

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The basic philosophical purpose of education should be to develop a personality and character, to enhance the capacity to make learned decisions in future life, to think independently, to understand, to discriminate, to challenge what, according to them, is wrong, and to develop the desire to transform what is unjust and unfair. However, in the present World of competition, globalisation and liberalisation we have actually forgotten what Education really stands for and what should be its aim. Today, the purpose of schooling merely means to acquire skills of literacy and numeracy. The educational Institutes too have evolved to a large extent to meet the new expectations and have been replaced by literacy and informal centres to meet the demand of the market. This transformation of the nature of education has seriously affected its quality and has relegated to the background the concept of schooling as a means of socialisation, nation-building and formation of social capital, which has been practised for centuries.

Whether or not expanded educational opportunities will translate into meaningful development - for an individual or for society - depends ultimately on whether people actually learn as a result of those opportunities, i.e., whether they incorporate useful knowledge, reasoning ability, skills, and values. The focus of basic education must, therefore, be on actual learning acquisition and outcome, rather than exclusively upon enrolment, continued participation in organized programmes and completion of certification requirements. Active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in assuring learning acquisition and allowing learners to reach their fullest potential. It is, therefore, necessary to define

acceptable levels of learning acquisition for educational programmes and to improve and apply systems of assessing learning achievements.

Education has a very significant role to play in development of any Nation. It is important for India as a Nation to strengthen its Educational System and ensure that the children are not deprived of one of their most basic needs, to learn. While, the elements of Free and Compulsory Education have been enshrined in our Constitution itself, Nation is still striving to attain its goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. The adoption of Right to Education Act, 2009 was a Right step in the Right direction. It has been more than seven years since the Act, and time is ripe to see how we are progressing towards UEE and whether RTE Act has made an impact to deliver on this front. The present Study has been undertaken with this objective in mind.

Some of the important findings, based on the Study and analysis of Data available are summarised as under:

The Enrolment rates in the Primary Education have improved significantly, which means that the Children are joining the school. The Gender Parity has also improved over the years. That is the first step towards UEE. However, the next difficult step is that the onus now lies on the Education System of India and its implementers to ensure that the Quality of Education provided in these schools is good. This will ensure that the students enrolled transits to the next grade successfully, the retention rates remain high, there are no dropouts and Repetition.

The data on these indicators revealed that the transition and retention rates have shown marginal increase and have ample scope to improve further. An intervention in this front is therefore required. The Dropout rate of over 4% in the

primary level itself is also considered on the higher side. But the real problem lies in Dropout rates in Upper Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary levels. The enrolment rates in these are also far from impressive.

Immediately after RTE Act, there was a trend of Closing old schools which did not meet the norms as per the Act. This showed a decline in total number of schools. However, the number of schools have started rising from 2011-12. A significant achievement seen in most of the new schools that have been opened in the recent past is that they are compliant with norms given in RTE, thereby they have proper school building, playground, toilets, library etc. Due to more number of classrooms available, the Student to Classroom Ratio (SCR) has come down to 27. DISE data also reveals that the percentage of single-classroom primary schools during 2004-05 were 10.39% which had come down to 6.06% in 2015-16. Still a significant number of 60,879 schools remain that need immediate intervention.

In the indicators which were based on facilities available in Schools, there have been substantial improvement in toilets both for boys and girls, availability of drinking water, availability of Ramp, provision of mid-day meals etc. However, two indicators which need immediate intervention are the availability of Electricity and Playgrounds in Schools. Also running water needs to be ensured in all the toilet facilities created in schools. Further, facilities for other categories of Physically challenged students like blind, mute, mentally challenged also needs to be catered for.

In the Teacher based indicators, there is a trend of increase in total number of teachers, however the number of teachers in Government schools have declined. This needs immediate intervention. The increase in total number of teachers have also brought down the Pupil to Teacher Ratio to 24. Another

encouraging trend observed was sharp improvement in Gender Parity among teachers. The sharp increase in Contractual teachers and decline in in-service training were the two indicators which required immediate intervention.

**Recommendations** - Any change in an ailing system is welcome, but there is no evidence that the alternatives will result in any serious financial savings or improvement in quality of education.

First and foremost, the nation should enhance funding for Elementary school education. While doing so, it should not be at the expense of Secondary or other Higher Education Budget. Though, it has been argued for decades that a budget of 6% of GDP is required to meet the UEE goals for India, but because of the Cumulative burden of under budgeting, there is a requirement to go beyond that and spend to the tune of 8 to 10% of GDP for a few years till the situation is retrieved. Government's thinking that major load of Education will be borne by Private Schools is not going to be a reality at least in near future. While Funding itself may not be a guarantee to provide success to a Scheme or a programme but is one of the crucial factor to eliminate most of the trivial and non-trivial causes that ails and cripples a system to a point that it cannot deliver properly. As National policy on Education states *"The deleterious consequences of non-investment or inadequate Investment in Education are indeed very serious"* (NPE, 1998)

Integration of ECCE with Primary Schooling - The Government of India approved the National Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy in 2013. The Policy is committed to universal access to quality early childhood education. There are still substantial numbers of children not enrolled in preschools. Even in elementary education, while there is a significant rise in enrolments, the dropout rate in the initial grades of elementary schooling itself, is a major concern. It would be more beneficial if the Pre-schooling of one year be integrated with already