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IMPACT OF DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE IMPROVEMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION.

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with DPEP as envisaged in its policy guidelines have a positive impact on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of primary education in Sambalpur district. Of course it goes without saying that there is scope for further improvement and a lot has to be done in providing a sound infrastructural and functional base for all children within the age group 6 to 14.

Key words: Primary Education Programme, DPEP, Qualitative Improvement, Quantitative Improvement

INTRODUCTION :

Primary education is the minimum basic education which is the birth right of every individual child born in the society. Article 45 of the Indian Constitution has argued for free and compulsory primary education for all children up to the age of 14 years. In spite of the best of efforts, the goal of universalisation has still remained unachieved. Keeping that in view the District Primary Education Programme, launched in 1993 sought to operationalise the strategy of district level planning. Initial projects were being formulated in 43 districts in eight states. DPEP has been introduced in eight district of Orissa. In the first phase (1996-97), the project has been started in the district of Bolangir,

Dhenkanal, Gajapati, Kalahandi and Rayagada. In the second phase (1997-98), the three districts Bargarh, Keonjhar and Sambalpur came under this project. On the basis of Education for All (1990), nations of the world had pledged to achieve universal primary education by 2000 and efforts were initiated accordingly. The Millennium Development goals set a more realistic, but still difficult deadline of the year 2015 when all children everywhere should be able to complete a full course of primary schooling. Therefore, new efforts and planning have been initiated by nations including our own country to achieve quality primary education.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY :

Education is the key of human resource. It is crucial for meaningful progress of any country. In addition, education is one of the basic or primary requirements of every child. It is said that only those countries that provide education for all can become rich and remain rich. Therefore, minimum efforts need to be made for imparting primary education to all the children of the age group 6 to 11 years for the attainment of literacy and numeracy. But it is disheartening to note that inspite of the increase in the large number of educational institutions, the dream of providing quality primary education to every Indian has not yet been fulfilled.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Taking into consideration the above information, the investigator felt that although a few macro level studies relating to various states have highlighted the extent to which the DPEP has or has not succeeded; there is need for several micro level studies. The researcher thought that a micro level study on the impact of DPEP on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of primary education would be a worthwhile attempt to identify some of the factors responsible for the achievement of the national goal. Hence, the present study entitled,

IMPACT OF DISTRICT PRIMARY EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON THE QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE IMPROVEMENT OF PRIMARY EDUCATION.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To assess the status of infrastructural facilities in DPEP schools.
2. To find out the impact of DPEP on the provision of access of children to primary education.
3. To find out the impact of DPEP on enrolment, retention and dropout of children at primary level.
4. To study the educational awareness of parents of the children studying in DPEP schools.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY :

The study is confined to only Sambalpur revenue district. The purpose of delimiting the scope of the study to Sambalpur district is to have an indepth, analysis of the impact of DPEP and to focus on target achievement at micro level.

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

The investigation was conducted in two phases.

In the phase I the basic background data required for calculating enrolment and wastage was collected from the primary sources.

In phase II of the study an in-depth investigation was undertaken to interpret the data both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The normative survey method was followed for the purpose.

The stratified random sampling technique was adopted for selection of the sample meant for the in-depth study. The sample consisted of the headmasters and the parents, which were proportional to the population in Block, Municipality and NAC. It included 60 schools, 60 headmasters and 120 parents.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Infrastructural Facilities in DPEP School:

- 1) There has been an increase in the number of partly pucca buildings after the implementation of DPEP.
- 2) The condition of the primary schools in urban areas was much better compared to the rural primary schools.
- 3) The percentage of schools which require major repair is almost the same in both the urban and the rural areas.
- 4) The learning materials like blackboards, syllabus, teacher guide, district map, state map, country map, plastic globes and educational charts were available in almost all sample schools. On comparison, it was found that provision of learning materials were better in rural schools than in urban schools.
- 5) It was found that 16.67 per cent of urban schools and 30.55 per cent of rural schools had no drinking water facilities. The schools in urban areas have advantage over their rural counterparts in this respect.
- 6) Only 50.00 per cent of sample schools had toilet facilities for both boys and girls in urban areas. In rural areas number of schools availing such facilities was still less. So far as toilet for girls was concerned the figure was deplorable i.e. 12.5 per cent in urban areas and 11.11 in rural areas. It is surprising to note that inspite of intervention of DPEP, there has been no significant improvement in providing toilets in schools.
- 7) Sitting arrangements for students like benches, desks and mats were not available in any of the sample schools irrespective of area whether urban or rural.
- 8) It was heartening to note that in the sample schools all teachers are found to be trained. The number of trained female teachers was almost four times higher than the number of trained male teachers.
- 9) The pupil-teacher ratio in the sample schools was found to be 1:32. This figure was lower than the state pupil-teacher ratio (1:35) and national pupil-teacher ratio (1:36) in the year 2005-06.

2. Access of Children to Primary Education:

It was found that 6.24 per cent of the population had no access to primary education at the national level. It was reported that 17.58 per cent habitations did not have schooling facility within one kilometer of walking distance from the home of the child in Orissa. As per an estimate there were 17.56 per cent habitations without primary schools within a walking distance of one kilometer in Sambalpur district in the year 2001.

3. Enrolment, Retention and Dropout of Children at Primary Level:

- a) In pre-DPEP period out of every 100 children admitted in class I only 47.42 children reached class V. It is a matter of serious concern that as large as 50.49 per cent of boys and 54.24 per cent of girls were found to have dropped out by class V. The rate of dropout was the highest in class I in comparison to other classes.
- b) In post-DPEP period out of every 100 children enrolled in class I, 102.82 were able to join class II, 104.97 class III, 100.46 class IV and 97.28 class V.
- c) It was found that enrolment of children in classes from I to IV was over reported.
- d) The dropout rate during the period was 2.72 per cent by class V in the schools of Sambalpur district. Thus the rate of dropout was found to have been reduced to a great extent in Sambalpur district due to the impact of DPEP. However, the phenomenon of dropout is still a curse for the girls which is as large as 7.83 per cent by class V.

5. Educational Awareness of Parents of the Children Studying in DPEP Schools:

About 85 per cent of parents were found to be aware and conscious of the educational requirements of their children.

Up to 85 per cent of parents in urban areas were found to be in a position to assist their children at home.

More number of urban parents felt the necessity of tuition as compared to their rural counterparts.

Around 4 per cent to 9 per cent of parents were found to be in disadvantageous position both academically and financially in guiding the education of their children.

Around 4 to 5 per cent of parents expressed that they would not like to send their girl children to school. The same number of parents also despised the bad condition of the school.

About 25 per cent of parents in rural areas were not in a position to inquire about the participation of their children in co-curricular activities.

CONCLUSION:

To conclude DPEP as envisaged in its policy guidelines have a positive impact on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of primary education in Sambalpur district. Of course it goes without saying that there is scope for further improvement and a lot has to be done in providing a sound infrastructural and functional base for all children within the age group 6 to 14.

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