



SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN AND ITS IMPACT ON ENROLMENT IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY



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ABSTRACT

Education is the most important lever for social, economic and political transformation. A well educated population, equipped with the relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills is essential for economic and social development in the twenty first century. Education is the most potent tool for socio economic mobility and a key instrument for building an equitable and just society. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is one of India's major flagship programmes for universalisation of elementary education launched in 2000-2001. Universalisation of elementary education in India implies Universal access and enrolment, universal retention, bridging gender and social category gap in primary and upper primary education and elementary education of satisfactory quality.

KEYWORDS: Education, Human Capital, Social Indicators, Elementary Education, Schools

INTRODUCTION

Education is the basic input for investment in human capital. Education is directly linked with economic development and it is also one of the essential social indicators. It is the key to social mobility. Well-educated population is essential for India's economic and social development. India has not yet achieved cent per cent literacy level. There also exists gender disparity in literacy level. Children from oppressed and poor sections of the society especially girls lack access to school education which is a serious problem to be encountered. Government of India had implemented several schemes to promote school education. The principal programme for

Universalization of primary education is Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) a centrally - sponsored scheme being implemented in partnership with State\Union Territory Government. The programme has been in operation since 2000-2001. Bridging gender gap in access to and participation in elementary education is one of the major goals of SSA. In this context an attempt has been made in this study to analyze the changes brought in gender disparity in enrolment of student in elementary education in India.

OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study are:

- ✧ To understand the specific goals of SSA programme.
- ✧ To examine the impact of SSA on sex-wise enrolment of students in elementary education from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is a macroeconomic study. The entire data used for the present study have been obtained from secondary sources. The sources of secondary data used are journals, books, magazine and reports. Websites related to SSA programme were also used in this study.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

The collected data are presented and analyzed with help of tables, percentages and linear trend model. The trends in enrolment of boys and girls since the launching of SSA are analyzed.

The trend line fitted is of the form

$$Y = a + bx$$

GOALS OF SSA

The goals of SSA are:

- i. Enrolment of all children in schools Education Guarantee Centre (EGC) Alternate School, 'Back-to-school' camp by 2003.
- ii. Retention of all children till the upper primary stage.
- iii. Bridging of gender and social category gaps in enrolment with retention and learning.
- iv. Ensuring that there is significant enhancement in the learning achievement levels of children at the primary and upper primary stages.
- v. All children in the 6-14 age group to complete five years of primary schooling by 2007
- vi. All children complete eight years of elementary schooling by 2010
- vii. Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life.
- viii. Universal retention of children in school by 2010. (Tilak 2007)

ENROLMENT

The enrolment of children in schools depicts the current flow or the spread of education. In order to ensure adequate enrolment of children in government schools, free books are being provided to all boys and girls of classes I to VIII. Enrolment of all categories of students by stages of schools education is observed through the table no 1.

Table No. 1 Enrollment of Boys and Girls in Elementary Education From 2000-2001 to 2013-2014

(in millions)

Year	Elementary Education (Classes I- VIII)		
	Boys	Girls	Total
2000- 2001	89.3	67.3	156.6
2001- 2002	89.7	69.0	158.7
2002-2003	91.4	77.9	169.3
2003-2004	95.7	81.4	177.1
2004-2005	98.2	83.8	182.0
2005-2006	99.4	84.9	184.3
2006-2007	100.8	87.3	188.1
2007-2008	102.1	90.6	192.7
2008-2009	99.4	90.5	189.9
2009-2010	102.6	92.4	195.0
2010-2011	103.3	94.1	197.4
2011-2012	102.6	96.4	199.0
2012-2013	102.8	96.9	199.7
2013-2014	102.8	96.1	198.9

Source :

Statistics of school Education 2007-2008, MHRD, Gol;

Statistics at a Glance, 2011, MHRD, Gol; statistics of school Education, 2010-2011, MHRD, Gol; and U-DISE, NUEPA.

Table No.1 shows that enrolment in elementary education for boys increased steadily from 89.3 million to 102.8 million between 2000-2001 and 2013-2014. Enrolment of girls in elementary level of education sharply increased from 67.3 million in 2000-2001 to 96.4 million in 2011-2012. For the next year, the enrolment of girls has marginally fallen to 96.1 million. A comparison of the changes in enrolment of boys and girls in elementary education between 2000-2001 and 2013-2014 shows that

the enrolment of girls increased by 28.8 million while that of boys increased by 13.5 million. Thus the increase in enrolment in elementary education is higher for girls than that for boys. The overall increase in enrolment for both boys and girls in elementary level of education was 42.3 million during the same period.

The linear trends fitted to show the enrolment of boys and girls are given in the figure 1.

Figure No. 1 Enrollment of Boys and Girls in Elementary Education from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014 Linear Trend Model

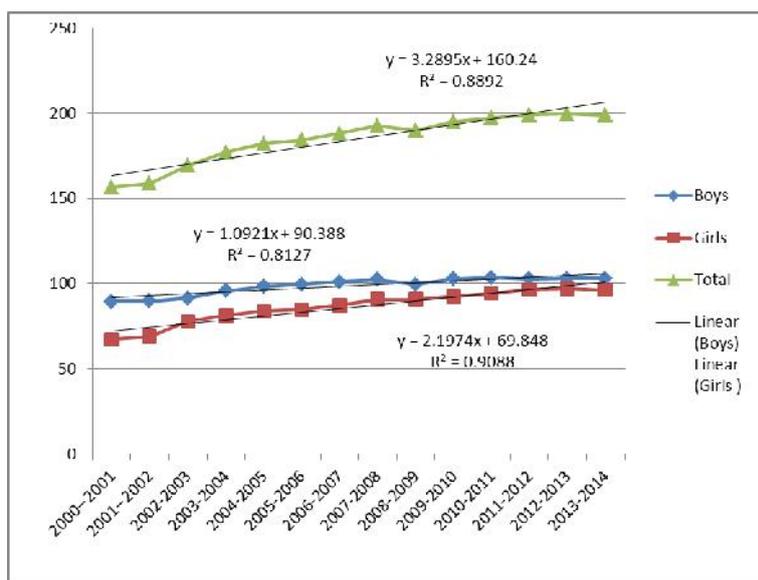


Figure No. 1 shows that the Enrolment in elementary education for boys increased at the rate of 1.09 million per annum from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014. The calculated regression value is 81 per cent and hence, the regression equation fitted for the data is reliable. The Enrolment in elementary education for girls increased at the rate of 2.19 million per annum from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014. The calculated regression value is 90 per cent and hence, the regression equation fitted for the data is reliable. A comparison of the trend in enrolment for boys and girls reveals that the rate of increase is more for girls than boys. The Enrollment in elementary education for both boys and girls increased at the rate of 3.28 million

per annum from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014. The calculated regression value is 90 per cent and hence, the regression equation fitted for the data is reliable.

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO

Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is a statistical measure used in the education sector to determine the number of students enrolled in school at different grade levels like elementary, middle school and high school. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), describes GER as the total enrolment within a country “in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education.

Table no. 2 Gross Enrolment Ratio of Boys and Girls in Elementary Education from 2000-2001 to 2013-2014

Year	Elementary Education		
	Boys	Girls	Total
2000-2001	102.5	73.5	88.0
2001-2002	99.8	77.3	88.9
2002-2003	86.7	73.9	80.5
2003-2004	90.6	81.1	86.1
2004-2005	108.5	95.8	102.4
2005-2006	111.9	101.3	106.7
2006-2007	114.7	104.2	109.6
2007-2008	116.3	108.9	112.7
2008-2009	122.0	116.6	119.4
2009-2010	121.1	116.4	118.9
2010-2011	120.5	118.7	119.7
2011-2012	NA	NA	NA
2012-2013	114.8	114.2	114.5
2013-2014	105.9	105.0	105.5

Source: *Statistics of School Education 2007-08, NGRDM Gol*
Educational statistics at a glance, 2011 MHRD, Gol; statistics of
school Education 2010-2011, MHRD, Gol; and U-DISE, NUEPA.

Table No. 2 shows that the gross enrolment ratio in elementary education increased by 4.8 per cent for boys, whereas, for girls it increased by 26.7 per cent between 2000-2001 and 2013-2014. The GER in elementary education for both boys and girls together increased from 81.6 per cent in 2000-2001 to 97 per cent in 2013-2014.

CONCLUSION

SSA has made significant progress in moving towards universal enrolment particularly by reducing gender gap. The increase in enrolment at elementary level has been higher for girls than that of boys. Still there are challenges in moving towards universal enrolment. Higher community involvement would help in effective implementation of SSA and thereby to achieve universal enrolment in elementary education in India.

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