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Dr. Ponnada Annaji Rao
Lecturer, Department of
Economics, Government
Degree College,
Narasannapeta, Srikakulam,
Andhra Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Ponnada Annaji Rao
Lecturer, Department of
Economics, Government
Degree College,
Narasannapeta, Srikakulam,
Andhra Pradesh, India

The progress of school education in Andhra Pradesh: An academic review

Dr. Ponnada Annaji Rao

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Abstract

The state initiated education reforms in 2020 by creating six types of schools namely satellite foundation school (pre-primary), foundational schools (pre-primary - class II), foundational school plus (pre-primary - class V) and pre High school (class III - class VII/VIII) and high school (class III - Class X) and high school plus (class III - Class XII). Transition to English medium education in all government schools started in the academic year 2020-2021 is expected to reach completion by 2024-25. The situation of dropout rates and out-of-school children was already poor even prior to COVID-19. According to NSS 75 Round Household Survey 2017-2018, around 3.22 crore children in the 6-17 year age group are out of school, 31 percent of whom have never attended any school (NSO, 2019). These figures were higher for rural areas as compared to urban areas. The major reasons cited for being out-of-school are engagement in economic activities and participation in household chores (NSO, 2019). A teacher is the perfect guide and facilitator and has a lot of impact on his/her students. So they can help a lot in raising awareness regarding gender equality. Evaluating and giving remarks to the students on the basis of their gender. Teachers can use gender-neutral pronouns to call and address students, for example instead of addressing them by "him" and "her" one can use "they" it is more gender neutral. Teachers could use these terms in their classroom and there are strong chances that students will notice and they will start using these words too. Educators can play a vital role in eradicating the bias with the help of their keen observation and accepting attitude.

Keywords: Education, primary, secondary, children, teachers, social groups, enrolment ratio

Introduction

The first step towards education is literacy. As a result, literacy can be seen as a component of education. To gauge a nation's educational level, literacy is a crucial criterion. A nation's economic development depends on its literacy rate. Literacy alone cannot make a person wise, but education can make a person wiser and give the ability to recognise right from wrong. It can be therefore concluded that learning to read and write is the first step in receiving an education. Education is the only real answer for both of these.

The Centre is represented by the Department of Education which is a Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and together with the States, it is jointly responsible for the formulation of education policy. The National Policy of Education (NPE) (1986) and revised Programme of Action (1992) envisioned that free and compulsory education should be provided to all children up to the age of 14 before the commencement of the 21st century. The Government of India made a commitment that by 2000, 6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) would be spent on education, of which half would be spent on primary education. Article 45 of the Directive Principles of the State Policy was committed to ensuring free and compulsory education for all. This did not significantly translate into action, and school enrollment and participation remained dismally low for decades after independence. Further, elementary education was made a fundamental right by the 86th Constitutional Amendment and the Supreme Court's insistence on states providing hot-cooked meals in schools led to improving enrollment, especially among girls. The Government of India has assigned high priority to the education sector, not only to achieve the universalization of elementary education by 2010 but also to improve the quality of education at all levels.

The latest National Education Policy 2020 also puts a strong emphasis on the education of girls and states that prejudice and bias based on gender and other such factors affect people's

capacity to benefit from the education system. The Policy gives due consideration to the needs of all children especially girls and transgender students in all levels of education. The Government of India with the help of international assistance has also started various initiatives. The most important and comprehensive of these initiatives is the 'Education for All' or Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. It is a flagship programme started by the Government of India to improve the quality of elementary education in the country. It has been operational since 2000-2001 and has its roots in the District Primary Education Programme, 1994. The main aim of the programme is to bridge the social, gender and regional facets of education. The Shiksha Karmi Project was started in Rajasthan and sponsored collaboratively by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and Government of India and State of Rajasthan. The provision of quality basic education to girls, scheduled caste and tribes, and other marginalized sections of the society was the main objective of the project. The success of the project was undermined by the discriminatory attitude towards women by some of the project leaders. The Mahila Samakhya Programme (Education for Women's Equality) was launched in 1989 with the financial assistance of the Government of the Netherlands to pursue the objective of women empowerment through their participation in the education process. The Government of India has funded the programme since 2005-06. The programme recognised the centrality of education for women empowerment and adopted an innovative approach towards the process of education.

Review of Literature

Meenakshi Sharma Yadav and Manoj Kumar Yadav (2023) [3] study investigate from 200 students on the implicit impact of executing English language teaching and learning programs. The impact was evaluated across four categories: high, medium, neutral, and low, and the analysis of the data showed the high impact of implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) in India.

Rajulapudi Srinivas (2022) [5] narrated that the Andhra Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (APSCPCR) will take measures for implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, also known as Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009. Though the Act came into force several years ago, it is not being implemented properly in the State.

Special correspondent of The Hindu (2022) [6] reported that the State government has signed a pact with education and tech company Byju's to impart quality education to students

of government schools. Students studying in Class 8 now and would write their Class 10 examinations in Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) syllabus in 2025, would be given tabs, Mr. Jagan said, emphasizing the need to make digital learning tools accessible to students and imparting training on teachers.

Atasi Mohanty (2019) [1] her article reveals that in September 2015, the UN formally adopted the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) as an outcome of a major global consultative process. UNDESAD advocates for providing the opportunity to progress towards implementing universal quality education that fosters the knowledge, skills, perspectives, values and actions that lead towards a more sustainable future.

Nidhi Singal (2019) [4] This has been strongly influenced by a notion that social injustices exist because social and material privileges are bestowed on a small group of already privileged people, and that economic restructuring is therefore required to redress the imbalance. The few research studies available suggest that children with disabilities face a range of negative experiences in mainstream schools.

Bindu Sharma and Vibha Sharma (2018) [2] The paper stressed how to prepare young minds for their future roles as productive citizens of an economy, and nurtures the holistic development of their personalities and characters so that they are able to face the challenges of the adult world boldly.

Number of Hostels for Students According to Social Groups

Table 1 furnishes the data on Number of Hostels for different Social Groups in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam district during 2019-20. In Andhra Pradesh out of 2940 hostels, as many as 1124 (38.23%) belongs to BCs, 1069 (36.36%) for Scheduled castes and 747 (25.41%) for Scheduled Tribes. The total number of students who benefited through these hostels were 399590 of which nearly 43 percent belongs to Scheduled Tribes followed by Backward Classes 31 percent and 26 percent of them belongs to Scheduled caste. There were 336 social welfare hostels established in Visakhapatnam district, as many as 197 (58.63%) of hostels for Scheduled Tribe, 84 (25%) hostels belong to Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes has 55 (16.37%). Out of a total of 72676 Hostel Students, nearly 80 percent belongs to Scheduled Tribe (58012) followed by Backward Classes 9480 (13.04) and only 5184 (7.13%) hostel students were Scheduled Castes benefited under different welfare hostels.

Table 1: Number of hostels for students according to social groups in andhra pradesh and visakhapatnam: 2019-2020

Si. No.	Item	Andhra Pradesh				Visakhapatnam			
		Hostels		Students		Hostels		Students	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
I	Scheduled Caste	1069	36.36	103476	25.90	55	16.37	5184	7.13
II	Scheduled Tribe	747	25.41	171405	42.90	197	58.63	58012	79.82
A	Residential Schools	190	25.44	51469	30.03	26	13.20	9376	16.16
B	Hostels	179	23.96	30054	17.53	49	24.87	10065	17.35
C	Ashram Schools	378	50.60	89882	52.44	122	61.93	38571	66.49
III	Backward Classes	1124	38.23	124709	31.21	84	25.00	9480	13.04
	Pre-Matric	761	67.70	83507	66.96	53	63.10	6368	67.17
	Post-Matric	363	32.30	41202	33.04	31	36.90	3112	32.83
	Grand Total	2940	100.00	399590	100.00	336	100.00	72676	100.00

Source: Districts at A Glance, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada - 2020

Number of Colleges & Students

Table 2 depicted that the data on different colleges and students enrolled in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam district during 2019-20. The total number of colleges reported at 5216 of which 3718 (71.28%) were junior colleges, 482 (9.24%) B.Ed colleges, 307 (5.89%) engineering colleges, 293 (5.62%) polytechnic colleges, 251 (4.81%) degree colleges, 121 (2.32%) B.Pharmacy colleges and medical (28) & dental colleges (16) each less than one percent of the total colleges in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Out of 881728 students enrolled in all colleges in the state, about 58 & 20 percent of students enrolled in junior and degree colleges respectively, 8 percent of students enrolled in polytechnic and 9 percent of them enrolled in engineering colleges in Andhra Pradesh. As many as 364 (71.51%) of junior colleges and more than half of the students enrolled in

junior colleges in Visakhapatnam district. About 9 percent of the colleges belongs to degree and 28 percent of the students enrolled in these colleges. The enrollment of the students both junior and degree colleges together constitutes 80.34 percent. The proportion of polytechnic and engineering colleges 5.89 and 5.50 respectively and the students enrolled these colleges 8.85 and 7.92 percent in Visakhapatnam district. Medical and dental colleges and students reported at less than one percent. It was observed that 76 percent of junior and degree colleges and 78 percent of students enrolled at the state level while the corresponding figures Visakhapatnam were 81 and 80 percent respectively. The proportion of polytechnic and engineering colleges together accounted for 11 and 17 percent of the students enrolled and these figures were almost same in Visakhapatnam district.

Table 2: Number of Colleges & Students in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam: 2019-2020

Si. No.	College	Andhra Pradesh				Visakhapatnam			
		Colleges		Students		Colleges		Students	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Junior	3718	71.28	507230	57.53	364	71.51	51919	52.11
2	Degree	251	4.81	177624	20.14	48	9.43	28131	28.23
3	Polytechnic	293	5.62	69602	7.89	30	5.89	8820	8.85
4	Engineering	307	5.89	79013	8.96	28	5.50	7893	7.92
5	Medical	28	0.54	4835	0.55	3	0.59	550	0.55
6	Dental	16	0.31	1440	0.16	2	0.39	200	0.20
7	B.Pharmacy	121	2.32	8916	1.01	6	1.18	413	0.41
8	B.Ed	482	9.24	33068	3.75	28	5.50	1709	1.72
	Total	5216	100.00	881728	100.00	509	100.00	99635	100.00

Source: As ex ante

Number of Schools

Table 3 gives information on number of schools established in sample district and at the State level. The school education system has been segmented into six different levels namely (i)Primary, (ii)Primary with Upper Primary, (iii)Primary with UP, Secondary & Higher Secondary (iv) UP With Secondary & Higher Secondary, (v)Primary With Upper Primary & Secondary (vi) Upper Primary With Secondary. Education in Andhra Pradesh is imparted via the government and private institutes. There are as many as 61514 schools in Andhra Pradesh while in Visakhapatnam district boasts of 5427 schools. The total number of schools were distributed in the following manner: (39388) 64.03% primary schools followed by Upper Primary with Secondary schools (10095) 16.41%, (9282) 15.09% of primary with upper primary schools, (2257) 3.67% Primary With Upper

Primary & Secondary schools, (290) 0.47% UP With Secondary & Higher Secondary schools and only (202) 0.33% Primary with UP, Secondary & Higher Secondary schools in Andhra Pradesh, while the corresponding figures were 3521, 648, 743, 482, 9 and 24 in Visakhapatnam district. The major part of the school education like in any society is covered by primary schools in Andhra Pradesh as well as the sample district Visakhapatnam. The proportion of primary schools slightly lower in Andhra Pradesh (64.03) compared with Visakhapatnam (64.88). In Visakhapatnam district Primary With Upper Primary & Secondary had a lion's share i.e., 21.36 next in order Primary with UP, Secondary & Higher Secondary 11.88, Primary 8.94, Primary with Upper Primary 8, Upper Primary With Secondary 6.42 and UP With Secondary & Higher Secondary 3.10.

Table 3: Number of Schools in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam: 2019-20

Si. No.	Schools	Andhra Pradesh		Visakhapatnam		% share in State
		No.	%	No.	%	
1.	Primary	39388	64.03	3521	64.88	8.94
2.	Primary with Upper Primary	9282	15.09	743	13.69	8.00
3.	Primary with UP, Secondary & Higher Secondary	202	0.33	24	0.44	11.88
4.	UP With Secondary & Higher Secondary	290	0.47	9	0.17	3.10
5.	Primary With Upper Primary & Secondary	2257	3.67	482	8.88	21.36
6.	Upper Primary With Secondary	10095	16.41	648	11.94	6.42
	Total	61514	100.00	5427	100.00	8.82

Source: Districts at A Glance, Directorate of Economics & Statistics-2020, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada

Class-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio

The Gross enrolment ratio was total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the eligible official school age population

corresponding to the same level of education in a given school year. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has directed officials to ensure a significant increase in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in the State though the

effective implementation of the Ammavodi and Mana Badi Nadu Nedu schemes had helped increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio, it is not enough. The data extracted from the secondary sources on Class-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam district and these details are presented in Table 4. The Gross Enrolment Ratio for all the classes i.e., Class-1 to X were significantly more in Visakhapatnam district compared with the State of Andhra Pradesh for the last three years. In the year 2019-20 the Gross Enrolment Ratio for primary schools (I-V) had increased to 92.09 from 85.59 in 2017-18, the figures for upper primary classes (VI-VIII), it increased to 87.74 from

83.93 and Secondary schools GER rose to 84.22 from 79.14 during the same period in the state of Andhra Pradesh. In case of Visakhapatnam district Gross Enrolment Ratio for the three year period reveals that for primary schools it increased from 88.54 in 2017-18 to 100.59 during 2019-20, for upper primary it increased from 89.73 to 97.89 and for the secondary schools it also increased from 86.74 to 96.15 during the same period. The above analysis indicates that there was a clear difference in Gross Enrolment Ratio in different classes. Overall, for the last three years, the Gross Enrolment Ratio in all classes was more in Visakhapatnam district compared with the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 4: Class-wise Gross Enrolment Ratio in Andhra Pradesh and Visakhapatnam: 2017-18 to 2019-20

Sl. No.	Class-wise	Andhra Pradesh			Visakhapatnam		
		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
1.	Classes I-V	85.59	87.36	92.09	88.54	91.06	100.59
2.	Classes VI -VIII	83.93	84.82	87.74	89.73	91.46	97.89
3.	Classes IX-X	79.14	82.36	84.22	86.74	91.27	96.15

Source: Districts at A Glance, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Vijayawada, 2018, 2019 & 2020

Conclusion

The present background paper reviews the progress of education including, vocational and higher education, skill development and literacy particularly during the last two decades in Andhra Pradesh and an attempt is made to identify gaps. It is observed that pre-primary education in the state, as is the case of all over India, still neglected and needs a strong policy intervention. With respect to school education, although the quantitative expansion is remarkable in the state as well as in India thanks to DPEP and SSA initiatives, the quality of education is still cause of concern.

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