

Health Related Physical Fitness Components Rural and Urban In School Children of Bihar

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Abstract – Physical, emotional and mental health was key predictors of future quality of life for today's students. The health and physical education curriculum includes lessons on healthy eating, social and emotional health. Children's health is a significant concern for all societies; it contributes to their overall growth. Health, nutrition and education are significant for the overall development of the child and these three inputs need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner.

Keywords: Physical Fitness, Rural, School Children, Health

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INTRODUCTION

In the north Indian state of Bihar, education has been improving faster than in the rest of the country. But as this column reminds us, Bihar is starting from the bottom. For education to continue to improve, Bihar needs to universally provide drinking water facilities, separate toilets for girls in schools, and more teachers and classrooms per student.

The government of Bihar, one of India's poorest states, has recently undertaken several policy initiatives to make education more affordable and accessible to children. These initiatives have focused on reducing the 'opportunity cost' of schooling and providing incentives for enrolment and performance. We look at the state of education in Bihar and analyze the policies of the Bihar government. We draw on our own research, publically available data, and previous studies on education in India. We find that while Bihar has made several impressive steps, there is still a long road ahead.

THE STATE OF EDUCATION IN BIHAR

Using data from District Information System for Education (DISE), we find that starting in 2006-2007 the enrolment rate at the primary level in Bihar – has been increasing and is now higher than the median of the 20 large states. However, the enrolment rate at the upper primary level is right at the bottom of the 20 major states in India with less than half of eligible children attending school. Since the DISE enrolment data for primary

grades are not available for Bihar after 2007, we use an alternative measure from Assessment Survey Evaluation Research (ASER) called the 'out of school rate' which is the percentage of school age children not attending school. This measure is far less impressive for Bihar. We find that Bihar has a higher out of school rate than the median state in India, though the percentage has been declining over time. In line with the enrolment numbers, the out of school rate is higher among older children.

Public campaigns aimed at informing parents and children of the benefits of education are extremely cost effective at increasing school enrolment. Given the current lack of public information in Bihar, we strongly recommend the government launches such a campaign. In Bihar in particular, it would be a good idea to emphasize the development of English language skills, given their high returns in the job market.

Classification of health related components:

Health Components	Skill Components
Cardio respiratory fitness	Agility
Muscular strength and endurance	Balance
Flexibility	Power
Body composition	Speed
	Coordination
	Reaction time

Overall fitness is made up of five main components:

- Cardio respiratory endurance
- Muscular strength
- Muscular endurance
- Body composition
- Flexibility

In order to assess level of fitness, need to give the impression of being at all five components together.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Bihar needs to consider other important determinants of a good education. Previous studies, such as Chaudhury et al. (2006), highlight the problem of teacher absenteeism in several developing countries, including India. This body of research highlights a strong connection between poor school infrastructure, such as lack of drinking water, and teacher absenteeism, but also suggests that improved monitoring by authorities can improve teacher attendance. Indeed, data from a field experiment in Kenya suggest that scholarship incentives, where good grades were rewarded with grants and payment of school fees, helped to motivate both students and parents as well as reduce absenteeism (Glewwe, Kremer et al. 2008).

EDUCATION IN BIHAR – PACS REPORT

On 13 October, partner Deshkal Society released a report on the status of primary education in rural Bihar. The Bihar State Manager for PACS spoke at the launch event in Patna where the report findings were shared with government officials including the Education Minister of Bihar.

BIHAR FAILS INDIA'S ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TEST, BUT ITS KIDS ARE BRIGHT:

According to the latest 'Annual Status of Education Report', while elementary school enrolment levels in India's villages are high across the country, there is a lot of scope for improvement in school facilities. Most urgent is that attention needs to be paid to the learning component at government schools

While more than 90% of Indian children in rural areas may be attending primary school, nearly half of them cannot read simple sentences nor to do simple math, according to a recent nationwide survey conducted in 485 rural districts across 28 of India's 35 states and union territories. Despite the government's concerted

efforts, 1.4 crore village children still remain out of school.

However, a pleasant surprise thrown up by the 'Annual Status of Education Report 2005' (ASER) conducted by the Delhi-based non-governmental organization Pratham together with hundreds of local NGOs, is that students in Bihar and Chhattisgarh (states that have the worst educational facilities) show higher learning capabilities in reading and arithmetic compared to children from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Gujarat which have higher enrolment rates and better school infrastructure.

THE STATUS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN RURAL BIHAR

The key findings of the report include:

- **There is a shortfall of classrooms and teachers:** although the number of children enrolled in primary schools has increased across India, there is a shortfall of classrooms and well-trained teachers which negatively affects the quality of education that children receive.
- **Literacy and numeracy levels are “appalling”:** 30% of children in Gaya and 26% of children. For math's, only 37% of children in Gaya and 39% of children in Katihar can recognize the number 1-9.
- **First generation learners need extra support:** in Gaya, 63% of mothers and 30% of fathers were never enrolled in school. In Katihar, this was 73% and 52%. Children who are first generation learners do not get additional support at home, which negatively affects their progress.
- **Extra tuition widens the gap:** due to the poor educational levels, many parents choose to pay for additional coaching. This leads to inequality within classrooms because children from disadvantaged groups do not receive extra support.

Given the current lack of public information in Bihar, we strongly recommend the government launches such a campaign. In Bihar in particular, it would be a good idea to emphasize the development of English language skills, given their high returns in the job market (Azam et al. 2011).

PHYSICAL FITNESS OF CHILDREN:

Children's health is an important concern for all societies since it contributes to their overall development. Health,

nutrition and education are important for the overall development of the child and these three inputs need to be addressed in a comprehensive manner. While the relationship between health and education is seen more in terms of the role that the latter plays in creating health awareness and health status improvements, what is not adequately represented in the debates is the reciprocal relationship between health and education, especially when it comes to children. Studies have shown that poor health and nutritional status of children is a barrier to attendance and educational attainment and therefore plays a crucial role in enrollment, retention, and completion of school education (Rana, K & Das, S: 2004; World Bank: 2004).

A significant percentage of general teachers had a negative attitude towards physical education. As far as the curriculum and syllabus is concerned, the aims and objectives of this area was not clearly stated and the existing syllabus for this area did not contain minimum levels of learning and the activities prescribed under yogic exercises were found to be inappropriate. The infrastructure for physical education was found appropriate but fifty percent of the lower primary schools of Mysore city did not have physical education teachers (Sudarshan and Balakrishnaiah: 2003).

CONCLUSION:

Components of physical fitness are skill-related (or sports-related) should be incorporated into daily exercise routines. Combining all components of fitness into exercise program will certainly make children stronger, faster, improve their balance and increase flexibility. Improving upon all the components of physical fitness helped them to perform daily routine tasks without fatigue and exhaustion. In this paper we found, there has been much progress in the field of exercise and physical conditioning.

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