



NSO Report on Education

Why in News

Recently, the [National Statistical Organisation](#) (NSO) released a report 'Household Social Consumption: Education in India', as part of the **75th round of National Sample Survey (July 2017 to June 2018)**.

- NSO also had released a Report on [Health in India](#) based on the same survey.

Key Points

- This is the **6th survey on social consumption relating to education**. Earlier, 35th, 42nd, 52nd, 64th, and 71st rounds had surveys on this subject. The 71st round pertained to January-June 2014.
- A sample of 64,519 rural households from 8,097 villages and 49,238 urban households from 6,188 blocks was surveyed all over India.
- This survey covered **both qualitative and quantitative aspects** related to educational attainment of the household members and educational services used by them.
- **Internet access-**
 - There is a major **digital divide within the country** across states, cities and villages, and income groups ([National Statistical Organisation Survey on Digital Education Divide](#)).
 - Nearly **4% of rural households and 23% of urban households** possessed computers and **24% of the households in the country had internet access**.

- Among persons of age 15-29 years, nearly **24% in rural areas and 56% in urban areas were able to operate a computer.**
- **Education and Literacy Rates:**
 - **Literacy rate** among persons (aged 7 years and above) in India was about 77.7%. In rural areas, the literacy rate was 73.5% compared to 87.7% in urban areas ([Report on Literacy Rate](#)).
 - **Male literacy rate was higher** (84.7%) than female literacy rate (70.3%).
 - Only **5.7% were graduates or above in rural areas** while the percentage was 21.7% in urban areas.
- **Access to schools, Attendance, Type of education:**
 - Only **38% of rural households have secondary schools within 1 km** of the house as compared to **70% for urban households.**
 - In rural areas **92.7%** of households and in urban areas, **87.2%** of households reported availability of primary school within 1 km from the house.
 - 96.1% of students were in general education and remaining were in technical/professional education.
 - **Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR)** at primary level was nearly 100% for both males and females in rural and urban areas.
 - For each level of education, GAR is the ratio of the number of persons attending in the level of education (For eg. Class I-V) to the number of persons in the corresponding official age-group (For eg. Total Population of age group 6-10).
- **Free education, Scholarships, Stipends:**
 - At all-India level nearly **14%** students attending formal education received scholarship/stipend/reimbursement.
 - **77%** of the students studying in Government institutions were receiving **free education.** Percentage of students studying in private unaided institutions and receiving free education was nearly 2% in rural areas and 1% in urban areas.
 - At **pre-primary** level nearly **33% students were getting free education** in India. At **primary** level, the proportion of students receiving free education was **62%**
- **Private Coachings:**
 - Nearly 20% of students attending pre-primary and above level were taking private coaching in India.
 - Incidence of taking private coaching was maximum at secondary level (31% of male students and 29% of female students).
- **Household expenditure on education:**
 - Average expenditure per student incurred during the current academic session (2017-18) for basic courses was nearly Rs. 8,331 for general courses, Rs. 50,307 for technical/professional courses.
 - The average annual expenditure on education for secondary school students is Rs. 9,013, of which Rs. 4,078 goes towards regular school fees.
 - About Rs. 1,632, or just over 18%, goes towards private coaching. In higher secondary school, students spend more than Rs. 2,500, also about 18% of the total expenditure, on private coaching.
- **Persons currently not attending education:**
 - In India, percentages of persons in the age group of 3-35 years dropping out of studies were nearly 14% in rural areas and 10% in urban areas.
 - For the **males** of age 3-35 years **engagement in economic activities** was the most common major reason for currently not attending education, whereas for the females it was **engagement in domestic activities.**

Key Concerns

- **Digital Divide:** Online education is yet to develop as a common good and too-much reliance of this mode will only lead to selective reach of education.
- **Difference in literacy rate between men and women:** This not only leads to **increased gender divide** but also leads to low participation of women in the workforce and **research and development activities**. Also, as the reason for women dropping out of schools remains domestic, the deep-ingrained patriarchy in the society is still the major factor behind the gender divide.
- **Dependence on private coaching centres for education:** This leads to the affluent having more access to education thus increasing the disparities between different social groups. It also comprises the quality of education as the emphasis often shifts to employability only, while the real motive of education should be to enhance critical thinking along with developing skills of the students.
- **Heavy Household expenditure:** In spite of many government initiatives to promote and improve education in governmental institutions, the cost of education is still very high for a large population to afford. The percentage of students who are receiving free education is still not enough and many needy students are outside its coverage.
- **Rural and Urban Divide:** The huge differences in some parameters like internet access, ability to use the internet or physical access to schools show that the Urban and rural India have very different conditions. Accordingly, there is a need for separate policies which cater to the separate needs of both, based on local input and community-led approaches.

Way Forward

- With the **New Education Policy 2020**, we should hope for the education scenario in India to be improved and key concerns to be met. **Covid-19** pandemic has necessitated a shift towards online education at a faster pace but the same should be complemented with infrastructure reforms, support and training by the government, aided by civil-society groups.

Source: Findings from NSO Report [“Household Social Consumption on Education in India”](#).

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