Quality Education for All: Moving from Access to Success in School

Tanvi Kashyap¹, Dr. Anuradha Sharma²

¹Department of Community Education and Disability Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

²Department of Community Education and Disability Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India

Abstract: *Two decades ago, access to education was the major concern in the area of school education in India. The availability of one school for every kilometer in India has now shifted the focus from access to education to ensuring quality education to all children. The United Nations Children's Fund stated that low learning outcomes in India are due to poor quality education which leads to increase in dropout rates and an increase in child labor, abuse, and violence. This research paper discusses the initiatives and policies taken up by the government in order to improve the quality of education among school children in India. This paper also discusses the level of educational attainment after these initiatives and makes several suggestions for further improvement in the quality of education.*

Keywords: Access; Education; Educational attainment; Government policies; Initiatives in education; Quality of education

1. Introduction

The Right to Education act (2009) envisaged free and compulsory education for all children within the age group of 6 to 14 years. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan or the universalization of education, and several other programs also aimed for similar outcomes. Fifteen years later, access to education does not seem to be an issue anymore with the advent of availability of one school for every kilometer in India. When a country moves from the stage of 'underdevelopment' to 'developing', there is a natural shift in focus from access to education towards quality of education. The United Nations Children's Fund stated that low learning outcomes in India are due to poor quality education which leads to increase in dropout rates and an increase in child labour, abuse, and violence. In many classrooms in India, negative reinforcement, rote - learning and discrimination are still practiced (UNICEF official website).

The National Education Policy, 2020 also laid more emphasis on quality of education. It focused on the pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability, and accountability. The sustainable development goal - 4 focuses on early childhood development and care, pre - primary education, learning outcomes, gender equality and vocational skills rather than mere quantum of school enrolment rates, attendance, or syllabus completion (Pandey, 2018).

Good quality education is dependent upon innovative approaches to learning which are discovered through research. The National Education Policy 2020 is a step towards quality education as it focuses on technology integration into the teaching - learning process, sports integrated and story - telling based pedagogy, and the emphasis is on the development of each child's creative potential (Das, 2024). Thus, this is a clear indication that for sustaining development in a nation, quality of education is of utmost importance.

According to Niti Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyan, India aims to become a developed nation by 2047 and thus, to fulfill this mission, good quality early childhood education must be the key focus area as the children in this age - group will be the ones who will become the youth of our nation and will contribute to its growth in the year 2047.

Government Initiatives
The following are some of the initiatives taken in India to enhance quality of education in schools:

- *Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat (2016)* This initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the Department of School Education and Literacy was launched as a sub - programme to the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan with a twin objective of improving early reading and writing skills along with comprehension of language and aimed at improving early mathematical skills. Since this is the foundational stage of language and mathematical development, children who are given the right knowledge at the right age, grow up to be more educated and responsible citizens. This helps in their overall cognitive development and they never fall behind in their studies throughout their schooling years and never face any difficulties in understanding subjects as a strong language and mathematical base proves to be beneficial for an entire lifetime.
- *National Reading Initiative Programme (2015 - 2016)* This initiative was introduced in the year 2015 - 2016 to inculcate the habit of reading in elementary school students. Teachers are encouraged to plan and implement innovative activities to promote reading. As an implementation of this initiative, schools in Sikkim have set up reading corners for children in the primary classes. (Pandey, 2018)
- *Pradhan Mantri Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI):* These schools have been set up to provide high quality education in an equitable, inclusive and joyful school environment by focusing on vocational interventions, child tracking, ICT, smart classrooms and digital libraries. Sustainable initiatives have also been taken by developing environment friendly institutions.
- *Vidya Samiksha Kendras (VSKs)* were special centres set up to assess the progress of the entire education system starting from learning outcomes of students to

Volume 13 Issue 8, August 2024
Fully Refereed | Open Access | Double Blind Peer Reviewed Journal
www.ijsr.net

Paper ID: SR24829103917   DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.21275/SR24829103917   1855

infrastructure facilities, etc. These centres are currently operational in twelve states: Punjab, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Delhi, Nagaland, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh.

- *PM e - Vidya:* This initiative offers educational resources through multiple platforms (DTH TV Channels, community radio, content for Divyangs (CWSNs), podcast, etc. telecasted across country. Initiated by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, the aim of this initiative was to enhance the pool of knowledge across various platforms.

- *National Initiative for proficiency in reading with understanding and numeracy (*2021): This initiative is also known as the Nipun Bharat Mission. As per the National Education Policy, 2020, universal foundational literacy and numeracy needs to be achieved by 2025 in the primary schools of India. Thus, a national mission on foundational literacy has been formed to implement the necessary plan for achieving this target by 2025 and to check progress and monitor success of the implementation. Thus, this initiative marks a shift in focus from universalization of education to good quality foundational literacy which is the most essential part of the education system.

- *Beti Bachao Beti Padhao* scheme was introduced by the Indian government in the year 2015, to reduce female foeticide and ensure good quality education for girl child.

Several initiatives were launched under this scheme to enhance quality of education of the girl child. Some of the initiatives were 'Collector ki Class', to give free coaching and career counselling to girls studying in government schools. "Lakshya se Rubaru', initiative was launched as an internship programme for female students in colleges to provide knowledge on which career to choose and providing necessary information related to that. 'Bal cabinet' initiative gave girl students a chance to role play ministers and government officials and conduct discussions to resolve major issues being faced by the government.

- *SWAYAM and SWAYAM Prabha (2017)* Swayam is an acronym for Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds. It was launched in the year 2017 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide one integrated platform for online courses. SWAYAM Prabha was created to develop 32 high quality educational channels, through DTH for the entire country especially the remote areas where internet availability remains a challenge.

Educational attainment among School Children

Despite the initiatives taken up by the government of India, the National Achievement Survey (2017), highlighted poor educational attainment among children in early years of school.
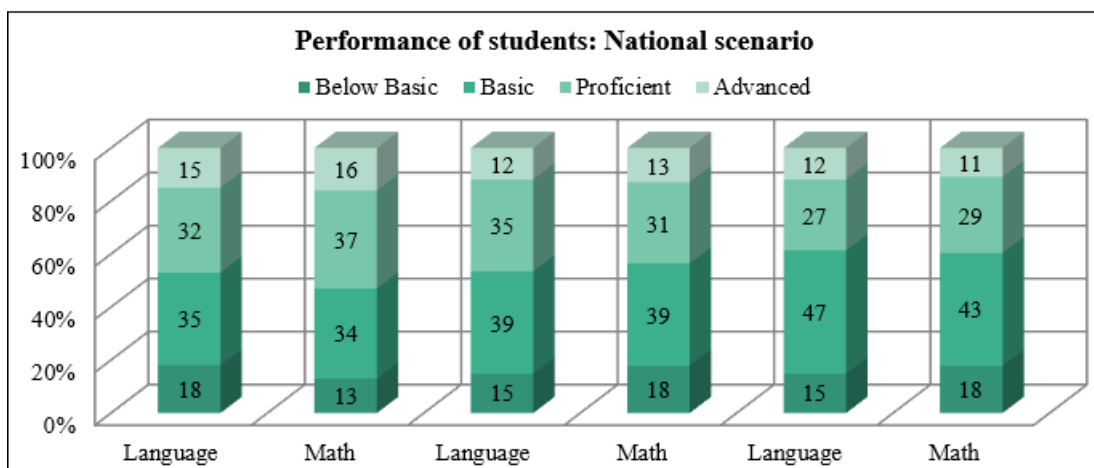
Source: ncert. nic. in/pdf/NAS/WithReleaseDate_NPPTL. pdf

According to this survey, only 39 to 53% students in classes 3rd, 5th and 8th have achieved proficiency levels. Around 13 to 18% of students are below basic learning levels.

Suggestions for further improvement in quality of education

- While teaching students, a problem - based approach can be adopted which helps the students to gain conceptual clarity and change their mindset from the rote - learning techniques they are used to.

- Teaching quality can be improved if teachers learn from each other. For example, if a teacher

Uses an innovative technique to teach a concept in class, the other teachers should learn from her and apply the same technique for teaching their respective subjects. This will also help in enhancing teacher motivation and improve the overall quality of teaching and learning in every school. It

will also enhance cooperation and collaboration among teachers, thus, further increasing their productivity.

- Higher education institutions should offer add - on courses to ensure skill development and increased employability among youth. Entrepreneurial development programs should also be introduced to help youth become self - employed.

- Technology has already played a significant role in enhancing the quality of education in India. The rapidly developing technology such as artificial intelligence, gamification platforms, etc. can also be used to improve quality of education in the future. Technology can help in developing a personalized adaptive learning system through which each child can learn and practice at their own pace without worrying about failure.

- Mental wellbeing is becoming a growing concern for school aged children these days and has been found to

Volume 13 Issue 8, August 2024
Fully Refereed | Open Access | Double Blind Peer Reviewed Journal
www.ijsr.net

Paper ID: SR24829103917   DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.21275/SR24829103917   1856

affect the ability of students in gaining knowledge and has resulted in greater absenteeism of students in schools. (KPMG report, 2019)

2. Conclusion

The Sustainable Development Goals and the National Education Policy, 2020 have clearly highlighted that it is time to move from universalization of education to good quality education, if we wish to see our nation as a developed nation. Thus, ensuring good quality education starting from the basic literacy skills, to the best facilities in higher education and further ensuring lifelong education is of utmost importance for our country.

References

[1] Das, P. & Das, G. (2024). *National Education Policy - 2020: Research and Innovations for Transforming Higher Education*. Retrieved from https: //www.researchgate. net/publication/379110386_National_Education_Policy - 2020_Research_and_Innovations_for_Transforming_Higher_Education

[2] Department of School Education and Literacy. (2021). *Nipun Bharat Mission*. Retrieved from NIPUN Bharat: Department of School Education & Literacy

[3] Klynweld Peat Marwick Goerdeler. (2019). *Enhancing Quality of Education in India by 2030*. Retrieved from Enhancing quality of education in India by 2030 (kpmg. com)

[4] Ministry of Education, Government of India. (2023). *Schooling: Access & Quality*. Retrieved from https: //ncte. gov. in/website/PDF/EaseofSchooling. pdf

[5] Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2020). *National Education Policy 2020*. Retrieved August 1, 2021 from https: //www.education. gov. in/sites/upload_files/ mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0. pdf

[6] Ministry of Human Resource Development. (2016). *Padhe Bharat Badhe Bharat*. Retrieved from https: //www.education. gov. in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document - reports/Padhe - Bharat - Badhe - Bharat. pdf

[7] Pandey, B. (2018). Achieving SDG - 4 in India: Moving from Quantity to Quality Education for all. *Research and Information System for Developing Countries*. Retrieved from DP 232 Dr Beena Pandey. pdf

[8] ncert. nic. in/pdf/NAS/WithReleaseDate_NPPTL. pdf

[9] Swayam. gov. in

[10] Unicef. org

Volume 13 Issue 8, August 2024
Fully Refereed | Open Access | Double Blind Peer Reviewed Journal
www.ijsr.net

Paper ID: SR24829103917   DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.21275/SR24829103917   1857