

**A STUDY ON PRIMARY EDUCATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
NORTH EASTERN REGION**

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Abstract

Primary education is the base of whole formal education system. Primary education is the root for future education of a child. Government has taken various steps for cent percent enrolment of primary education. Sarva Siksha Aviyani is a scheme for Universalisation of primary education of India. This article shows about progress of primary education with special reference to North East Region. The study involves a comparison of dropout rate, male-female enrolment etc during the years 2003-04 to 2011-12. The necessary data and information were collected from MHRD Reports, Journals, and Books etc.

Key words: *Primary, Education, SSA, NER.*

Elementary education is very important for a society and a country at large. Elementary education is also called primary education in India. Primary education is the first stage of compulsory education. Every child should get quality education. The future of our country depends upon the children of today. The Kothari Commission had remarked "Destiny of the Nation is being shaped in her classrooms." It is the duty of the Government to provide free-education to every boy and every girl up to the primary stage. Primary Education will enable a child to learn to read and write. The Indian government lays emphasis on primary education, also referred to as elementary education, to children aged 6 to 14 years old. ... Education has also been made free for children for 6 to 14 years of age or up to class VIII under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009.

In US and other parts of the world it is called as elementary education or elementary schools. But here in India we simply say primary schools. According to the United Nations Education board, India is the only country, has progressed the most over the world by sending students to school at elementary stage. United Nations also lauded Indian government effort in implementing the welfare program in elementary education. The elementary education system in India is the second largest in the world with 149.4 million children of 6-14 years enrolled.



India is a developing country with a population of over one billion. A significant portion of that population lives in poverty: 26% live on less than US \$1 a day and 35% are considered illiterate. Gender gaps exist. Literacy rates are 21% lower for females than for males. Among those children aged six to 14 not enrolled in school, more than 60% are girls. Some communities do not see the need to educate daughters because they will be married off at an early age and live and work with their in-laws, mostly doing housework and raising children. Child labor is a great problem of primary education. Many children need to work and earn in order to supplement a meager family income and therefore do not attend school. Realizing the importance and the critical state of primary education in India today, many organizations on many levels are focusing on this issue. International agencies, such as UNESCO and UNICEF, are deeply involved. UNESCO has pledged to work with national governments and development partners to achieve universal free primary education by 2015, as was agreed upon at the World Education Forum in Dakar. UNICEF also has primary education as part of its mission. Both are supporting the Government of India in its task with funds and expertise.

India has 29 states and 7 territories where India's literacy rate is at 74.04%. There is not cent percent literacy in India due to various socio-economic, geographical, educational problems etc. But now a day's Education is considered as the most powerful weapon to build up knowledge based competitive society in correspondence with the changing global knowledge society.

From independence, both the central and the state government has been taking various initiatives to upliftment of educational process in various stages of education mainly emphasized given on Elementary Education, because Elementary or primary education is the preliminary or fundamental education of our life. Primary education is root of our educational life, which leads to a secondary or higher level education.

Indian education system has been undergone a rapid change both quantitatively and qualitatively during the last two decades because of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG). The government of India has launched several schemes namely Kasturba Gandhi Ballka Vidyalaya Scheme, Mid-Day Meal Scheme, the National Program For Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) etc to make attention among its citizens regarding development of literacy rate. Among these schemes another one of the most important and fundamental schemes is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan (SSA) is a scheme for universalization of elementary education. SSA is also known as the Education for All, or 'Each One Teach One'. It was introduced in 2000-2001 as the flagship programme run by the Government of India. This scheme is framed

to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen by 2010.

North-eastern region (NER) comprising of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim are all special category states. Because of the geographical peculiarities the seven states of the region (excluding Sikkim, which was added later on) is called ‘Seven Sisters’. The region is endowed with rich biodiversity and natural resources like tea, timber, tourism, oil, coal and bio-resources like medicinal and aromatic plants, orchids etc.

- To study the present status of primary education in North-Eastern Region and to compare it with that of India in the context of----
 - a) Number of primary and Upper Primary schools.
 - b) Male and Female group.
- To study the dropout rate of primary education in North-Eastern Region and to compare it with that of India -----
 - All categories’
 - I-VIII, boys & girls

The present study is based on secondary data only. The necessary data and information were collected from MHRD Reports, Journals, and Books etc. Some related information were gathered from different websites like shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in, assam.ac.in etc. The data were analyzed through using simple percentage.

Table 1: State wise Number of Primary and Upper Primary Schools in NE States.

Region	2003-04		2011-12		Total	
	P.S	U.P.S	P.S	U.P.S	P.S	U.P.S
Arunachal Pradesh	1364	449	2098	945	3462	1394
Assam	30068	8143	31202	14133	61270	22276
Manipur	2552	832	2420	733	4972	1565
Meghalaya	5851	1559	9081	3235	14932	4794
Mizoram	1504	908	1855	1383	3359	2291



Nagaland	1495	480	1662	465	3157	945
Tripura	2075	453	2298	1274	4373	1727
NE Region	44909 (6.30%)	12824 (4.89%)	50616 (6.63%)	22168 (4.63%)	95525 (6.47%)	34992 (4.72%)
India	712239	262286	763370	478756	1475609	741042

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development Bureau of Planning, Monitoring & Statistics, New Delhi, 2014.

P.S- Primary School, U.P.S- Upper Primary School.

From table 1 we found that according to 2003-04, number of total primary schools of NE Region is = 44909

But in 2003-04, Number of total primary schools in India = 712239

Therefore the percentage of NE Region = $44909/712239 \times 100$
=6.30%

According to 2011-12 the number of total primary schools of Ne Region is=50616

In 2011-12 No of P.S in India =763370

Therefore % of NE Region = $50616/763379 \times 100$
=6.63%

Table 2: Dropout rates of all categories from class I-VIII including boys and girls.

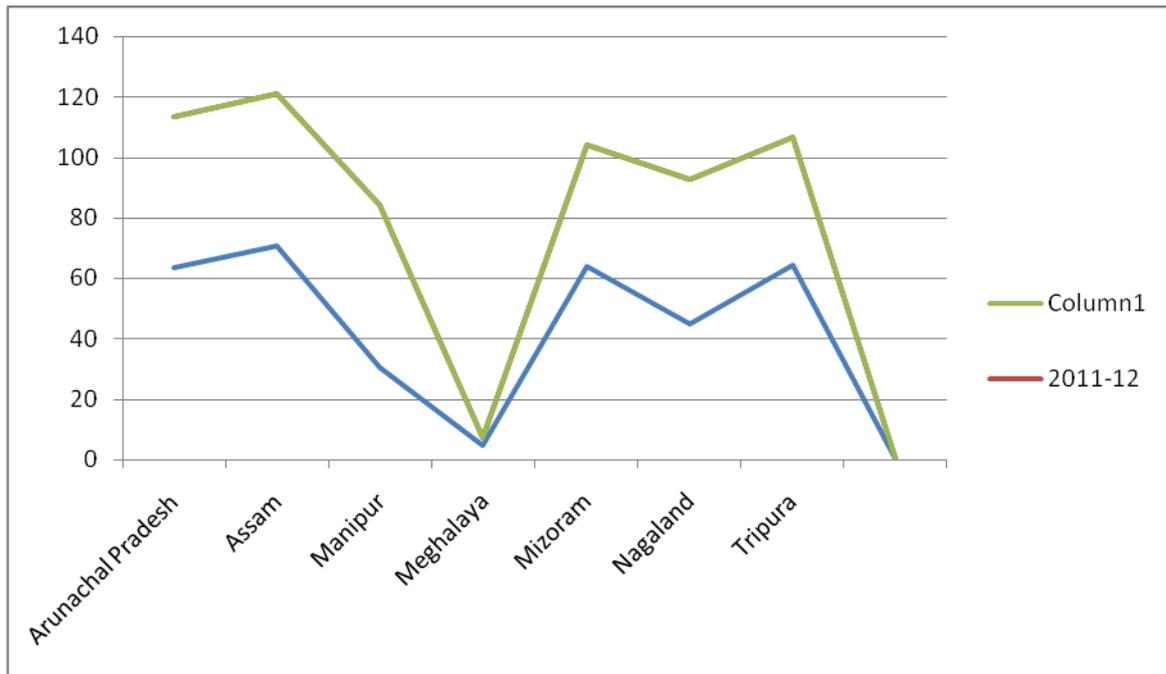
Region	2003-04	2011-12	% Increased/Decreased During 2003-2012
Arunachal Pradesh	63.53	50.0	-13.52
Assam	70.81	50.2	-20.61
Manipur	30.61	53.7	23.09
Meghalaya	71.13	68.0	-3.13
Mizoram	64.19	39.9	-24.29
Nagaland	44.83	47.7	2.87
Tripura	64.29	42.4	-21.89

NE Region	31.47	8.625	-57.46
India	36.13	40.8	-4.67

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development Bureau of Planning, Monitoring & Statistics, New Delhi, 2014

From table 2 we found that dropout rate at Primary level has decreased from 63.53 in 2003-04 to 50.0 in 2011-12 in Arunachal Pradesh i.e. 13.52 %.But in case of Manipur it has increased from 30.61 in 2003-04 to 53.7 in 2011-12 i.e. 23.09%. The total dropout rate of India has increased from 36.13 in 2003-04 to 53.7 in 2011-12 i.e. 23.09%. Dropout rates of NER at Primary levels are 31.47 in 2003-04 which has decreased up to 8.6% in 2011-12.As a whole dropout rate of India is 36.13% in 2003-04 and 40.8% in 2011-12 which has increased during these years.

Fig-1 graphical representation of dropout rates of all categories from class I-VIII including boys and girls.



The above figure represents that the maximum percentage of dropout rate is found decreased during 2003-2012 except Manipur and Nagaland. Comparing to India NER dropout rate has decreased satisfactorily i.e. 31.47% to 8.6% during 2003-2012.



Table 3: Enrolment of school education 2011-12, all categories class I- VIII

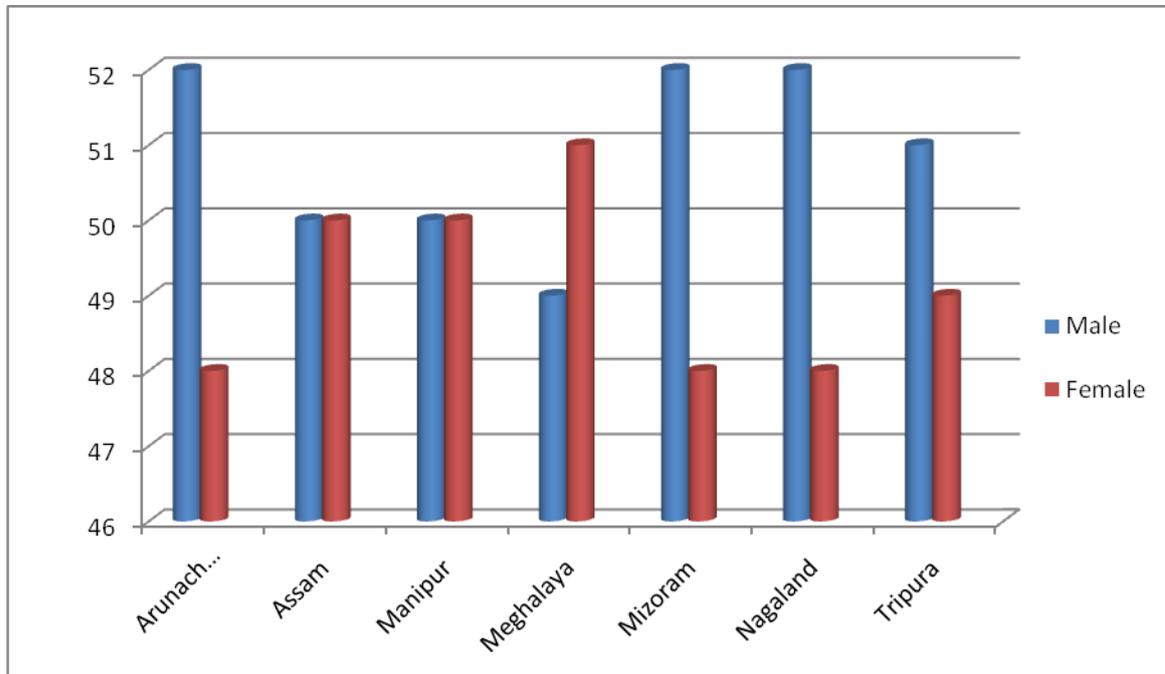
Region/States	Male		Female		Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
	Arunachal Pradesh	167104	52	156961	48
Assam	2139530	50	2134846	50	4274376
Manipur	247836	50	246211	50	494047
Meghalaya	345866	49	359750	51	705616
Mizoram	109342	52	99552	48	208894
Nagaland	159905	52	150125	48	310030
Tripura	314036	51	301245	49	615281
NE Region	3483619	50	3448690	50	6932309
India	105755779	52	97120438	48	202876217

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development Bureau of Planning, Monitoring & Statistics, New Delhi, 2014

The perusal of the table-3 showed that the total number of students enrolled in primary and Upper primary education (2011-12) in NER is 6932309 of which 3483619 are male and 3448690 are female that accounted at 50% and 50 % respectively, whereas the percentage of male and female in primary and Upper primary education in India stands at 52% and 48% respectively. So far the individual states are concerned; it is found that male female disparity is highest in, Mizoram, and Nagaland (48% female) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (48% female students), Assam (50% female), Tripura (49% female), Manipur (50% female) and Mizoram and Nagaland with 48% female students in primary education. It is here to be mention that the

proportion of female students is even higher in Meghalaya with 51% female in primary education. Thus, more or less disparity is found in all the states of NE region.

Fig-2 graphical representation of enrolment in school education 2011-12



The above figure represents that an imbalance in male-female enrollment of primary education in 2011-12. Highest male enrollment rate found in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Tripura in 2011-12 i.e. 52%, 52% and 51% respectively and lowest rate also found in Meghalaya i.e. 49%. Likewise, highest female enrollment rate found in Meghalaya i.e. 51% and lowest found in Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland i.e. 48%, 48% and 48% respectively.

Conclusion:

In today’s education system, many things have changed, many new things have been incorporated, yet there is something wrong somewhere. This will solve when government, as well as the citizens, take initiatives to improve the Indian education system, by providing the same quality as well as facility to all classes of students. The importance of universal primary education has now been widely recognized by everyone.

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