

Education

10.19 Education is universally recognized as a central component of 'human capital'. The role of education as a contributor to economic growth and its impact on population control, life expectancy, infant mortality, improving nutritional status and strengthening civil institutions is well recognised. Moreover, the social rates of return on investments in all levels of education much exceed the long-term opportunity cost of capital.

10.20 The total expenditure on education in India is currently 3.8 per cent of GDP (1998). Plan expenditure on education has also increased rapidly since the First Five Year Plan. A high priority was accorded to this sector in the Ninth Five Year Plan, with an allocation of Rs. 24,908 crore against an expenditure of Rs. 8,522 crore in the Eighth Plan, representing a three fold increase in funds available to this sector. The total Central Plan allocation for education has also been enhanced from Rs. 5,450 crore in 2000-01 (BE) to Rs. 5,920 crore in 2001-02 (BE). Out of this, elementary education has received the highest priority, increasing from Rs. 3609 crore in 2000-01 to Rs. 3800 crore in 2001-02 (BE).

10.21 The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 and its Programme of Action (POA), as reviewed in 1992, envisage improvement and expansion of education in all sectors, elimination of disparities in access, a stress on improvement in quality and relevance of education at all levels, alongwith technical and professional education. The goal of education policy has been to provide Education for All, the priority areas being free and compulsory primary education to children in the age group of 6-14 years (upto standard V), total eradication of illiteracy, vocationalisation of education, covering children with special needs, special focus on education of women, weaker sections and minorities.

10.22 During the period 1950-51 to 1999-2000, the number of primary schools has increased three fold, from 210,000 in 1950-51 to 642,000 in 1999-2000. The number of upper primary schools has increased by about 15 times,

from 13,596 in 1950-51 to 198,000 in 1999-2000. The ratio of upper primary schools to primary schools has also come down from 1:15 in 1950-51 to 1: 3.2 in 1999-2000. There are now 245 universities, 52 deemed universities, five institutions established through State and Central legislations, nearly 11,831 colleges including 1,520 women's colleges in the country, in addition to the unrecognised institutions in the higher education sector. According to the last i.e .Sixth All India Educational Survey 1993, 83 per cent of the rural habitations and 94 per cent of the rural population have access to primary schools/sections within a distance of 1 km.; 76 per cent of the rural habitations and 85 per cent of the rural population are served by Upper primary schools/sections within a distance of 3 kms. Access to primary/upper primary education has improved further since 1993.

10.23 The total enrolment at the primary and upper primary school levels in India has witnessed a steady increase (Table.10.11). Total enrolment at the primary stage (grades I-V) increased by 5.91 times, from 19.2 million in 1950-51 to about 113.61 million in 1999-2000. Out of this, the relative share of girls' enrolment increased from 28.1 per cent in 1950-51 to 43.6 per cent in 1999-2000. Total enrolment at the Upper Primary levels (grades VI-VIII) increased by 13 times from 3.1 million in 1950-51 to 42.06 million in 1999-2000. The relative share of girls' enrolment which was only 16.1 per cent in 1950-51 rose to about 40.4 per cent in 1999-2000. During 1950-51 to 1999-2000, the growth rate of girls' enrolment at the elementary levels was higher as compared to that of the boys. Participation of girls at all levels of school education has improved appreciably over the years.

10.24 The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at Primary and Upper Primary levels has improved perceptibly from 1950-51 to 1999-2000 (Table 10.12). The GER has risen at the primary level from 42.6 per cent in 1950-51 to 94.90 per cent in 1999-2000. Enrolment for girls rose from 24.8 per cent to 85.18 per cent during this period. The boys /girls differential also declined substantially, from 35.8 percentage points in

1950-51 to 18.90 percentage points in 1999-2000. The GER at the Upper Primary level improved from 12.7 per cent in 1950-51 to 58.79 per cent in 1999-2000 with that for girls increasing from 4.6 per cent to 49.66 per cent for this period. The boys/girls differential at the Upper Primary level which had increased to 29.6 percentage points in 1990-91 has been in the range of 16-18 percentage points in 1996-97 to 1999-2000. Though the participation of girls at all levels of school education has increased substantially, the proportion of girls enrolled both at the Primary and Upper Primary levels continues to be lower than the gross enrolment of boys. Vast disparities exist amongst the States/UTs in terms of enrolment with educationally backward states having a lower GER than the all India average (Table at Appendix).

10.25 Whereas the rising enrolment in elementary schools is a source of satisfaction, there is concern about the percentage of students actually attending school and those dropping out of the education system altogether. Nearly 79 per cent of the 6-14 age group are attending school that is, of the population of 200 million

in this age group in the year 2000, the number of children attending school was about 158 million. The student retention rate at the primary school stage was about 58 per cent (1990-95). Dropout rates at the primary and upper primary level have decreased over the years. From 64.9 per cent at the primary level in 1960-61, the dropout rate decreased to 40.25 per cent 1999-2000 and from 78.3 in upper primary level in 1960-61, it decreased to 54.53 per cent in 1999-2000. Though dropout rates at the elementary education stage have declined over the years, they are still relatively high especially in the case of girl students for whom the rates are 42 per cent and 58 per cent at the Primary and Upper Primary stages respectively.

10.26 In absolute terms, the number of teachers registered at the elementary level has increased five fold from 6,24,000 in 1950-51 to 3.2 million in 1999-2000. The percentage share of female teachers to total teachers during this period has increased from 15.2 per cent in 1950-51 to 35.81 per cent in 1999-2000. Despite the fact that the number of teachers has increased, this increase has not kept pace with the growth

TABLE 10.11
Sex-Wise Enrolment By Stages/Classes Since 1951-Second Level (In Million)

Year	Primary			Middle/Upper Primary			High/Hr.Sec./Inter/pre-Degree		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1950-51	13.8	5.4	19.2	2.6	0.5	3.1	1.3	0.2	1.5
1955-56	17.1	7.5	24.6	3.8	1.0	4.8	2.2	0.4	2.6
1960-61	23.6	11.4	35.0	5.1	1.6	6.7	2.7	0.7	3.4
1965-66	32.2	18.3	50.5	7.7	2.8	10.5	4.4	1.3	5.7
1970-71	35.7	21.3	57.0	9.4	3.9	13.3	5.7	1.9	7.6
1975-76	40.6	25.0	65.6	11.0	5.0	16.0	6.5	2.4	8.9
1980-81	45.3	28.5	73.8	13.9	6.8	20.7	7.6	3.4	11.0
1985-86	52.2	35.2	87.4	17.7	9.6	27.1	11.5	5.0	16.5
1990-91	57.0	40.4	97.4	21.5	12.5	34.0	12.8	6.3	19.1
1991-92	58.6	42.3	100.9	22.0	13.6	35.6	13.5	6.9	20.4
1992-93	57.9	41.7	99.6	21.2	12.9	34.1	13.6	6.9	20.5
1993-94	55.1	41.9	97.0	20.6	13.5	34.1	13.2	7.5	20.7
1994-95*	62.3	46.8	109.1	24.5	15.8	40.3	16.0	8.4	24.4
1995-96*	62.4	47.4	109.8	25.0	16.0	41.0	16.1	8.8	24.9
1996-97*	62.5	47.9	110.4	24.7	16.3	41.0	17.2	9.8	27.0
1997-98*	61.2	47.5	108.7	23.7	15.8	39.5	17.1	10.2	27.2
1998-99*	62.7	48.2	110.9	24.0	16.3	40.3	17.3	10.5	27.8
1999-2000*	64.1	49.5	113.6	25.1	16.9	42.0	17.2	10.9	28.1

* Provisional

Source :- Selected Educational Statistics 1999-2000, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India

of enrolment. From 1: 24 in 1950-51, the Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) at the Primary education level worsened to about 1:43 in 1999-2000. Similarly from 1:20 at the Upper Primary level, the PTR increased to 1:38 in 1999-2000. Apart from the worsening Teacher-Pupil Ratio, problem areas to be addressed are the distribution of teachers among the schools in various states/regions, non-attendance of teachers on a regular basis, presence of single-teacher schools, inefficient teaching methods and the general quality of education.

10.27 Within the education sector, elementary education has been given the highest priority in terms of sub-sectoral allocations. Several schemes have been launched by the Central government to meet the needs of the educationally disadvantaged and for strengthening the social infrastructure for education viz Operation Blackboard (OB), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Education Guarantee Scheme and Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS&AIE), Mahila Samakhya, Teacher Education (TE), Mid day

Meals Scheme, Lok Jumbish, Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP), Janashala etc. In 2001-02 significant steps have been taken towards achievement of the goals of UEE through a time bound integrated approach, in partnership with the States through launching of the “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan” (SSA). (Box 10.4) The planning in SSA will be decentralised and highest priority accorded to community ownership and monitoring. This programme will subsume all existing programmes including externally aided programmes in due course within its overall framework with district as the unit of programme implementation.

10.28 One of the measures for achieving the goal of Education for All (EFA) was the Ninety Third Amendment of the Constitution passed in the Lok Sabha on November 28, 2001, to make the right to free and compulsory education for children for 6-14 years of age a Fundamental Right and also, to make it a Fundamental Duty of the parents/guardian to provide opportunities for education to children in the age group of 6-14 years.

TABLE 10.12
Trends In Gross Enrolment Ratios In India

(in per cent)						
Year	Primary (I-V)		Upper Primary (VI-VIII)		Elementary (I-VIII)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
1950-51	60.6	24.8	20.6	4.6	46.4	17.7
1960-61	82.6	41.4	33.2	11.3	65.2	30.9
1970-71	95.5	60.5	46.5	20.8	75.5	44.4
1980-81	95.8	64.1	54.3	28.6	82.2	52.1
1990-91	114.0	85.5	76.6	47.0	100.0	70.8
1991-92	112.8	86.9	75.1	49.6	101.2	73.2
1992-93	95.0	73.5	72.5	48.9	87.7	65.7
1993-94	90.0	73.1	62.1	45.4	80.2	63.7
1994-95	114.8	92.6	79.0	55.0	101.8	78.8
1995-96	114.5	93.3	79.5	55.0	101.8	79.3
1996-97	98.7	81.9	70.9	52.8	88.9	71.8
1997-98	97.7	81.2	66.5	49.5	86.4	70.0
1998-99	100.9	82.9	65.3	49.1	87.6	70.6
1999-00	104.1	85.2	67.2	49.7	90.1	72.0

Source:- Selected Educational Statistics, 1999-2000 (D/o. Education, M/O. Human Resource Development, GOI.

10.29 The secondary education sector prepares students in the age group of 14-18 years for entry into higher education as well as for the world of work. The number of secondary and senior secondary schools increased from 7,416 in 1950-51 to 1,16,000 in 1999-2000 with a student enrolment of 28 million. The Sixth All India Educational Survey 1993 showed that there was an increase of 51 per cent in enrolment of girls in classes IX to X and a 54 per cent increase in classes XI to XII as compared to 20 per cent in the primary and 40 per cent in the upper primary stages during the period 1986 to 1993. The focus in this sector is on reducing disparities, renewal of curricula with emphasis on vocationalisation and employment oriented courses, expansion of the Open-Learning System and greater use of new information and communication technologies, particularly computers. The NCERT provides academic and technical support for a qualitative improvement of school education. The Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan manages 871 Kendriya Vidyalayas and the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti through more than 410 institutions in predominantly rural areas has taken up activities for extension of infrastructural facilities, introduction of vocational courses, training of teachers etc.

10.30 There has been impressive growth in the area of University and higher education. Accreditation of all Universities and colleges has been made mandatory. It has also been made possible for Deemed Universities to open campuses abroad. In addition, all higher educational institutions at all levels (postgraduate and undergraduate) can now have 15 per cent supernumerary seats for foreigners. These steps would not only improve the quality of education offered but also make the system more globally competitive. The Open University System is another step towards diversification of courses offered for focussing on the educational needs of women, the rural segment as also for professional training of in-service personnel. In view of the problem of resource constraint, some steps have already been initiated for internal generation of resources. A hike in university fees along with contributions from industry, private individuals etc. in the constitution of funds/

BOX: 10.4

Goals of “Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan”

- All children of age 6-14 in schools/Education Guarantee Centres/bridge course by 2003
- All children of age 6-14 to complete five year primary education by 2007
- All children of age 6-14 to complete eight years of schooling by 2010
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010 and
- Universal retention by 2010.

trusts like the Bharat Shiksha Kosh is also necessary. For higher/technical education recovery of user costs is now a paramount necessity.

10.31 Technical and professional education in the country has played a significant role in economic and technical development by producing quality manpower. There are at present 1,058 approved engineering colleges at the degree and 1,231 colleges at the diploma level. Apart from this, 797 institutes impart courses on Master of Computer Application (MCA). There are 820 approved Management Institutes imparting MBA courses. Strong linkages have developed between technical institutions and industry. Through the high profile Technology Development Missions (TDM), industry-institution linkages have grown stronger in 7 generic areas at 5 Indian Institutes of Technology as well as the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. For strengthening technical education and improving the quality of polytechnic passouts, massive efforts have been made with the assistance of the World Bank with States Sector projects in three phases. The thrust in the coming years would be on improving quality and relevance through a networking of technical and management institutions not only in the government but also in the private sectors.