

Status of Elementary Schooling and Learning in Rural Areas of Uttarakhand

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ABSTRACT

Essence of child's future wellbeing is served by education. Primary education is the first step of formal education beginning at about age 5 to 7 and ending at 11 to 13. It involves various steps for evolution of child such as creating a right environment, providing access to books & options, encouraging communication and focus on their interests. Foundational literacy and numeracy skills of young children is considered to be essential for their growth. Evidence on schooling and foundational learning status of child helps us in understanding the way which is to be paved for them in future and in present. This study presents the status of children's schooling and learning in the rural areas of Uttarakhand on the basis of variable of school enrollment in preschool & school, reading ability of students, capacity to perform arithmetic operations, tendency to read and understand English sentences, school facilities and other school indicators. Study is done based on secondary sources and data has been primarily taken from Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2022.

Key Words : Elementary schooling, Learning, Rural areas, Primary education

INTRODUCTION

Every child all over the world entails the right to learn. However, many children are unable to receive even the least proficiency level in writing, reading and attending school in order to strengthen the foundational skills of a child. Huge rift between what a child needs and what is provided to him, results in learning crises. Political instability, disasters, economic instability are some of the major reasons for hitting the educational opportunities. Inadequate training for teachers, material for education and unfulfilling infrastructure curtails growth of students and lack of quality education gives birth to less potent future generations resulting in barrier for their growth and upliftment. A good educational system promotes curiosity stimulation, impressionable minds and helps in shifting thoughts from bookish knowledge to life knowledge in schools thereby helping an individual to develop into a well-rounded personality from well-shaped

cognitive abilities and healthy thought process. Various fields of arts, culture, sciences, commerce, defences, helps in acquiring knowledge that exposes a child to various forms of influences by generating avenue for socializing.

Social practices of empathy, assistance, friendship, and participation are also inculcated that turn out to be vital for adulthood. Educational beyond rote learning helps in developing own's mind for any individual further enlarging the imagination of a child through which immense knowledge is generated. Thus, in order to inculcate the life workings, school is vital requirement for children. Henceforth, societal growth is impacted by quality of education thereby highlighting the importance of education in molding future of the nation by facilitating all round development

Review of literature:

Alka (2022) stressed the necessity of free and compulsory education in the age group of 6-14 years ago

with consistent mid-daymeals, proper infrastructure and innovative projects introduction to provide strong base for children. According to Bidiyalakshmi (2016) elementary schooling is the beginning step of any child that covers more than fifty per cent of job. Therefore, parent send their children to private schools due to lack of facilities in government schools, henceforth, initiation by government is requisite for schools. Chauhan and Sati (2016) concluded that reconsideration for whole education system is required as monitoring in the programs that run the schools is absent. Elementary education has poor infrastructure, financial constraints, illiterate parents of students etc. problems. Pushola (2015) pointed out toward degrading conditions of toilet, playground, furniture, library of the school that draws the solution oriented approach of the government in order to sustain and further improve the quality and standard of education. Bhatnagar and Das (2013) conducted survey and asserted the need of inclusive education that showed moderate interest by teachers due to huge workload and inadequate training. Mehra (2012) described the contributions of centrally funded programs through which Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Punjab grew while these schemes failed in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar due to lack of financial assistance. Therefore, immediate incentives and actions by the government are required. Vyas (2011) gave 20 multiple choice questions through which he concluded that government schools teachers are more active and diligent in comparison to private schools. Banerjee (2000) stated that enrollment in primary education has risen. However, quality of education has distorted and degraded the educational standard

Objectives:

1. To find out status of children’s schooling in rural areas of Uttarakhand
2. To find out status of children’s learning in schools

of rural areas of Uttarakhand

METHODOLOGY

This study has been done on the basis of secondary data that primarily includes “Annual Status of Education Report ”for the period of 2022. Other secondary sources include district survey reports, UDISE report etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

School Enrollment:

The Table 1 shows the preschool and school enrollment of children noted in 2022 with three categories of children in preschool, school and not in either of them. Ages vary from age 3 to age 8 with anganwadi, Govt. preprimary and LKG/UKG in preschool and Government, private and other categories for school. 65 percentage of children of age 3 have enrolled in anganwadis and 0.5 percentage of children of age 8 have entered in preprimary schools. 58.8 percentage children of age 8 have enrolled in government schools while 35.8 is the percentage of enrollment for same age group in private schools.

Reading:

This Table 2 depicts the percentage of students in class III, class V and class VII who can read the text of previous standards they have passed. In 2018, 43.3 percentage of students could read the text in class III of primary institutions while 87.7 percentage of students can do so in class V of private institutions. Class VIII student who can read the text of previous passed class in government institutions is 81.6 percentage in 2018 and 81 percentage in 2022.

Arithmetic:

The Table 3 shows the ability of students to

Table 1: Status of enrollment of children within preschools or schools								
Age	Pre school			School			Not in pre-school or school	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt pre primary	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	65.0	0.9	12.7	0.6	0.4	0.2	20.2	100
Age 4	56.5	1.5	29.4	1.5	1.4	0.0	9.8	100
Age 5	29.7	1.3	36.2	20.0	9.7	0.4	2.9	100
Age 6	7.0	1.1	20.5	46.4	22.7	1.4	1.3	100
Age 7	0.9	0.1	6.8	57.9	32.6	1.0	0.8	100
Age 8	0.5	0.5	1.8	58.8	35.8	2.4	0.8	100

Source: Annual status of Educational Report, 2022

Table 2: Status of students in class who can read previous class text

Year	Std III			Std V			Std VII		
	Govt.	Private	Govt. and private	Govt.	Private	Govt. and Private	Govt.	Private	Govt. and Private
2018	24.7	43.3	34.5	58.0	72.8	64.6	81.6	87.7	83.7
2022	22.1	37.5	28.1	47.7	62.8	53.3	81.0	84.6	82.2

Source: Annual Status of Education Report 2022

Table 3 : Status of Children by grade and arithmetic level

Std	Not even 1-9	Recognize 1-99	Subtract	Divide	Total
I	32.6	62.6	3.5	1.3	100
II	12.6	77.6	7.8	2.0	100
III	6.3	70.0	15.5	8.1	100
IV	3.8	57.9	18.6	19.9	100
V	3.0	48.8	17.8	30.6	100
VI	3.0	41.9	21.7	33.3	100
VII	1.9	41.6	21.8	34.8	100
VIII	1.7	31.1	22.8	44.4	100

Source: Annual Status of Education Report, 2022

recognize numbers, subtract and divide them from standard I to standard VIII. 32.6 percentage of students are unable to recognize numbers from 1-9 in standard I while 77.6 percentage of students in standard II are able to recognize numbers from 1-99.44.4 percentage of respondents can divide the numbers in class VIII and 30.6 percentage of respondents are able to subtract in standard VII.

Reading and comprehension in English:

This figure represents that percentage of respondents who can read English and tell their meaning, who can read English and tell their meaning and pay tuition classes. Percentage of students who can read and understand English in class VII is 76.2 while 54.5 percentage of students are unable to tell the meaning of the English sentences although they can read them in the same class. Tuition classes attendance percentage is highest in middle classes that are class III, class IV and

class V (Table 4).

School Facility:

This Table 5 shows various school facilities provided in schools for the students. Mid-day meal and electricity and girls toilets facility shows a higher percentage since 2018 which is 97.1, 84.4 and 58.6 respectively. Electricity facility is 93.1 percentage in 2022 and library shows a rate of 55.9 percentage

Other School Indicator:

This Table 6 depicts the status of other school indicators where weekly time allotted for physical education is 90 percentage, 73 percentage of schools have playground in schools, 87.7 percentage of schools have trained teachers and 93.6 percentage of schools allocated textbook and 49.5 percentage of schools distributed uniforms.

Table 4: Status of reading and comprehension and paid tuition classes

Std	Who can read English words but not sentences and tell their meaning	Who can read English sentences and tell their meanings	Paid tuition classes (Govt. and Pvt.)
II	50.2	0	19.2
III	48.1	59.5	23.4
IV	51.7	64.8	24.9
V	54.4	65.9	22.5
VI	53.9	72.9	20.9
VII	54.5	76.2	16.5

Source: Annual Status of Education Report, 2022

Table 5: Status of school facility in % in various schools

% school with	2018	2022
Mid-day meal	88.1	97.1
Drinking water	75.6	84.4
Toilet	12.5	22.5
Girls' toilet	67.2	58.6
Library	26.1	55.9
Electricity	86.3	93.1
Computer	0.7	7.3

Source: Annual Status of Education Report, 2022

Table 6: Status of indicators in schools

% of school with	% on 2022
Weekly time allotted for physical education for every class	90.0
Playground in school	73.0
Have at least one teacher trained on FLN	87.5
Allocation of textbook	93.6
Distribution of uniforms	49.5
Have separate teacher for pre primary	8.3

Source: Annual status of Education Report, 2022

Conclusions:

1. Highest enrollment in Anganwadis is for age 3 and lowest is in age 4 while government preprimary schools show highest enrollment from age 4 and lowest from age 7. LKG/UKG enrollment is highest in age group 8 and percentage of non-enrolled students in preschool or school is low. Children of age 8 are more enrolled in government schools and private schools however age 3 -4 enrollment is lowest in government and private schools

2. Students belonging to private institutions are more capable to read the text of previous classes they have passed while in case of government schools the percentage of students capable to read the text has increased with higher classes. Overall trend of capacity of students in reading has not changed from 2018

3. Majority of students in higher level of classes are able to perform arithmetic operations (subtraction, division) while percentage of lower level of classes respondents unable to recognize numbers is high

4. With the increase in hierarchy of class the ability of students to read English sentences and tell their meaning has progressed. The percentage of attending tuition classes for improving English is almost same for every class. However, it is highest for class IV, class V and class III.

5. Percentage of school facilities provided to the students in various schools have improved since 2018. Mid-day meal and electricity in schools has been on

favourable side along with drinking water and toilet facility for girls being decently provided. However, computer labs and knowledge of computer show a low percentage and percentage of toilets facility teachers and male students pertains to be low

Majority of schools have playground in their schools and more than 90 percentage of schools distributed textbooks and have at least 1 trained teacher with them. However, percentage of distribution of uniforms and having separate teacher for preprimary level is low in school.

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