

# India's National Education Policy 2020: A new hope to eradicate regional disparities in Education and promote economic growth in Odisha

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## Abstract:

The objective of this paper is to explain the role of education to promote economic development in Odisha. It may be realized that the society with higher percentage of literates has higher levels of development. The paper principally focuses on the growth of elementary to higher education in Odisha, issues of equity and access to educational opportunities. This has been examined by enrolment in higher Education and gender wise enrolment. The challenge to the Government is to ensure the equitable access of educational opportunities to all. However, there is sufficient evidence of educational disparity not only between different social groups but also between different regions of the state.

The paper makes an attempt to address the issues relating to elementary to higher education in different regions of Odisha. It also examines regional disparities in education in the state. Besides the paper highlights the important features of new National education policy of India to eradicate regional disparities in education and promote economic growth in Odisha.

**Keywords:** Elementary, education, enrolment, dropout rates, sustainable development, economic development, inclusive growth in Education, sustainable development, regional disparities, economic growth

## 1.0 Introduction

Education is a human right and strength for sustainable development. Objectives for education are essentially captured in Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) of the 2030 Agenda which aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. Government holds the main responsibility for ensuring the right to quality education whereas; the 2030 Agenda is a universal commitment. It requires global and regional collaboration and the engagement of all governments, civil society, the private sector and other multilateral agencies to tackle educational challenges and build systems that are inclusive, equitable and relevant to all learners.

The Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by India in 2015 - seeks to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” by 2030. Such goal will require the entire education system to be reconfigured to support learning, so that all of the and Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be achieved.

## 2.0 India and Goal 4

In India, significant progress had been made in primary education, with improvement in the enrolment and completion of girls in both primary and elementary school.

Source: <https://in.one.un.org/page/sustainable-development-goals/quality-education-in-india-sdg-4/>

The new national Education Policy along with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 shares the goals of quality education and lifelong learning for all. Besides the government scheme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, is aimed at achieving universal quality education for all Indians, and is complemented in this effort by different schemes like higher education, and teacher training etc.

## 3.0 Materials and Methods

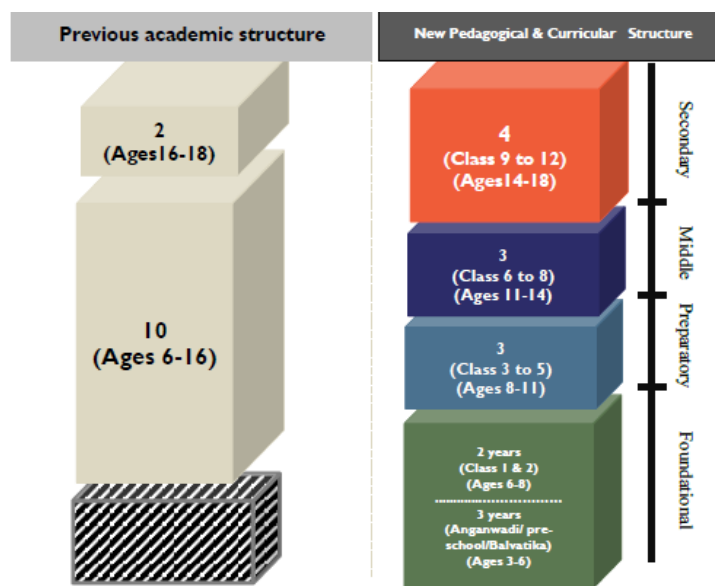
The analysis is based on secondary data collected from ACTIVITY REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2019-20 OF SCHOOL & MASS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, Odisha Economic Survey 2020-21, Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) 2018 and National education Policy 2020. The analysis of the study mainly focuses on the enrolment and Dropout rates of the students in primary/higher education in Odisha.

#### 4.0 Inclusive vision in the National Educational Policy

The National Education Policy (NEP) was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on July 28th, 2020. This is the third national policy on education. The first was declared in 1968. The second was declared in 1986 and modified in 1992. This National Education Policy 2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century and aims to highlight many growing developmental agendas of our country. This Policy intends the revision of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the SDG4. The National Education Policy lays particular stress on the development of the creative potential of each individual.

The main purpose of NEP's is to reform the education system and eradicate the gap between current learning outcomes and those desired. The education policy focuses on promoting equality among all. Special attention has been given to the SEDG (Socially and Economically Disadvantaged) group. Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the primary education to higher education.

The most important goal of the NEP is to ensure that all Indians receive a quality education at an affordable price. The policy has a commitment to achieve 100 percent Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) across all levels by 2030. The greatest success of NEP 2020 is better teaching and learning methods and better training for teachers. The policy covers elementary education to higher education in both rural and urban India.



#### 4.1 Restructuring school curriculum and pedagogy in a new 5+3+3+4 design

The policy aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3% (2018) to 50% by 2035. This policy envisages that the present 10+2 structure in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18 as shown in the representative figure 2.

Currently, children in the age group of 3-6 are not covered in the 10+2 structure as class 1 begins at age 6. In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included, which is aimed at promoting better overall

learning and development. The primary goal will be to ensure universal access to high-quality ECCE across the country in a phased manner. Special attention and priority will be given to districts and locations that are particularly socio-economically disadvantaged. For universal access to ECCE, Anganwadi Centres will be strengthened with high-quality infrastructure, play equipment, and well-trained Anganwadi workers/teachers. Every Anganwadi will have a well-ventilated, well-designed, child-friendly and well-constructed building with an enriched learning environment. Children in Anganwadi Centres shall take activity-filled tours - and meet the teachers and students of their local primary schools, in order to make the transition from Anganwadi Centres to primary schools a smooth one. Anganwadis shall be fully integrated into school complexes/clusters, and Anganwadi children, parents, and teachers will be invited to attend and participate in school/school complex programmes and vice versa.

It is envisaged that prior to the age of 5 every child will move to a "Preparatory Class" or "Balavatika" (that is, before Class 1), which has an ECCE-qualified teacher. The learning in the Preparatory Class shall be based primarily on play-based learning.

#### 5.0 Curtailing Dropout Rates and Ensuring Universal Access to Education at All Levels

One of the primary goals of the schooling system must be to ensure that children are enrolled in and are attending school. Through initiatives such as the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (now the Samagra Shiksha) and the Right to Education Act, India has made remarkable strides in recent years in attaining near-universal enrolment in elementary education. However, the data for later grades indicates some serious issues in retaining children in the schooling system. The GER for Grades 6-8 was 90.9%, while for Grades 9-10 and 11-12 it was only 79.3% and 56.5%, respectively - indicating that a significant proportion of enrolled students drop out after Grade 5 and especially after Grade 8. As per the 75th round household survey by NSSO in 2017-18, the number of out of school children in the age group of 6 to 17 years is 3.22 crore. It will be a top priority to bring these children back into the educational system as early as possible, and to prevent further students from dropping out, with a goal to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio in preschool to secondary level

by 2030. A concerted national effort will be made to ensure universal access and afford opportunity to all children of the country to obtain quality holistic education—including vocational education - from pre-school to Grade 12.

## 6.0 Inclusive growth in Education: Odisha

Education is the single greatest tool for achieving social justice and equality. Social and economic growth is essential for inclusive development. Therefore, development of social sectors is very important. The concept of social sector includes education, health and medical care, water supply and sanitation, poverty alleviation, welfare of marginalized groups and backward regions, and social security for the common people.

Education is the core component of social sector. The state government is taking prompt steps to ensure steady improvement in this essential sector. According to Census-2011 the literacy rate in Odisha was 72.9 per cent which was at par with the national average of 73 per cent. Enrolment ratio in primary and upper primary schools has perceptibly improved from 97.67 per cent in 2014-15 to 100.40 per cent in 2019-20. Gross enrolment ratio at primary level which was 92.74 per cent in 2014-15 increased to 102.17 per cent in 2019-20 and the dropout rates at Primary and Upper Primary levels were reduced from 41.8 per cent and 57 per cent in 2000-01 to 1.63 per cent and 4.21 per cent in 2014-15 and to 1.55 per cent and 4.56 per cent respectively in 2019-20. To improve the quality of school education, State government has established 250 Adarsh Vidyalayas. Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Yojana is a programme of State government to offer quality education to deserving student from the State. The state Govt. has decided to execute the scheme and establish Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya in all 314 blocks of the state phase wise. Adarsha Vidyalayas will provide infrastructural facilities of the same standard in Kendriya Vidyalaya with holistic educational background.

Odisha is one of the Pioneer States to implement Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education. The State aims at not only to provide necessary infrastructure for Primary and Upper Primary Schools, but also to ensure 100% enrolment and quality education to children in between the age group of 6-14 years.

## 7.0 Relationship between education and economic structure: Odisha

Education provides a foundation for development, the basis on which much of our economic and social well being is built. It is the key to increase economic efficiency and social consistency. Education is crucial to economic development. No economic development of individual is possible without good educational background.

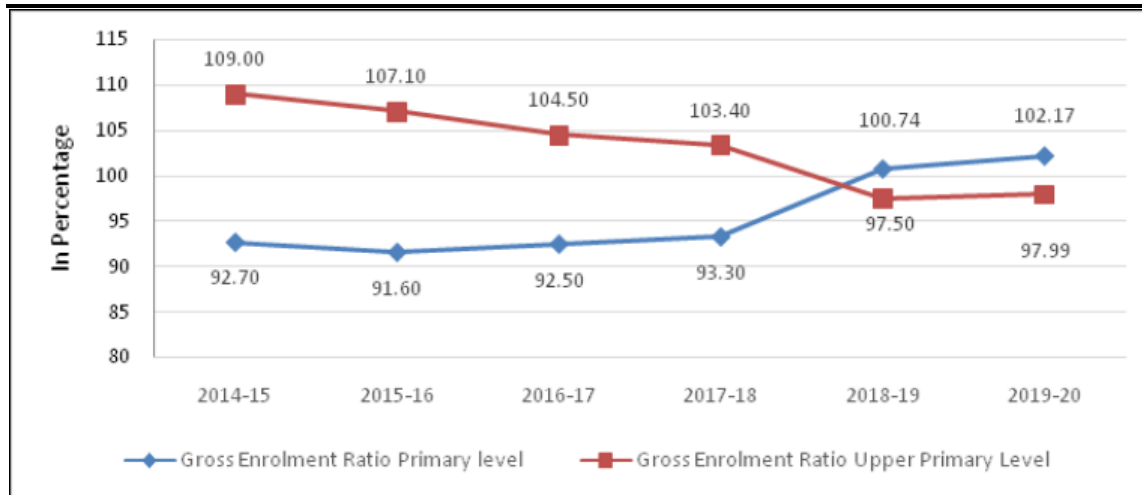
Education in Odisha is witnessing a rapid revolution. The Economic Survey Report provides a picture of the State's Economy along with social sector development and education. Dropout rate in the Primary and Upper Primary level is an important indicator of Education in the state. During 2019-20, dropout rate declined drastically to 1.55 per cent from 5.42 per cent in 2018-19 which shows positive response of children towards education. This is only because of lots of Government interventions, which attracts the lower income groups to educate their children.

Enrolment ratio in elementary (primary and upper primary) schools has perceptibly improved from 97.67 per cent in 2014-15 to 100.40 per cent in 2019-20. Gross enrolment ratio at primary level which was 92.74 per cent in 2014-15 increased to 102.17 per cent in 2019-20 and the dropout rates at Primary and Upper Primary levels were lowered from 41.8 per cent and 57 per cent in 2000-01 to 1.63 per cent and 4.21 per cent respectively in 2014-15 and to 1.55 per cent and 4.56 per cent respectively in 2019-20. The Teacher Pupil ratio improved from 1:26 to 1:18 for primary level and from 1:26 to 1:20 for upper primary level during the period from 2014-15 to 2019-20 [5].

Odisha is one of the pioneer States to implement Right of Children to free and compulsory education. The State aims at not only to provide necessary infrastructure for primary and upper primary schools, but also to ensure 100% enrolment and quality education to children in between the age group of 6-14yrs. In Odisha, according to 2011 census, there were 56.34 lakhs children in the age group of 6-14, out of which 56.26 lakhs children are studying in 0.55 lakhs schools and 0.08 lakh children are reported to be out of school as per the SD MIS, 2019-20.

Number of students attending school is an important determinant of educational development in a region. From Figure, 6.8 it is observed that GER and NER at primary levels has increased in the past 5 years, since 2014-15. This indicates that more children are being enrolled in school. At the upper primary level, GER is less than 100. The decline in GER at both levels of schooling may indicate that children are being enrolled in schools at the proper age and their progression from one class to other is also at a normal pace. This is supported by increase in the NER at upper primary level from 2014-15 to 2019-20 and decrease at primary level during this period. Increasing the net enrolment ratios to 100% can achieve the objective of universalisation of elementary education.

**Trend in Gross Enrolment Ratios in Elementary Education**



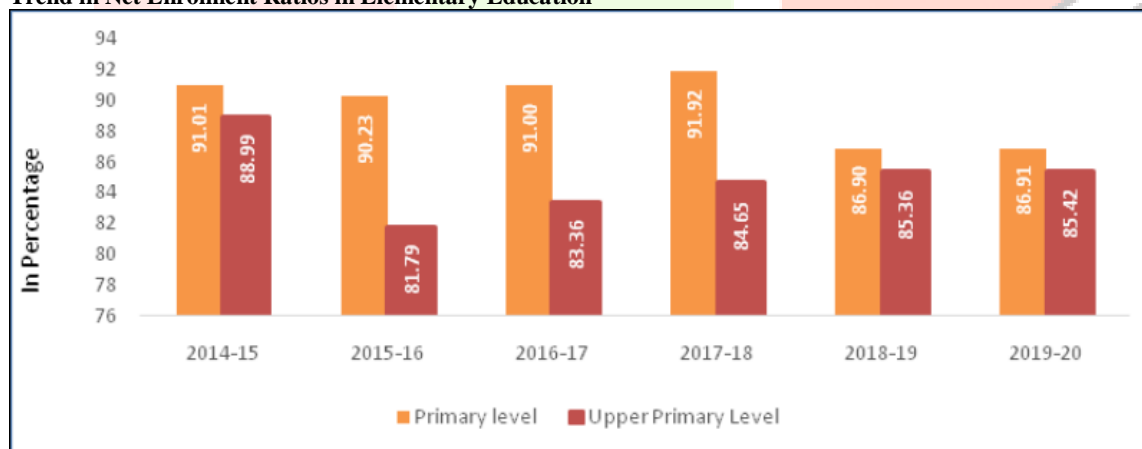
### 8.0 Enrolment Ratios and Dropout rates in Odisha

Dropout rates relate to the proportion of students failing to complete a particular level of education or not enrolling for the next level. The dropout rates in the case of both primary and upper primary education have increased over the years in the State, which is a matter of concern. Dropout rates for primary education increased from 1.63 in 2014-15 to 5.42 in 2018-19 and in 2019-20 it fell down to 1.55. The trend at upper primary schooling is similar. Gender wise dropout rates have increased for both boys and girls across all social groups, particularly those from STs.

The main reasons for the high dropout rates among ST, SC and girl students may be the socio economic background, socio cultural norms, lack of access to education, disability, migration of families, early marriage etc. To overcome this issues, the State Government have taken lot of steps by establishing 182 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) with 18400 inmates in 23 districts for ST & SC girls, 16 Residential Hostels for urban deprived children with 1000 capacity in 11 districts, 165 seasonal hostels for 7169 migrant children in source point at Baragarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nuapada and Mayurbhanj districts during 2018-19.

The State government is making continuous efforts to improve the quality of education through up-gradation of curriculum, teacher training and improving the conditions of school infrastructure so that it is conducive to enhance the learning ability. As per the All India Survey on Higher Education during 2018-19, Odisha has 23 colleges per lakh population (18-23 years) as against all India average of 28.

#### Trend in Net Enrolment Ratios in Elementary Education



### 9.0 Curtailing Dropout Rates and Ensuring Universal Access to Education at All Levels as per National Education Policy 2020

It will be a top priority to bring these children back into the educational system as early as possible, and to prevent further students from dropping out, with a goal to achieve 100% Gross Enrolment Ratio in preschool to secondary level by 2030. A concerted national effort will be made to ensure universal access and afford opportunity to all children of the country to obtain quality holistic education—including vocational education - from pre-school to Grade 12.

There are two overall initiatives that will be undertaken to bring children who have dropped out back to school and to prevent further children from dropping out. The first is to provide effective and sufficient infrastructure so that all students have access to safe and engaging school education at all levels from pre-primary school to higher education. Besides providing regular trained teachers at each stage, special care shall be taken to ensure that no school remains deficient on infrastructure support. The credibility of Government schools shall be re-established and this will be attained by upgrading and enlarging the schools that already exist, building additional quality schools in areas where they do not



exist, and providing necessary facilities, especially for the girl children, so that all children have the opportunity to attend a quality school and learn at the appropriate level.

Since independence, there has been a major thrust on elementary education in different regions of Odisha. To achieve Universalization of Elementary Education state government has been implemented the Right to Education (RTE) Act, right to education for free and compulsory education, and Sarva Siksha Abhiyan. With different proposals of the state government the enrolment percentage has been increased and the dropout parentage has been decreased. However the education in rural area of Odisha particularly for girls, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes, and the disadvantaged group is a challenge.

## 10.0 Conclusion

It is imperative to analyze the performance of the educational system in Odisha to eradicate regional disparities in Education and promote economic growth in Odisha. Elementary education is essential for all children for basic knowledge. In Indian constitution "Provision for early childhood care and education to children below the age of six years" have been incorporated under article 21-A and article – 45. The constitution Act of 2002 also added a new article 21A that education for all children of the age of 6 to 14 years a fundamental right. It mentions that, the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years. As per the article every child irrespective of socio economic condition will go to the school situated in the proximity.

Education is considered a vital component for economic development. The Constitution of India and National Education Policies have laid much emphasis on education for socio-economic development. Hence education is highly needed for individual's growth as well as growth of the nation. Although education is under concurrent list the school education is mostly control by the states and union territories. Odisha is one of the states in India that is committed to the universalization of elementary education in the state to fulfill the constitutional obligation. The state committed to give emphasis on education in both of urban and Rural areas to eradicate disparity in education.

Rural education is one of the important components for economic development. However, people in rural areas have limited opportunities to earn a higher income due to less opportunity for proper education. Education is the main instrument for socio-economic development of the people. This is because higher education is a powerful tool of increasing access to highly skilled and high paid jobs. This will help to achieve Inclusive development in the state.

The earlier policy on education was basically focused on learning opportunities for the students. But the new education policy focuses on multi-disciplinary approach and aims at all-round development of the student. The new policy on education visualizes a new curriculum and structure of education which may help the students at their different stages of learning. Besides the new education system will reach all students from urban to rural areas of the state. It will fulfill Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with equitable quality educational opportunities for all.

There is a need to provide equal educational opportunity to all to eradicate regional disparity and promote economic development and Inclusive Growth in the state of odisha. To facilitate learning for all students, with special emphasis on Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Groups (SEDGs), the scope of school education may be broadened to facilitate multiple pathways to learning involving both formal and non-formal education modes. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Programmes offered by the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and State Open Schools may be expanded and strengthened to achieve learning needs of the students. This will fulfill different skill development of the student along with the course curriculum. Proper implementation of the policy will drive the state towards progress of economic development,

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