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ICT IN SCHOOL EDUCATION – A CASE STUDY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ICT in School Education – A Case Study of Primary and Secondary Education

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Abstract – This study provides a stocktaking of progress and shortcomings in India's march towards universalization of elementary education (UEE), whilst addressing concerns of equity, inclusion, and quality from the central focus which looks into the dimensions of locational disadvantage, social exclusion, gender disparity, and special needs for children of other neglected groups. It focuses on gaps in enrolment, infrastructural provisioning, equity concerns in terms of being inclusive in the context of schools functioning, teachers (social group, training, motivation, transaction and so on), management, and governance issues. The extent and manifestations of non-inclusion or exclusion in the educational context is also related to the capacity of the State as reflected in the policy fuzziness and ambiguities.

Keywords: ICT in School, Education

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in the progress of an individual's mind and country. People are made aware of what is going on in the world and can understand these issues and take necessary measures, if they are educated. Education tames the astray mind, nurturing its capabilities the same way, training builds a clever dog. Webster defines education as the process of educating or teaching (now that's really useful, isn't it?) 'Educate' is further defined as "to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of..." Thus, from these definitions, we might assume that the purpose of education is to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of students.

Right to Education is the primary right of every citizen of India, whether a child resides in a high profile society or in a faraway not so developed secluded village, according to the Article 45 of Indian Constitution the basic elementary education must be provided to all the children up to the age of fourteen years. Even after 64 years of independence some States in India are still struggling to achieve Universal enrolment, retention and quality education. There are about 1303996 or more than one million rural schools among 6, 38,000 villages in India. Schools in rural areas are promoted to raise the level of education and literacy in rural India. The main aim of running these types of schools in India is to increase the rate of literacy in rural areas. More than 40 percent of India's population is illiterate and cannot read or write. Schools in rural areas are inadequate and often equivalent to being non-existent. Thus, government's initiative to set up schools in rural areas came into

picture. According to Just Indian Schools the conditions of rural education in India, is improving steadily and the government is also providing full support and providing with many initiatives. The fee structure in these schools is also very low so that every child can study and afford it.

Education being one of the most important factors responsible to shape the personality of an individual has manifold functions. It is the potent source of material and human development. Quality is the most cherished goal in human endeavour and especially in the field of education. The right to education has been well recognised by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) under Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNDHR) as:

- I. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in elementary and fundamental stages
- II. Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- III. Parents have a right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children. Education has now become a global concern.

The world conference on 'Education For All' held in March, 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand adopted a declaration calling upon all member states and international agencies to take effective steps for achieving Elementary Education for All by the 2000.

India was one of the participants to the declaration. The ultimate goal affirmed by the world declaration on 'Education For All' is to meet the basic needs of all children, youth, and adults.

The government of India has launched an integrated educational programme, 'The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan' (SSA), which is a flagship programme for universalising elementary education and a National mission constituted with the Prime Minister as its Chairman. The programme initially aims to provide eight years of quality elementary education for all children up to the age of 14 years in a mission mode with a thrust on community ownership, disadvantaged groups and quality education for girls. In order to meet the increased demand of quality education, the private institutions came up to support and work for it. The growing population pressure and universalization of primary education also have contributed to the growth of private educational institutions.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

ICTs act as and provide students and teachers with new tools that enable improved learning and teaching. Geographical distance no longer becomes an insurmountable obstacle to obtaining an education. It is no longer necessary for teachers and students to be physically in proximity, due to innovations of technologies such as teleconferencing and distance learning, which allow for synchronous learning.

There is much research evidence that links the availability of permanent classrooms, textbooks, desks, libraries, and running water with the take up of primary education (Verspoor, 2003). We also find that often in India the 'school building' is regarded by stakeholders and many commentators as the most important ingredient after the teacher.

The access of primary/upper primary schooling facilities within a walkable distance of one/three km had not been achieved for all rural habitations in India. It requires a planned and systematic intervention from the public agencies involved in catering the school education facilities, particularly, in hilly areas - thereby it had been requiring an extensive review on distance criterion. The expansion in number of rural schools was quite slow and disparities among and within States/UTs were prevailing. The increase in number of primary schools was less than 10 percent in majority of States/UTs. The increase in number of upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools might have appeared due to the up gradation of existing schools. Efforts were required to create the pucca/partly pucca school building infrastructure in the country. A study conducted by the International Institute for Communication and Development (IICD) indicated that 80 percent of its participants felt more aware and empowered by their exposure to ICT in education, and 60 percent stated that the process of teaching as well as learning were directly and positively affected by the use of ICT. Vast variations exist between states in their efforts to provide eight years of elementary schooling.

While in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Maharashtra, nearly all children have reached school and are remaining there, in other states like Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh, a very significant number continue to be out school (Sinha Amarjeet2003).

Twenty-first century teaching learning skills underscore the need to shift from the traditional teacher-centered pedagogy to more learner-centered methods. Active and collaborative learning environments facilitated by ICT contribute to the creation of a knowledge-based student population. Education leadership, management, and governance can also be improved through ICT by enhancing educational content development and supporting administrative processes in schools and other educational establishments. India has an excellent opportunity to initiate its efforts in re-formulating an education policy in such a way that the following can be the key areas of focus:

- Creativity, cultural values, national need, critical thinking, Entrepreneurial Thinking and subject orientation formulate the content for students across school education.
- Education system is in continuous alignment to the economic-GDP 2020 vision of 44% of national GDP from agricultural income, 21% of GDP from manufacturing sector and 35% of GDP from the services sector.
- Develop knowledge resource not just to meet the national need but also the global need on knowledge human resources.

Recent research in the field of neuroscience has provided convincing evidence that "experience-based brain development in the early years sets neurological and biological pathways that affect health, learning and behaviour throughout life"(Mustard, 2007).

PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

Various types of preprimary schools are available in India and more children are now attending pre-school (NIPCCD, 2006) indicating an increase in demand for education at this stage. This overall increase raises questions such as whether this demand has increased everywhere. Are all children attending pre-schools if they are available? Which types of preschools do children belonging to different socio-economic groups attend? Who are the children totally excluded from preprimary schooling (zone 0 of the CREATE zones of exclusion)? Drawing on quantitative data collected in the National Family Health Survey, DISE (District Information System for Education) and the Seventh All India Education Survey as well as qualitative data collected through CREATE's community and school survey (ComSS) in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh conducted in 2008, this policy brief presents an analysis of pre-primary education in India and recommends policies for the improved provision of equitable and quality preprimary schooling.

Pre-school Education and Exclusion - Research suggests that pre-primary education is very important for the development of young children before they enter formal school (Kaul, 2002). It helps in cognitive development of children at the early grades of primary education and it has strong bearing on attendance and participation of children once they enter primary school. Pre-primary education is considered to be very important for the child as it is the first step towards entering the world of knowledge as well as a healthy and purposeful life. Pre-primary education helps children become more independent and confident as well as promoting the all-round development of the children (Ramachandran et al., 2003).

CONCLUSION:

The development of any country depends fully on the education of its people. Basic education is viewed worldwide as human right. For this reason 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 came into picture. All educational innovations require strong community support and participation. 'People's acceptance and participation' can be used as an indicator for measuring the progress of the various programmes. Therefore to spread awareness among the rural people about the need and significance of education more efforts have to be taken by the government, educated youth of urban towns and cities, teachers, young scholars etc.

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