

Elementary Education is the Foundation to Higher Education: An Evaluation Study of Odisha

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Abstract

Even after 71 years of Educational Development in India, yet we are far behind the international standards right from the elementary to the level of Higher Education. No doubt there has been quantitative growth through the various five years plan and incentives to reduce the dropout at school level yet the qualitative intake to higher education is wanting. Education is the planned process of inducing those attitudes and transmitting those skills that are essential for local, regional and national development. Though the modern education particularly higher education started in the 19th century and had a steady growth during the 20th century. Yet after Globalisation it is faced with variety of challenges. One of them is linking the three sector of education. This paper tries to analyze the qualitative and quantitative growth of Elementary Education through the various policies and programmes of government and how it impacts the system of Higher Education.

Keywords: Quantitative, qualitative, globalisation

Introduction

Education plays an important role in the all round of developmental process. It refers that education not only enhances individual development but also the socio economic development in a qualitative and quantitative manner. Education ensures empowerment, self-confidence and improves their position in the society and challenges the inequalities. Education ensuring a better quality of life and improves the living standards of the people and enhances the people's participation in the nation building process. The economic development can be achieved only through the development of education. Education

also promotes gender equality or eliminate gender disparity at all stages of education by providing universal education for all. Education is the prime need for both the genders in the society. Therefore in a nutshell it can be said that education brings sustainable growth in the state.

Till 1976, education was the exclusive responsibility of the states. But the constitutional Amendment of 1976, education was placed in the Concurrent List. "The Substantive financial and administrative implication required a new sharing of responsibility between the Union Government and the State Government. The Union Government accepted a larger

responsibility of reinforcing the national and integrated character of education.

Objectives

- To achieve the Universalisation of Elementary Education throughout the State.
- To provide elementary education to the children between the age of 6-14 years in a time bound manner.
- To find out the impact of elementary education on Higher Education.

Methods of Study

The present study is based on both Primary and Secondary sources of data and the methodology for this study is explanatory in nature. The researchers have collected information by making a sample study from both the government Primary and Upper Primary schools of Sundargarh District of Odisha. The secondary sources of data have been collected from the available literature: Government documents, books, journals, articles and internet website.

Types of Educational Institution

Education is provided by the Public sector as well as the private sector. Generally Institution is of two types such as; 1. Organizational Institution. 2. Programmatic Institution. As an organizational institution DPI (Director of Public Instruction) came into existence in the year 1936 in Odisha. In the year 1985, the DPI was divided into two educational system such as;

- Director of Secondary Education,
- Director of Higher Education

After this division again the government made a trifurcation of the office of DPI as

- Director of Elementary Education (DEE).
- Director of Secondary Education (DSE),
- Director of Higher Education (DHE),

Among the above three branches the DEE (Director of Elementary Education) is

functioning for the entire State, under the authority of School & Mass Education (S&M) Department. The School and Mass Education Department was created as a separate department in January 1993 to look after the issues pertaining to elementary education. School & Mass Education Department of the government of Odisha has the responsibility to achieve the goals of Universal Elementary Education. It operates through two agencies namely; Director of Elementary Education (DEE) and OPEPA (Odisha Primary Education Programme Authority). The OPEPA (Odisha Primary Education Programme Authority) is the flagship Programme of SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) of the entire State.

Pattern of Education System in the State

The National System of education envisages a common educational system. The state followed the system of 10+2+3 pattern of education. It means 10 years calculated for Primary and Upper Primary and next 2 years is Secondary and lastly the remaining 3 years courses is provided for the college study, which has now been accepted in all parts of the country. This system of education has originated from the recommendation of the Education Commission Report (1964)

Elementary Education

Elementary education is the formal structured education. Since independence the Central and the State governments have been expanding the provision of primary formal and non formal education to realize the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. Elementary education is recognized as fundamental right of all citizens in India. The government of India introduced 86th constitutional Amendment Act added in Article – 21A, which make education as a fundamental right of all children in the age group of 6-14 years of age. The Right to Free and Compulsory

Education Act, 2009 seeks to give effect to this amendment.

From 1950 onwards the Government of India (GOI) has created policy instruments to promote;

- Universal Elementary Education (UEE) in an attempt to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on caste, community and gender based bias.
- Provide schools within walking distance, and satellite schools for remote hamlets, stepped after the adoption of the National Policy of Education and Programme of Action.
- Provide alternative education programmes to reach out to out-of-school children (never enrolled and drop-outs) through bridge courses, residential schools and focused initiatives for minorities and special focus groups (migrant groups, etc)

As “Right to Education” is the Human Rights, every child between the ages of 6-14 years has the right to free and compulsory education. This is stated as per the “Article 45” of the constitution provided that free and compulsory education should be provided for all children till they complete the age of 14 years. After independence first we are trying to established primary and middle schools in all areas through which elementary school becomes available to every child within easy distance from home, and secondly we are trying to enroll every child in school because to increase the total number of children in the age group of 6-11 from (Class-V) and in the age group of children, 11-14 from (Class VI-VII). After Independence the government, organized the education system and set up various governmental commissions, which are described as follows:

University Education Commission (1948)

After Independence the first governmental commission under the chairmanship of Dr.

Radha Krishnan, known as “University Education Commission” was created in order to recommend suggestions to improve the quality of education. This commission produced a comprehensive and voluminous report and reorienting the education system to face the great problem of social and the needs of the nation, alternatively increase of general prosperity, prevailing the distinctions of caste and creed and the level of culture. According to this commission, higher education has five basic tenets enshrined in the constitution. These are Democracy, Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. This implies that education system is to provide strength and support to parliamentary democracy.

Draft National policy on Education (1979)

The draft National Policy on Education 1979 states that education system should enable individuals to know and develop their physical and intellectual potentialities. To develop a strong temperament, this policy promotes social awareness and human value. Regarding elementary education, it proposed universal elementary education up to the age of 14 years, as it laid down in the directive principle of the constitution.

This commission largely proclaimed that, the special attention should be given to the education of girls and children of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes from unprivileged society at the elementary stage. The government of Odisha has given high priority to the primary education as primary education plays a vital role in the process of human development. Odisha government has given more emphasis to the primary education or the ‘elementary education’. The ‘elementary’ and ‘primary’ were used as inter changeably and translated between different office language.

Impact of Elementary Education

To achieve the universalisation of elementary education government introduced various programmes such as SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), DPEP (District Primary Education Programme), NPEGEL (National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level), MDM (Mid-day Meal Scheme) and KGBV (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya) in the state. SSA is a partnership programme between the central government and state government which covered the entire country before March 2002 and the duration of the programme in every district will depend upon the DEEP (District Elementary Education Plan) prepared by the district. SSA has been operational in Orissa since 2001-02. With the passage of the RTE (Right To Education) Act, changes need to be incorporated into the SSA approach, strategies and norms. The changes are not merely confined to norms for providing teachers or classrooms, but encompass the vision and approach to elementary education as evidenced in the shift to child entitlements and quality elementary education in regular schools. Teacher motivates the students to innovate and create a culture in the classroom, and beyond the classroom, that might produce an inclusive environment for children.

Goals of SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan)

- SSA specific focus on provision of quality education, enrolment and retention.
- Established education guarantee centers, alternative school and school camp for back to school.
- Open both primary and upper primary school in rural areas especially in KBK district with aim focus on providing basic education within a clear time frame, as SSA is a holistic and convergent programme.

Higher Education

The Higher education is largely based on the British model now it is the shared responsibility of both the centre and state. With the assistance of central government higher education has been standardized in the state and considered as an academic life, which is full of opportunities in a liberal setting and provide freedom to innate skills for all round personality development. Assessment has become a main important concern for higher education. Learning outcome review has become the basis for determining institutional effectiveness. Thus the students are constantly motivated to meet the rigour of academic and their endeavor which supported by the teachers in the class engagement. Thus higher education as a transaction between the teachers and the students which enable to both of them to improve their knowledge and skill and it is the way of platform to get better opportunity and placement in the job market. Teachers qualitative teaching is more important in higher education to achieve the goal of literacy development. Higher education focused on teacher training, technical education and highly on communication skill. After passing the secondary education students enroll in higher education which enables students to contribute their knowledge for the advancement of economic growth and development, science and technology with a global perspective. Thus higher education is meant for human resource development in the socio-economic sphere. On the eve of independence there were only 20 universities and near about 500 colleges but with time the number of both universities and colleges has increased. According to the "National Commission" there should be 1500 universities by 2015 and we should setup 50 National Universities to provide quality education. India's higher education system is considered as 3rd largest in the world after China and United States. But it has lacked

the pace of development due to various reasons.

Impact of higher Education

The institution of higher education in India has incorporated the extension activities in the form of curricular and co-curricular. The role of higher education has a great impact on modern societies and that higher education is able to supply adequate number of human resources for the needs of the society, more so in a developing society like India.

Need of Elementary Education

After six decades of independence still most of the people are considered as illiterate, which is one of the primary reasons of unemployment and poverty in the nation. The problem in this regard is due to the lack of access and desire for education it has created hindrance in the path towards development. Therefore access to education is fundamental importance to any developmental process.

In order to meet the challenges of qualitative and quantitative development in higher education we need to focus on elementary education because “education for all” has still not been achieved in India. Most of the vulnerable section like Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and the ensuing obstacles are deprived from educational opportunity due to many socio economic problems. These are attributed to social taboos, customary tradition, poverty and unemployment. In fact it is in a continuum over a century. In our State to achieve 100 percent literacy is a far-away dream; especially people from rural and disadvantaged area are deprived from basic educational opportunity. Even most of the students drop out from the school before completing elementary education, which is one of the most important barriers in lagging behind higher education in the country. Therefore government entitled the

elementary education as fundamental and compulsory for all children in the age group of 6-14 years of age. It has directly benefited the children who do not go to school and never have been to any educational institution and also for those who are school dropouts. Thus it is the part of the responsibility of the government to provide free and compulsory education to the children in the state at the elementary level. Globally half the adolescent population of appropriate age attends higher education due to lack of access elementary education at the appropriate age. Therefore elementary education became mandatory and provide within the time bound manner by the Government of India .So far they can challenged in the development of various field like employment, social and economic development.

Importance of Elementary Education in respect to higher education

There are numerous elements of Elementary education which impact in the development of higher education. These are as follows as;

- In a pyramidal structure of our education system, elementary education is considered as the base and a small area at the apex of higher education. Even it is also assumed that when bottom will be lifted the top will develop automatically.
- Elementary education prepares the students for secondary and higher education respectively. So far it is very significant aspect as the qualitative spread of elementary education in the state, will ultimately spill over to the higher education system.

To let somebody know about the status of elementary education in the State, the following data has been given in figure as below;

Status of Elementary Education in Odisha

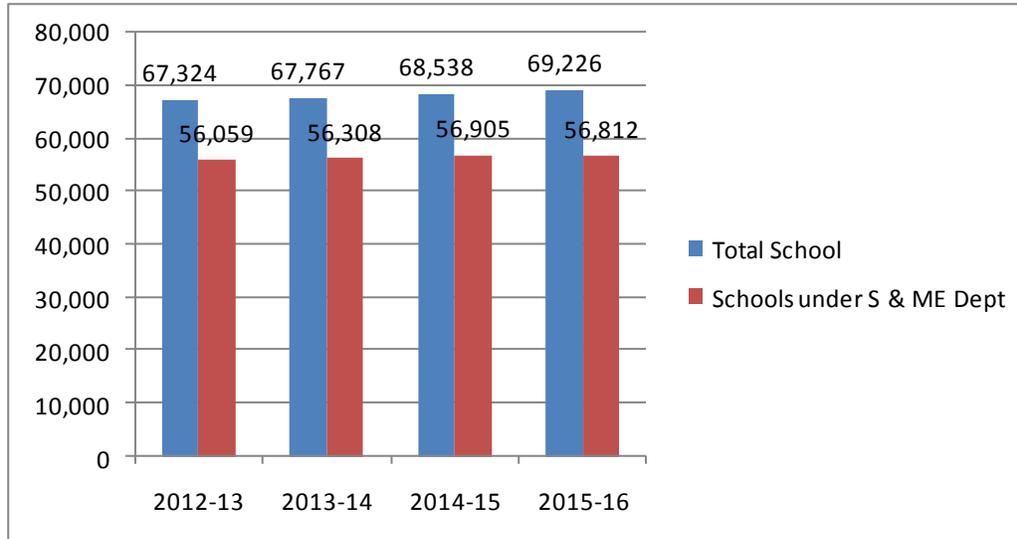


Figure 1: Total School and Schools under School & Mass Education DEPT.

(Source : OPEPA Odisha Government, 2015)

The above figure depicts that, the number of schools were increased tremendously throughout the year under School and Mass Education Department. In 2012-13 there were 56,059 numbers of schools managed under School & Mass Education Department out of 67,324 number of total School. Again in 2013-14 the number of schools under School & Mass Education Department were 56,308, in 2014-15 it was raised to 56,905 out of 68,538 number of total schools.

But in the year 2015-16, there was slow progress of schools under School and Mass Education Department. In 2015-16 there were sum of 56,812 number of schools covered under S & ME Dept from 69,226 number of total schools. In this perspective it is the responsibility of the government to increase the number of elementary school to enhance the enrolment of children in the State.

The number of enrolment of the students at elementary level represents a necessary condition for the qualitative development and functioning of higher education. Schooling habit and involvement in more curricular activities developed among the students at elementary level will help them in their future especially for the curricula of higher education. It includes discipline, communicative skill, teacher and student interaction, effective understanding of various environmental policies, awareness, responsibility, reading and writing habits and curriculum activities etc are developed in the elementary educational level which helps them to intimate these elements at higher educational level. Qualitative and quantitative development at elementary level leads to the development of the level of higher education. But somehow yet we are not achieved the universal enrolment of children at elementary level, which clear depiction has given below in figure.

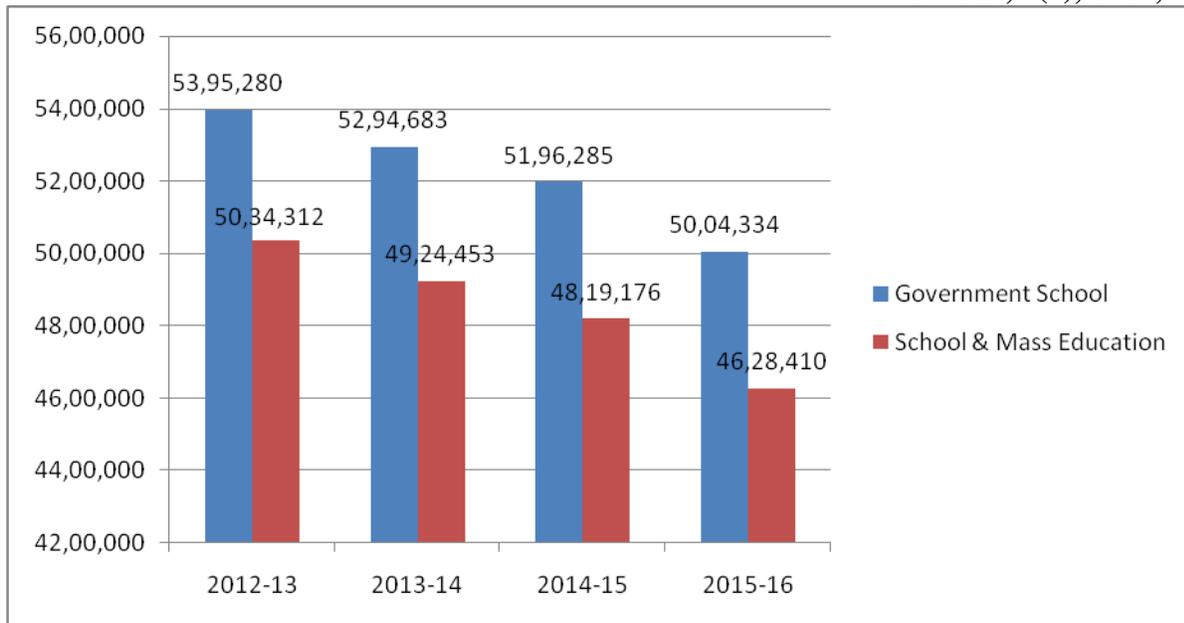


Figure 2: Enrolment of children in School from (Class I – VIII).
(Source : OPEPA Odisha Government, 2015)

Table 1: Educational Institution and Enrolment of Children in Sundargarh District of Odisha.

Description	Number of Schools	No. of Student Enrolment
Primary	2,686	2,07,292
Upper Primary	1,084	95,711
Secondary	409	3,03,003

(Source : www.panchayat.gov.in>document)

According to the above figure it clearly shows that, the number of enrolment of children decreased throughout the year instead of enhancement. In 2012-13 there were 50,34,312 numbers of children enrolled under School & Mass Education Department from the total of 53,95,280 numbers of children of Government schools. In 2013-14 the number of enrolment of children decreased to 49,24,453 under School & Mass Education Department where there were 52,94,683 numbers of children in Government school. In 2014-15 and 2015-16 the number of children under School & Mass Education Department decreased to 48,19,176 and 46,28,410 respectively. Thus it signified that, somehow the low enrolment of children at elementary level lag behind the education and far

reaching from the Universalisation of elementary education.

Let to somebody know about the status of school and student enrolment, the following data has been taken in this study.

According to the above table, there were 2,686 and 1,084 numbers of Primary and Upper Primary Schools and 409 numbers of Secondary school in Sundargarh District as per 2011 Census. There were 2,07,292 and 95,711 numbers of children enrolled in Primary and Upper Primary School accordingly. And significantly more numbers of children such as 3,03,003 were enrolled in Secondary school.

As elementary education is the first stage of becoming literate, the government provided resources for the growth and development of

elementary education. Therefore to spread the literacy in the state, the government significantly focused on elementary education through various educational interventions, such as: NPE (National Policy on Education), Shakshar Bharat, NLM (National Literacy Mission), NEEM (National Elementary Education Mission), SIE (State Institute of Education), SIET(State Institute of Educational Technology), UEE (Universalisation of Elementary Education), SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) and DPEP (District Primary Education Programme) etc. Through the development of Primary education government is expecting to expand the literacy rate in the state.

Findings

After collection the data and interviewing 80% respondents, the researcher found that about 45% of the teachers opined there were not as much of schools are available for the children, especially in rural and disadvantaged areas. Even due to the lack of infrastructural development such as; insufficient class rooms, undeveloped boundary wall and somehow due to lack of teachers, there were very least numbers of children enrolled in the school. In spite of many plans, policies and holistic programme like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, yet we are far away from the universalisation of elementary education and lag behind the level of higher education in the State.

Suggestions

- Universalisation of elementary education should be most precedence of both Centre and State Government.
- Better educational facilities should be provided to the children of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Minorities and disadvantaged group.
- More numbers of government school should be constructed in rural and remote

areas to enhance more number of children at elementary level.

- For the development of higher education many educational developmental activities should be provided at school level.
- Higher level officials should check the functioning of schools relating to the teaching methods and curriculum of the study materials.

Concluding Observation

Thus in the final analysis it can be said that education is imparted by the Government as well as the private sector. This is in regard to the spread and increase of the intake rate to higher education as it is the main contributor and instrument for socio economic and political change.

From the above inputs in a nut shell it can be said that education is an instrument for achieving rapid and effective inclusive growth in the state and reveals that “Elementary Education is the foundation to Higher Education”.

With all the efforts of state and the central government with large amount of funds being provided to the education system at all levels, we can hope that so far our achievements are good though not at the pace with which our Asian giant China has progressed or the European nations and the united states. Yet there is a hope that the commendable overall development made by India in all sectors of Education during the past decades will accelerate our skill and employability ratio in the global sphere in the future years.

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