

Education

10.16 The broad policy framework for the development of education and eradication of illiteracy is provided in the National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, which had set a goal of expenditure on education at 6 per cent of the GDP. As against this target, the combined total expenditure on education by Central and State Governments was 3.74 per cent of GDP in 2003-04 (BE). The trend of total expenditure on education as a proportion of total government expenditure reveals a disturbing downward trend between 2000-01 and 2003-04 (Table 10.3). As reported in Economic Survey, 2003-04, a high priority has been accorded to this sector in the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07), with an allocation of Rs.43,825 crore as against Rs.24,908 crore made available in the Ninth Plan, representing an increase of 76 per cent.

10.17 The total Central plan allocation of Rs.7,025 crore in 2003-04 (BE) has been increased to Rs. 8,225 crore in 2004-05 (BE), with Rs.5750 crore for Elementary Education, Rs.250 crore for Adult Education and Rs.2225 crore for Secondary and Higher Education. Apart from this, an additional allocation of Rs.2,

000 crore is earmarked for the Department of Elementary Education & Literacy and Rs.250 crore for the Department of Secondary & Higher Education for implementing the schemes related to the NCMP.

10.18 Literacy rates in India increased from 18.3 per cent in 1951 to 64.8 per cent in 2001. However, India continues to lag behind several other developing countries in the region in terms of adult literacy and youth literacy rates (Table 10.5).

Elementary Education

10.19 The number of primary schools decreased from 6.64 lakh in 2001-02 to 6.51 lakh in 2002-03, whereas that of upper primary schools increased from 2.20 lakh to 2.45 lakh over the period, indicating upgradation of a large number of primary schools to upper Primary schools. The total enrolment at the primary and upper primary levels has witnessed a steady increase. During 2001-02 and 2002-03, the growth rate of enrolment for girls at elementary level was higher than that of boys. Participation of girls at all levels of school education has improved appreciably over the years, but vast disparities amongst

Table 10.5 : India's global position on adult and youth literacy rates

Country	Adult Literacy Rate (percent 15 yrs & above)		Youth Literacy Rate (per cent 15yrs-24)	
	1990	2002	1990	2002
China	78.3	90.9	95.3	98.9
India	49.3	61.3	64.3	73.3*
Nepal	30.4	44.0	46.6	62.7
Pakistan	35.5	41.5	47.4	53.9
Sri Lanka	88.7	92.1	95.1	97.0
Bangladesh	34.2	41.1	42.0	49.7

* Figure relates to 2001.
Source: UNDP, Human Development Report 2004.

the States in gross enrolment ratio (GER) at primary/upper primary levels still persist (Table 10.6).

10.20 Of the estimated population of 205 million in the age group of 6-14 years on March 1, 2002, nearly 82.5 per cent was enrolled in schools, compared to 82.4 per cent in 2001-02. The retention rate of students at the primary school stage was about 59 per cent (1992-97). At the primary level, the drop-out rate decreased from 39.0 per cent in 2001-02 to 34.9 per cent in 2002-03, while at the upper primary level, the drop-out rate decreased from 54.6 per cent to 52.8 per cent over the same period. In spite of the decline over the years, drop out rate still remains very high, especially in the case of girl students, for whom the rates in 2002-03 were 33.7 per cent and 53.5 per cent, at the primary and upper primary levels, respectively.

10.21 The number of teachers at the elementary level rose from 3.4 million in 2001-02 to 3.5 million in 2002-03, while the share of female teachers increased from 37.2 per cent to 40 per cent over the same period. Despite the increase in the number of teachers over the decades, the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) at the primary and upper primary levels has

remained more or less constant around 42:1 and 34:1 respectively during 2002-03.

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)

10.22 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), launched in November 2000 as an umbrella programme, continued to be implemented to support and build upon other primary and elementary education projects. The programme aims to ensure five years of primary education for all children in the age group 6-14 years by 2007 and eight years of schooling by 2010. The programme is implemented in partnership with the States. The programme addresses the needs of 192 million children in 11 lakh habitations. 8.5 lakh existing primary and upper primary schools and 33 lakh existing teachers would be covered under the scheme. As on January 7, 2005, an amount of Rs. 3,031 crore has been released out of Rs. 3,057 crore for 2004-05 (BE).

10.23 In July, 2003, Government of India approved a new programme called '*National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level*' (NPEGEL) as an amendment to the existing scheme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for providing additional support for education of underprivileged/

Table 10.6 : Gross Enrolment Ratios (GER) (in per cent)

Year	Primary (I-V)			Upper Primary (VI-VIII)			Elementary (I-VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1950-51	60.6	24.8	42.6	20.6	4.6	12.7	46.4	17.7	32.1
1960-61	82.6	41.4	62.4	33.2	11.3	22.5	65.2	30.9	48.7
1970-71	95.5	60.5	78.6	46.5	20.8	33.4	75.5	44.4	61.9
1980-81	95.8	64.1	80.5	54.3	28.6	41.9	82.2	52.1	67.5
1990-91	114.0	85.5	100.1	76.6	47.0	62.1	100.0	70.8	86.0
1991-92	112.8	86.9	100.2	75.1	49.6	61.4	101.2	73.2	87.7
1992-93	95.0	73.5	84.6	72.5	48.9	67.5	87.7	65.7	77.2
1993-94	90.0	73.1	81.9	62.1	45.4	54.2	80.2	63.7	72.3
1994-95	96.6	78.2	87.7	68.9	50.0	60.0	87.2	68.8	78.4
1995-96	97.1	79.4	88.6	67.8	49.8	59.3	86.9	69.4	78.5
1996-97	97.0	80.1	88.8	65.8	49.2	58.0	85.9	69.4	78.0
1997-98	99.3	82.2	91.1	66.3	49.7	58.5	87.4	70.7	79.4
1998-99 *	100.9	82.9	92.1	65.3	49.1	57.6	87.6	70.6	79.4
1999-2000 *	104.1	85.2	94.9	67.2	49.7	58.8	90.1	72.0	81.3
2000-01*	104.9	85.9	95.7	66.7	49.9	58.6	90.3	72.4	81.6
2001-02*	105.3	86.9	96.3	67.8	52.1	60.2	90.7	73.6	82.4
2002-03*	97.5	93.1	95.4	65.3	56.2	60.9	85.4	79.3	82.5

*Provisional

Source : Selected Educational Statistics 2002-2003, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

disadvantaged girls at the elementary level. The scheme is implemented in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where the level of female literacy is below, and the gender gap is above, the national average, in blocks of districts which are not covered under EBBs but have at least 5 per cent SC/ST population and where SC/ST female literacy is below 10 per cent, and also in select urban slums.

10.24 An estimated provision of Rs.1064.80 crore has been kept for the Tenth Plan. Apart from NPEGEL, a new scheme called *Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)* has been approved for launching during 2004-05 for setting up 750 residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, other backward castes (OBC) and minorities in difficult areas. A provision of Rs. 489 crore has been made for the Tenth Plan; and Annual plan allocation for the year 2004-05 is Rs. 100 crore. 525 KGBVs have been approved by the Department of Elementary Education, involving an amount of Rs. 123.03 crore for 2004-05.

10.25 An education cess of 2 per cent on all direct and indirect Central taxes has been imposed through the Finance (No.2) Act, 2004. Soon after the relevant Bill was introduced in Parliament on July 8, 2004, action was initiated for creation of a separate, dedicated, non-lapsable Fund to be named as *Prathamik Shiksha Kosh* and maintained by the Ministry of HRD, Department of Elementary Education & Literacy. The proceeds would be available on a rollover basis for the schemes of basic Education and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme. Budget provision for the Mid-day Meal Scheme during 2004-05 is Rs.1, 675 crore. In addition, Rs.1, 232 crore has been provided to the States/UTs as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) under State Sector as earmarked outlay for meeting cooking cost.

Adult Education

10.26 The National Literacy Mission (NLM), launched on May 5, 1988 as a Technology Mission to impart functional literacy to non-literates and modified from time to time, aims

at attaining a literacy rate of 75 per cent by 2007. The Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) has been the principal strategy of NLM for eradication of illiteracy. These campaigns are area-specific, time-bound, volunteer-based, cost effective and outcome-oriented and are implemented by Zilla Saksharata Samities (District Level Literacy Societies).

10.27 NLM accorded high priority for the promotion of female literacy. As a result, female literacy rate increased by 14.4 percentage points from 39.3 per cent to 53.7 per cent during 1991-2001 compared to an increase by 11.2 percentage points for males from 64.1 per cent to 75.3 per cent over the same period, and thereby reducing the male-female literacy gap from 24.8 per cent in 1991 to 21.6 per cent in 2001.

Secondary and Higher Education

10.28 The Secondary Education sector prepares students in the age group of 14-18 years for entry into higher education and employment. The number of secondary and senior secondary schools increased from 7,416 in 1950-51 to 1,37,207 in 2002-03 with a student enrolment of 33.2 million.

10.29 There has been an impressive growth in the area of higher education with an increase in the student enrolment in higher education from 7.26 million in 1997-98 to 9.51 million in 2003-04. Enrolment of women students rose to 3.81 million constituting 40 per cent of the total in 2003-04. There has also been a significant increase in the students' enrolment under Open and Distance Education System.

Technical & Professional Education

10.30 In addition to 1349 approved engineering colleges at the degree level, there are 1030 institutes offering Master of Computer Application (MCA) programme and 990 approved Management Institutions imparting education in Management Studies. Recently, All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has delegated the powers of approval with respect to Diploma level technical institutions to the State Governments.