



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Economics**

**ISSUES IN PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA**

**KEY WORDS:** Primary education, Enrollment, Dropout

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**ABSTRACT**

Education is widely regarded as the route to economic prosperity, the key to scientific and technological advancement, the means to combat unemployment, and the foundation of social equity. Based on these facts, the government of India has made frantic efforts in increasing the no of children enrolled in primary school though there are still many who are not enrolled and who do not complete the programme. This massive expansion has been possible by the infusion of large sum of monetary allocation to primary education. Although the functionality of this level of education is not doubted, in addition to the structural changes made to improve the system, it has been saddled with problems ranging from issues of enrollment funding, infrastructure, teaching personnel and curriculum provisions. This paper mainly discusses the issues in primary education and measures that should be taken to achieve hundred percent attainments in primary education in India.

**INTRODUCTION**

Primary education is the foundation of formal education. It is an essential component in the structure of the educational system of every nation. In order to qualify for other levels of education one must first pass through primary schools, as such it is an institution upon which all other levels of education and educational achievements are built. It prepares the mind and trains the child for higher academic pursuits. It provides young learners with the fundamentals of reading, writing, skill acquisition, information and attitudes necessary for proper adjustment into the society. Unfortunately, though not all recipients of primary education get to higher levels. Investment in primary or basic education is considered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as a means to foster gender inequality and sustained economic growth and reduce poverty. The age of primary schooling defined as 6-10 years. The direct relationship between attainment in primary education and human resource development forced by the Government of India to universalisation of primary education through education. "Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan" was the central legislation earmarked in 2001. It gives emphasis on the fact that all children should be in schools of different kinds by 2003. Despite that primary education is not homogeneously spread either in states or even with the states due to various problems. This paper tries to emphasize the importance and basic issues of primary education with the aim of achieving inclusive economic growth in India.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

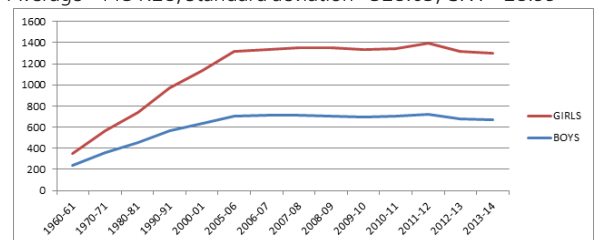
The data has collected on secondary basis from the data source published by Ministry of Human Resource Development and data source published by the Central Planning Commission under Central Government of India. The data has been chosen secondarily which is based on cross section entity in order to get the whole overview of primary education in India. The population has been divided into three categories - General, Schedule Caste (SC) and Schedule Tribes (ST) categories including both boys & girls in each category. This paper attempts to examine the regression analysis (Econometric Model) between the dependent and independent variables. Here the dependent variable is Literacy Rate and independent variables are Percentage change in GDP per capita, Dropout Rate, and Percentage change in pupil-teacher ratio in order to get an overview about how this dependent variable is influenced by the independent variable.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Table-1: Level wise enrollment (general category)**

Level year	Boys	Girls	Total
1960-61	236	114	350
1970-71	357	213	570
1980-81	453	285	738
1990-91	570	404	974
2000-01	640	498	1138
2005-06	705	616	1321
2006-07	711	626	1337
2007-08	711	644	1355
2008-09	706	647	1353
2009-10	697	639	1336
2010-11	701	646	1348
2011-12	726	672	1398
2012-13	681	639	1320
2013-14	672	628	1300

Average= 1131.28, Standard deviation= 328.03, C.V. = 28.99

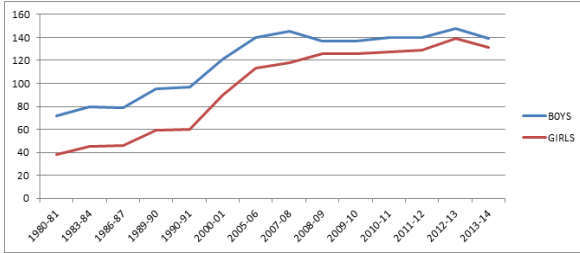


From Table – 1 and corresponding figure, we get Level - Enrollment for the general category smoothly increases from 1960-61 upto 2005-06. After 2007, the level wise enrollment for both boys and girls shows a steady level of development.

**Table 2: (Schedule caste category)**

Level (year)	Boys	Girls	Total
1980-81	72	38	110
1983-84	80	45	125
1986-87	79	46	125
1989-90	95	59	154
1990-91	97	60	167
2000-01	121	90	211
2005-06	140	113	253
2007-08	145	118	263
2008-09	137	126	263
2009-10	137	126	263
2010-11	140	127	267
2011-12	140	129	269
2012-13	148	139	287
2013-14	139	131	270

Average= 216.21, standard deviation= 62.92, C.V.= 29.10



From Table 2, we see that Level Wise Enrollment for the schedule caste category have a erratic nature from 1980-81 to 2000-01. Then there is a sharp increase in the level wise Enrollment from 2000-01 to 2007-08, the level wise enrollment attains a steady level of development. Further it shows an increasing tendency in 2012-13. we observe that though the level wise enrollment for boys and girls in schedule caste category increases till 2007-08 and attains a steady level thereafter but it is observed that the increase in the level wise Enrollment for boys is more as compared to girls. Currently, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is implemented as India's main programme for universalizing elementary education. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of learning levels of children.

Table- 3: (Schedule tribe category)

Level (year)	Boys	Girls	Total
1980-81	31	15	46
1983-84	37	20	57
1986-87	42	24	66
1989-90	49	29	78
1990-91	49	29	78
2000-01	63	47	110
2005-06	75	66	141
2006-07	76	68	144
2007-08	77	70	147
2008-09	78	72	150
2009-10	77	72	149
2010-11	77	72	149
2011-12	79	74	153
2012-13	77	73	150
2013-14	75	70	145

Average= 117.53, standard deviation= 39.02, C.V.= 33.20



From Table 3, we observe that the level wise Enrollment for the Schedule tribes category increases sharply from year 1980-81 to 1990-91 but it attains a steady level of development from 1990-91 to 2000-01. After 2000-01 we observe a sharp rise in the Level wise Enrollment for the schedule tribes category upto 2008-09. Again in 2011-12 there is a small increase in level wise enrollment for schedule tribes category but that it shows a decreasing tendency.

Value of C.V. in different categories

General (PRIMARY LEVEL)	Schedule caste (PRIMARY LEVEL)	Schedule tribe (PRIMARY LEVEL)
28.99	29.10	33.20

From the above data we calculate the coefficient of variation (c.v.) among various categories. We find that c.v. for general category is lower as compared to schedule caste and schedule tribes category. Lower c.v. means there may be higher degree

of consistency in primary education and lower degree of variability where as the schedule caste and the schedule tribes have higher c.v as compared to general category which means that they are less consistent and shows higher degree variability in primary education. Thus general category have lower c.v as compared to other category because - parents may be well educated, have a good family background, well supportive environment of education for their children, earns good income, guides their children properly through their own knowledge, provides healthy nutrition to their children were some important crucial factors which help them to encourage, help to generate interests and thereby devote their mindset strongly in education to become well established in future. On the other hand, the other two categories (schedule caste and schedule tribes) are lagged behind because of deprivation of these basic important factors.

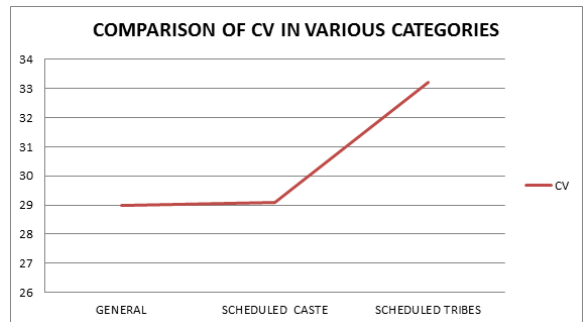
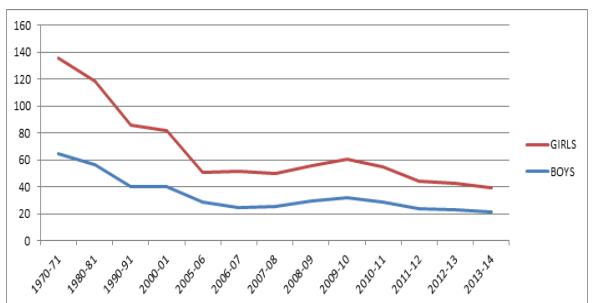


Table 4: Dropout rate (general category)

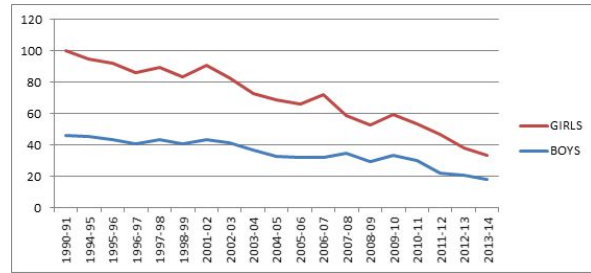
Level(year)	Total	Boys	Girls
1970-71	67	64.5	70.9
1980-81	58.7	56.2	62.5
1990-91	42.6	40.1	46
2000-01	40.7	39.7	41.9
2005-06	25.7	28.7	21.8
2006-07	25.6	24.6	26.8
2007-08	25.1	25.7	24.4
2008-09	27.8	29.6	25.8
2009-10	30.3	31.8	28.5
2010-11	27.4	29	25.4
2011-12	22.3	23.4	21
2012-13	21.3	23	19.4
2013-14	19.8	21.2	18.3



The above figure shows the overall trend of dropout rate in general category. This figure clearly shows that overall level of dropout rate was high in 1970-71 but after that dropout rate falls drastically and reaches to 19.8% in 2013-14. This may be due to the reason that education was given a primary importance by parents, improvement in infrastructure in primary school, developing interests in education, right to education for all, mid-day meal schemes to improve the enrollment and regular attendance to reduce dropout rate in schools. Similarly, we observe that the dropout rate for girls which stood at 70.9% in 1970-71 falls to 21.8% in 2005-06. But after 2005-06 – 2010-11 dropout rate for girls shows a fluctuating trend of growth and after 2010-11 it falls drastically and reaches to 18.3% in 2013-14.

**Table 5: Dropout rate (schedule caste category)**

Level(year)	Total	Boys	Girls
1990-91	49.4	46.3	54
1994-95	47	45.1	49.8
1995-96	45.7	43.7	48.5
1996-97	42.7	41	45.2
1997-98	44.7	43.4	46.4
1998-99	41.4	40.5	42.8
2001-02	45.2	43.7	47.1
2002-03	41.5	41.1	41.9
2003-04	36.6	36.8	36.2
2004-05	34.2	32.7	36.1
2005-06	32.9	32.1	33.8
2006-07	35.9	32.3	39.9
2007-08	30.1	34.4	24.5
2008-09	26.6	29.6	23
2009-10	30	33.7	25.6
2010-11	27.1	30.2	23.4
2011-12	23.5	22.3	24.7
2012-13	19.2	20.9	17.4
2013-14	16.6	17.7	15.4



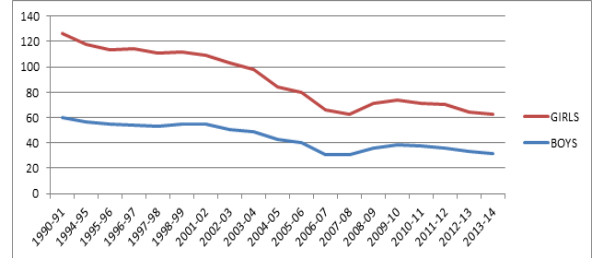
The above table shows the overall trend of dropout rate in schedule caste category. From the figure it is clearly observed that the overall trend of dropout rate which was 49.4% in 1990-91 have drastically fallen and reached at 32.9% in 2005-06. After 2005-06-2009-10 dropout rate shows a fluctuating trend of growth. But after 2010-11 overall dropout rate have fallen drastically and reached 16.6% in 2013-14.

Similarly for girls we observe that the dropout rate which was 54% in 1990-91 falls to 45.2%. From 1997-98-2002-03 the trend for dropout rate shows a fluctuating tendency but thereafter dropout rate decreases and reach to 33.8% in 2005-06. But in 2006-07 it raises sharply and reach to 39.9%. But after 2009-10 it experience a steady fall in dropout rate and reaches to 15.4% in 2013-14 apart from marginal increase in dropout rate to 24.7% in 2011-12.

**Table 6: Dropout rate (schedule tribes category)**

Level(year)	Total	Boys	Girls
1990-91	62.5	60.3	66.1
1994-95	58.6	56.9	61.3
1995-96	56.6	55	58.9
1996-97	56.5	54.4	60
1997-98	55.1	52.9	58.1
1998-99	55.7	54.8	56.8

2001-02	52.3	55	54.1
2002-03	51.4	50.8	52.1
2003-04	48.9	49.1	48.7
2004-05	42.3	42.6	42
2005-06	39.8	40.2	39.3
2006-07	33.1	30.6	35.8
2007-08	31.3	31	31.7
2008-09	35.6	36	35.1
2009-10	36.8	38.1	35.4
2010-11	35.6	37.2	33.9
2011-12	35.3	36.1	34.4
2012-13	32.3	33.3	31.2
2013-14	31.3	31.9	30.7



The above figure shows the overall trends of dropout rate for schedule tribes category. The overall dropout rate which stood at 62.5% in 1990-91 falls sharply to 55.1% in 1997-98. Though there was marginal increase in dropout rate in 1998-99 but after that, we observe that overall dropout rate falls steadily and reaches to 31.3% in 2007-08. Within next two years the overall dropout rate again rises and reaches to 36.8% in 2009-10. Again from 2010-11 it shows a decreasing tendency and reaches to 31.3% in 2013-14. Similarly it also shows the overall trend of dropout rate for boys in schedule tribes category. Dropout rate for boys which stood at 60.3% in 1990-91 falls drastically to 52.9% in 1997-98. Though in 2001-02 dropout rate again increases to 55% but after that it falls drastically and reaches to 30.6% in 2006-07. But in 2008-09 and 2009-10 dropout rate again increases sharply and reaches to 38.1% as compared to 2006-07 and 2007-08. But after 2009-10 dropout rate again falls slowly and reaches to 31.3% in 2013-14. Similarly for girls we observe that the dropout rate which was 66.1% in 1990-91 falls drastically to 31.7% in 2007-08. There was again sharp increase in dropout rate for girls within next two years as compared to 2007-08. After 2009-10 there was a steady decline in dropout rate expect in the year 2011-12 experience a marginal increase in dropout rate to 34.4% and finally reaches to 30.7% in 2013-14. From the above figure, Schedule caste posses drop out about 31% of the area and the general category posses 29% of the total area in dropout.

From the above table, we observe that the drop out enrollment ratio for schedule caste (boys) which stood at 0.4473196 in 1990-91 falls drastically after that and reaches to 0.1273381 in 2013-14. This due to the reason that many measures have been taken to uplift the education of minorities in recent years.

**Table -7: Econometric analysis**

summary output						
Regression Statistics						
Multiple R	0.7998845					
R Square	0.7797691					
Adjusted R Square	0.7990763					
S.E	0.393359					
Observations	5					
ANOVA	df	SS	M	F	Significant F	
Regression	3	669.914	223.304	1443.177	0.019	
Residual	1	0.1547	0.154			

Total	4	670.068						
	Coefficients	S.E	t Stat	P-value	Lower 95%	Upper 95%	Lower 95.0%	Upper 95.0%
Intercept	63.158	1.276	49.491	0.012	46.943	79.373	46.943	79.373
DROPOUT	-0.791	0.026	-29.424	0.021	-1.133	-0.449	-1.133	-0.449
%CHANGE GDP	-0.049	0.026	-3.453	0.179	-0.230	0.131	-0.230	0.131
%CHANGE PTR	-0.049	0.026	-42.068	0.015	0.543	1.014	0.543	1.014

Variable	Coefficients	Standard error	t-stat	p- value
Dropout rate	-0.791**	0.026	-29.424	0.021
%change in GDP per capita	-0.049	0.026	-3.453	0.179
%change in PTR	-0.049**	0.026	-42.068	0.015

Note : \*\* Denotes 5% level of significance

The first explanatory variable which is significant in this paper is dropout rate. Here P value for drop out rate is 0.02<0.05. So it is significant at 5% level of significance. The sign of the coefficient is negative which means that it significantly influences the dependent variable – literacy rate. There may be some reasons behind this. Some of these reasons have been discussed elaborately.

It is clear from the fact that the number of children enrolled in school has been increased over time. Nevertheless , a significant proportion of children who start primary schools .There are many factors that Dropout rate affects literacy rate. These include individual have poor health or malnutrition or lack of motivation. Other's emerge from children's household situations such as child labour and poverty. School level factors also play a key role in increasing pressure to dropout such as teacher's absentees , school location and poor quality of educational provision. The system of educational provision at the community level generates conditions that can ultimately impact on the likelihood of children to drop out from school. Therefore , both demand and supply driven factors may embedded in cultural and contextual realities which make each circumstances different.

Poverty appears to influence demand for schooling , not only because it affects the inability of households to pay school fees and other costs it associated with education , but also because it may be associated with a enough opportunity cost of schooling for children. As children grows older, the opportunity cost of education is even longer, hence increasing the pressure for children to work and earn money income for households as opposed to spending line in education .

Additional factors affecting motivations and decision making relating to educational access may be the key factor of dropping out. Perceptions of how education will influence lifestyle and career possibilities , life chances in the labour market are shown to be factors in both early withdrawal and sustained access in different contexts..

The second explanatory Variable in this paper is % change in GDP per capita and from the results , we have seen that it is insignificant at 5% level of significance i.e. , as GDP changes, it has no effects on literacy rate in India.

The third explanatory Variable which is significant in this paper is % change in pupil teacher ratio. Here P value is 0.01 < 0.05 , so it is significant at 5% level of significance. The coefficient of the variable is negative. There may be the several reasons. Teachers play an important role in the trajectory of the students throughout the formal schooling experience (Baker, Grant, & Morlock, 2008). Although these research regarding pupil -teacher relationships investigate the primary years of schooling, teachers have the unique opportunity to support students 'academic and social development at all

levels of schooling(Baker et al., 2008; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner& Morris, 1998; McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, &McClowry, in press). Positive pupil- teacher relationships enable students to feel safe and secure in the learning environments and provide scaffolding for important social and academic skills (Baker et al., 2008; O'Connor, Dearing, & Collins, 2011; Silver, Measelle Armstron, & Essex, 2005). Teachers who support students in the learning environment can positively impact their social and academic outcomes, which plays an important role to increase literacy , for the long term trajectory of school and eventually employment (Baker et al., 2008; O'Connor et al., 2011; Silver et al., 2005).

When teachers form positive bonds with students classrooms becomes supportive spaces in which students can engage in academically and socially productive ways (Hamre&Pianta, 2001). Positive Teacher student relationships are classified as having the presence of closeness, warmth and positivity (Hamre&Pianta, 2001). Students who have positive relationships with their teachers use them as a secure base from which they can explore the classroom and school setting both academically and socially , to take on academic challenges and work on social emotional development (Hamre&Pianta, 2001). This includes relationships with peers and developing self esteem and self study(Hamre&Pianta, 2001). Though this secure relationships, students learn about socially appropriate behaviour as well as academic expectations and how to achieve these expectations (Hamre&Pianta, 2001).

Students in high poverty urban schools may benefit from positive teacher – relationships even more than students in high – income schools because of the risk associated with poverty includes high rates of school drop outs, lower rate of college applications, low self efficacy and low self confidence(Murray & Malmgren, 2005). Low income students who have strong student teacher relationships have higher academic achievement and have more positive social emotional adjustment than their peers who do not have a positive relationship with a teacher. (Murray & Malmgren, 2005)

Teacher – student relationships can have significant impact on peer acceptance of students (Hughes et al., 1999). Teacher's interactions with students can affect classmates perceptions of individual students, in turn affecting which students classmates choose to interact with and accept. On the other hand conflicting interactions between teachers and students may convey a lack of acceptance, causing other students to also reject the student involved in the conflict with the teacher (Hughes et al., 1999). Peer rejection significantly impacts self esteem of students leading to severe negative social relations..

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