies educating all children upto the age of 14 which is equivalent to completion of upper primary level of

education. Over the years, efforts by the government towards achieving the goal of UEE were focused more on the primary stage than on the upper primary level of education. With the expansion of enrollment at the primary level of education, the pressure for expansion of the upper primary level of education has increased. Universalisation of upper primary education in India is normally discussed in terms of enrolling and retaining all children belonging to the age group 11 to 14. This seems more to be a desirable goal to be achieved in the long run than a realisable target at the present levels of development of primary education. Enrollment is a function of the relevant age group at the primary level of education.

However, enrolment in upper primary schools is more a function of primary education completion rates than a function of the relevant age group. It is logical to argue that all children in the relevant age group (11 to 14) cannot be enrolled in upper primary classes unless they complete primary level of education. In other words, all relevant age group children can be provided upper primary education only when all children of the primary school going age group are enrolled, retained and successfully complete the primary stage of education. Since primary education is not yet universalised, this implies that universalisation of upper primary education means providing upper primary education for all children who have successfully completed primary level of education. (Varghese and Mehta, 1998).

It is observed that most of the research work carried out for primary school education and also educationist or researchers concentrated on primary education only. A very few attempt has been made for the study of upper primary school education. It is therefore an attempt a look out to the progress and development of upper primary education in India. Keeping these factors in view, this study attempts to make a realistic assessment of the extent of provisions required to universalise upper primary education in India.

The present study is especially discussed on the change and development in the upper primary school education in India. The study also focused on the contemporary data on some key parameters of school education in India. In the upper primary school category¹, the highest class either VI, VII or VIII. In the study, the data has been taken from secondary source of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) - School Education Surveys Report. The data has been culled from all seven survey reports conducted by NCERT time to time. The period of survey conducted by NCERT: First Survey (1957) only survey conducted by Ministry of Education, GOI; Second Survey (1964); Third Survey (1972); Fourth Survey (1978); Fifth Survey (1986); Sixth Survey (1993) and Seventh Survey (2002). The data on status of upper primary schools according to area and type of schools, type of school with number of schools having upper primary stage, enrolment in school: area wise, management wise and socially backward community wise, upper primary schooling facilities in rural habitations according population slab etc. has been collected from the Survey Reports (National Council of Education Research and Training 2005).

Progress of Upper Primary School

The stage transition ratios from primary to upper primary levels of education indicate that they are very high in most of the states. Further expansion of primary education will have a demand for expansion of upper primary education even when transition ratios remain the same. In certain cases expansion of primary education may be accompanied by an increase in the inter-stage transition ratios. Under such circumstances, the demand for expansion of upper primary education system may be rather high. In states which are educationally more advanced, the primary stage completion rates and inter-stage transition rates are nearing 100%. In states which are educationally less advanced, the primary stage completion rates are not yet nearing 100% but inter-stage transition rates are very close to 100%.

States and districts in India belong to different levels of development of primary education. States like Kerala have almost achieved universal enrollment and retention at the primary levels of education. But there are states which are educationally backward where universal enrollment at the primary level of education is still a distant dream. Therefore, it is not perhaps desirable to have a uniform strategy and the same level of investments to achieve the target of universalisation of upper primary education. Needless to add, the institutional arrangements for universalisation of upper primary level of education will vary depending upon the level of development of primary education (Varghese and Mehta, 1998).

Fifth Survey² had revealed that there were 139,016 upper primary schools in the country in 1986. This number increased

to 162,805 at the time of Sixth survey³, registering an increase of 17.11%. According to the Seventh All India School Education Survey⁴ (7th AISES), number of upper primary schools has increased to 245,322 that show increase of 0.68% in comparison to the Sixth Survey. Out of total upper primary schools, 79.06% are located in rural areas and 20.94% in urban areas. In comparison to the Sixth Survey, growth of 50.06% has been recorded in upper primary schools of rural areas where as in urban areas the same is 53.09%. Percentage of boys and Girls upper primary schools recorded 3.26 and 4.60 respectively. 92.14% upper primary schools provide Co-education. *Table 1* gives the status of upper primary schools according to area and type of school.

Number of boy's schools has reduced while girl's schools has increased by 12.65% in comparison to the Sixth Survey. During the period between Sixth and Seventh Surveys, upper primary schools providing co-education has increased by 58.22%.

In our schooling system, upper primary stage⁵ education is available in secondary and higher secondary schools also. *Table 2* shows the schools of different categories having upper primary stage. It is observed that 3,37,980 schools have upper primary stage of education. Of the total schools with Upper primary stage, 60,794 secondary schools and 31,864 higher secondary schools have upper primary stage facility also.

Management of Schools

Because of initiative taken by State and Central Government, the large number of schools has been started during last two decades. In this exercise, the NGOs and private organizations (societies) are also cooperates to the Government by opening new schools in urban as well as rural areas to provide education to the children.

The number of upper primary schools run by Government⁶ and local bodies⁷ are 1,11,305 (45.37%) and 66,699 (27.19%),

³ Sixth Survey (Sixth All India Education Survey) was conducted in 1993 by National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi with support of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

⁴ Seventh All India School Education Survey (7th AISES), was seventh in the series, renamed as All India School Education Survey, conducted in 2002 in collaboration with National Informatics Centre and Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

⁵ *School Stage: Combination of classes for different school stages differs from state to state. Various combinations of classes of the school system constitute primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary stages. Generally in most of the states the structure is as follows:*

Classes I-IV/I-V constitute primary stage;

Classes V-VII/VI-VII/VI-VIII constitute upper primary stage;

Classes VIII-X/IX-X constitute secondary stage;

Classes XI-XII as higher secondary stage.

Some of the States and Union Territories have provision for junior colleges, independent Pre-University Classes (PUC), intermediate colleges and degree colleges having the higher secondary classes. In this survey, these classes/colleges will be considered along with the higher secondary stage.

⁶ *Government : A Government School is that which is run by the State Government or Central Government or Public Sector Undertaking or an Autonomous Organisation completely financed by the Government.*

¹ School category will be determined as per state pattern on the basis of the highest class in a school. For example, in a state where classes I – V, VI-VIII, IX-X and XI- XII form primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary stages respectively, the category of the school will be decided as follows:

• A school having highest class either VI, VII or VIII will be termed as *Upper Primary school category*.

² Fifth Survey (Fifth All India Education Survey) was conducted in 1986 by National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi with support of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India.

respectively. Government and Local Bodies cover 72.56% of the total upper primary schools. Percentage of schools run by Private Aided and Private Unaided managements⁸ are 7.37% and 20.07% respectively. In rural areas, Government and Local Bodies managements together have 81.76% schools. 12.41% upper primary schools are private aided and only 5.83 private un-aided. *Table-3* shows the number of upper primary schools under different management in Seventh Survey.

In comparison to the Sixth Survey maximum growth has been recorded in the private un-aided upper primary schools, which is 174.52% where as minimum growth, 16.55% in private aided schools. Growth in upper primary schools run by government and local body are 48.81% and 22.26%, respectively.

Enrolments in Classes VI-VIII

Enrolment means the number of pupils or students enrolled in a particular class (viz., primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary stages) of school education, regardless of age.

In Seventh All India School Education Survey, it has been noted that the total enrolment in upper primary school education in the country is 200820513 out of this, the girls enrolment at different stages of the schools is 46,845,845. The share of girls' enrolment has been analyzed as 44.00% of the total enrolment. In rural and urban areas, the total enrolment recorded as 30,566,950 and 16,278,295 at upper primary schools whereas the girls' enrolment in these areas has found to be 13,029,667 and 7,052,632 respectively (*Table-4*). The percentage of girls' enrolment in the total enrolment in these areas has 42.63% and 43.33% respectively.

Upper primary schools operate under different managements in India. A pattern that can be generalised in case of enrolment is that the share of enrollment in aided schools is consistently higher than their share in the total number of schools. This is not true in schools under other types of management, especially so in case of un-aided schools. During our discussions in the schools, it was found that many parents prefer aided private schools over other schools for many reasons. Many parents feel that teaching-learning process is better in aided private schools than in government managed schools. Aided private school does not charge high fees as in un-aided schools and hence aided schools are affordable from the financing point of view.

There are 14,365,053 and 6,816,812 children enrolled in Central/State Government and Local Bodies schools respectively where 41.82% and 47.06% girls are enrolled in these schools at upper primary stage. In Private Aided and Unaided schools, 13,055,142 and 8,585,633 children are enrolled and share of girls in these schools are 45.54% and 40.01% respectively.

Enrolment of Socially Backward Community children

⁷ *Local Body:* A Local Body School is that which is run by Panchayati Raj and local body institution such as Zilla Parishad, Municipal Corporation, Municipal Committee, Notified Area Committee and Cantonment Board.

⁸ A Private Aided School is that which is run by an individual or a private organisation and receives grant from government or local body and a Private Unaided School is that which is managed by an individual or a private organisation and does not receive any grant either from government or local body.

The Socially Backward Community is a disadvantage group in the country. Government of India launches number of schemes/programmes to lift the people of the community. But still development of these communities is very slow. Only 19.42% of Scheduled Castes (SC) children enrolled at upper primary schools in rural areas where as 9.02% Scheduled Tribes (ST) and 11.07% EBMC children are enrolled in rural area school. In urban areas, the situation is very poor, only 15.34% of SC children and 3.66% of ST children are enrolled in upper schools. In case of EBMC⁹, the situation is slight difference but still very few numbers of children are enrolled in the schools.

Upper Primary Schooling facilities in Rural Habitations¹⁰

In this section, growth of schooling facilities at upper primary stage has been discussed. In order to achieve universalisation of elementary education, it is necessary that an elementary school is made available to all children within convenient walking-distance. Percentage of habitations and population with schooling facilities at upper primary stage in different All India Education Surveys is shown in *Table 6*.

Habitations with Population slab "Below 500"

This slab has 7,53,091 habitations, which cover population 16,23,55,922. Out of total, 5.78% habitations, which account for 7.66% rural population, have upper primary stage within them, while 76.59% habitations with 78.80% of the population, have upper primary stage within a distance of three kilometers.

Habitations with Population Slab "500-999"

There are 2,45,781 habitations with population 17,12,50,000 in this slab. Of these, 20.72% habitations, comprising 21.82% population, have upper primary stage within habitation and 84.71% habitations representing 84.96% population, have this facility within a distance of three kilometers.

Habitations with Population Slab "1000-1999"

This slab has 1,39,987 habitations which, constitutes 11.57% of the total number of habitations. The population in this slab is 18,98,97,783, which is 24.43 % of the total rural population in the slab.

Out of total, 43.38% habitations, which represent 45.04% of the population in the slab, have schooling facilities at the upper primary stage within them and 90.35% habitations covering 90.35% population of the slab have the same facility within a distance of three kilometers.

⁹ EBMC – Educationally Backward Minority Community (Muslims)

¹⁰ *Rural Habitation:* (a) A habitation is a distinct cluster of houses existing in a compact and contiguous manner; with a local name; and its population should not be less than 25 in plain areas and not less than 10 in hilly/desert/sparsely populated areas. In case there exists more than one such cluster of houses in a village, they will not be treated as separate habitations unless the convenient walking distance between them is more than 200 meters.

(b) Any habitation with population less than 25 in plain areas or with population less than 10 in hilly/desert/sparsely populated areas may not be given a separate status of a 'habitation' and its population be included in the nearest habitation of the same village. But this condition will not apply to a village with one habitation only.

(c) A village may have one or more than one habitation, except when it is a deserted/Bechirag village

Habitations with Population Slab “1000-1999”

There are 1,39,87 habitations in this slab among which 60,727 (43.38) habitations covering 45.04% population have priority stage education facility within the habitations of the residence while the percentage of habitation and population served within them or up to distance of three kilometers are 90.05 and 90.35 respectively.

Habitations with Population Slab “2000-4999”

This slab has 60,424 habitations with population 17,19,01,726. It is observed that 66.69% habitation accounting for 68.61% of the population of the slab, have upper primary stage within them, while 95.05% habitations covering 95.38% population, have this facility within a distance of three kilometers.

Habitations with Population Slab “5000 and above”

The population slab 5000 and above which contains only .85% of the total habitations accounting for 10.53 of the rural total population. 98.23 per cent of the total habitations, which account for 98.52 percent of the population, have schooling facilities at the upper primary stage within a distance of three kilometers.

Conclusion:

On the basis of above analysis and discussions on some key parameters of development of upper primary school education in India, a few major conclusions are briefly discussed here.

A very important development is recorded regarding schools, number of girls schools has been increased by 12.65% in comparison to the Sixth Survey where as number of boys schools has been reduced. This is a positive indicator towards girls education is improving in the country. In case of girls education and their retention, Government launches number of programmes, schemes, scholarship in spite of this the enrollment of girls is still lower than boys, below 45% in rural as well as urban areas. Government of India trying to provide education facilities in each and every rural area as well as in habitations by deciding some distance criteria. As a results lot of schools opened and enrollment of children in the school also increased and it is a positive sign of progress of any country which principally reflects with literacy level of the population.

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Table 1: Status of Upper Primary Schools according to Area and Type of schools**Reference**

Type of schools	Sixth Survey			Seventh Survey		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
Boys	6662	3262	9924	5215	2781	7996
Girls	6136	3879	10015	7318	3964	11282
Co-ed	116448	26418	142866	181414	44630	226044
Total	129246	33559	162805	193947	51375	245322

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 2: Type of school with number of schools having Upper Primary stage

S No	School with Upper Primary stage	Rural	Urban	Total
1	Upper Primary only (UP)	60025	10422	70447
2	Upper Primary with Primary (UPP)	133922	40953	17485
3	Secondary with Upper Primary (SUP)	33507	11742	45249
4	Secondary with upper primary and Primary (PUPS)	7089	8456	15545
5	Higher Secondary with Secondary and Upper Primary (UPSHS)	14220	8707	22927
6	Higher Secondary with Secondary, Upper Primary and Primary (PUPSHS)	2212	6725	8937
	Total	250975	87005	337980

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 3: Management wise schools at upper primary stages

Management	Schools at Upper Primary Stage				Total	
	Rural Number	Percentage	Urban Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Government	99913	51.52	11392	22.17	111305	45.37
Local Body	58640	30.24	8059	15.69	66699	27.19
Private-aided	11309	5.83	6779	13.20	18088	7.37
Private-unaided	24085	12.41	25145	48.94	49230	20.07
Total	193497	100.00	51375	100.00	24322	100.00

Table 4 Enrolments in Classes VI-VIII

Area/ Management	Boys	Girls	Total	% of Girls
1	2	3	4	5
Rural	17,537,283	13,029,667	30,566,950	42.63%
Urban	8,696,263	7,052,632	16,278,295	43.33%
Total	26,233,546	20,612,299	46,845,845	44.00%
Government	8,358,266	6,006,787	14,365,053	41.82%
Local Body	3,608,996	3,207,816	6,816,812	47.06%
Private Aided	7,110,330	5,944,812	13,055,142	45.54%
Private Unaided	5,150,637	3,434,996	8,585,633	40.01%

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 5: Enrolment of Socially Backward Community children

Areas	Scheduled Castes (SC)	Scheduled Tribes (ST)	EBMC
1	2	3	4
Rural	19.42	9.02	11.07
Urban	15.34	3.66	15.27
Total	18.00	7.16	12.53

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 6: Percentage of Habitations and Population Served by Upper Primary Stage from First to Seventh Surveys

All India Education Surveys / All India School Education Surveys	Percentage of Habitations Served by Upper Primary Stage		Percentage of Population Served by Upper Primary Stage	
	Within Habitation	Within Three km	Within Habitation	Within Three km
1	2	3	4	5
First	3.13	-	-	-
Second	7.07	-	-	-
Third	8.69	58.26	28.26	71.97
Fourth	10.74	66.86	33.47	78.83
Fifth	13.13	74.00	36.85	83.98
Sixth	13.87	76.15	37.02	85.00
Seventh	16.88	80.91	41.77	88.72

Source: All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 7: Habitations and Population Served by Upper Primary School

		Population Slabs						
		5000 above	and 2000-4999	1000-1999	500-999	Below 500	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Within distance of 1 KM	Habitations Served	9204	46586	83986	107159	241030	487965	
	Population Served	74847168	134831936	116058955	75854344	55075721	456668124	
	%age of habitations Served	89.90	77.10	60.00	43.60	32.01	40.34	
	%age of Population Served	91.49	78.44	61.12	44.29	33.92	58.76	
Within distance of 3 KM	Habitations Served	10057	57434	126065	208206	576818	978580	
	Population Served	80601716	163958019	171566087	145498678	127938703	689563203	
	%age of habitations Served	98.23	95.05	90.05	84.71	76.59	80.91	
	%age of Population Served	98.52	95.38	90.35	84.96	78.80	88.72	
At more than 3 KM	Habitations Served	181	2990	13922	37575	176273	230941	
	Population Served	1209986	7943707	18331696	25751322	34417219	87653930	
	%age of habitations Served	1.77	4.95	9.95	15.29	23.41	19.09	
	%age of Population Served	1.48	4.62	9.65	15.04	21.20	11.28	
Total	No. of Habitations Served	10238	60424	139987	245781	753091	1209521	
	Population Served	81811702	171901726	189897783	171250000	162355922	777217133	

Table 8: Schooling facilities in habitations predominantly populated by those belonging to Scheduled Castes

		Population Slabs						
		5000 and above	2000-4999	1000-1999	500-999	Below 500	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Within a distance of one kilometer	Habitations Served	449	2779	4987	4492	3874	16581	
	Population Served	3541505	7917335	6936139	3294206	1106146	22795331	
	Percentage of habitations Served	69.83	50.69	28.11	12.06	3.41	9.49	
	Percentage of Population Served	72.91	52.88	29.39	12.77	4.44	24.21	
Within a distance of three kilometers	Habitations Served	622	5043	15573	31364	90348	142950	
	Population Served	4728682	13848552	20759961	21753375	20138113	81228683	
	Percentage of habitations Served	96.73	91.99	87.76	84.19	79.55	81.83	
	Percentage of Population Served	97.35	92.49	87.96	84.32	80.81	86.27	
Within a distance of more than three kilometers	Habitations Served	21	439	2171	5892	23227	31750	
	Population Served	128876	1124738	2842537	4046046	4781836	12924033	
	Percentage of habitations Served	3.27	8.01	12.24	15.81	20.45	18.17	
	Percentage of Population Served	2.65	7.51	12.04	15.68	19.19	13.73	
Total	Habitations Served	643	5482	17744	37256	113575	174700	
	Population Served	4857558	14973290	23602498	25799421	24919949	94152716	

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)

Table 9: Schooling facilities in habitations predominantly populated by those belonging to Scheduled Tribes

		Population Slabs					Total
		5000 and above	2000-4999	1000-1999	500-999	Below 500	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Within a distance	Habitations Served	204	1556	5287	8845	10258	26150
	Population Served	1529765	4330516	7148946	6280250	2982812	22272289
	Percentage of habitations Served	77.27	69.78	53.31	26.38	5.21	10.76
	Percentage of Population Served	76.69	70.72	54.91	27.83	7.54	26.76
Within a distance	Habitations Served	249	2039	8616	26590	125814	163308
	Population Served	1887057	5615953	11365419	17998324	26877789	63744542
	Percentage of habitations Served	94.32	91.43	86.88	79.29	63.85	67.21
	Percentage of Population Served	94.60	91.72	87.29	79.75	67.99	76.58
At more than	Habitations Served	15	191	1301	6944	71234	79685
	Population Served	107702	507215	1655016	4570725	12656543	19497201
	Percentage of habitations Served	5.68	8.57	13.12	20.71	36.15	32.79
	Percentage of Population Served	5.40	8.28	12.71	20.25	32.01	23.42
Total	Habitations Served	264	2230	9917	33534	197048	242993
	Population Served	1994759	6123168	13020435	22569049	39534332	83241743

Source: Seventh All India School Education Report (2007)