A Review of State of Education in Bihar

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ABSTRACT

If development is to be sustainable, people need to be better educated. Just looking at economic output, education contributes to growth by increasing the level of human capital of the workforce – as India has discovered in the IT sector. Looking beyond the statistics, education can equip people with the tools for a more fulfilling and enjoyable life. Though many of the recent policies have reduced the costs of schooling in Bihar, yet much remains to be done to boost schooling infrastructure and improve conditions for both students and teachers. The paper discusses at length, various facets of education in Bihar and their outcome and outreach

Keywords: Financial donation, Economic Output, Work force, IT Sector, Opportunity Cost, Cost of Schooling, Subsidies, Liberalization

Introduction:

Education promotes economic growth and is, in turn, influenced and induced by economic growth. Education provides a foundation for development, the ground on which much of our economic and social well-being is built. Education affects economic development in a direct as well as in an indirect way. The direct effects can be observed in productivity, employment, composition of labour force, division and mobility of labour, etc. The indirect effects include, thrift, savings, limitations in the size of family, formation of the right kind of attitudes and skills.

In the growth models, growth accounting studies have shown that education contributes to economic growth. In the early 1960's research conducted on determinants of economic growth of several economies have indicated the residual factor (education and technology) as one of the major elements. Similar findings made in the area have witnessed that education has impacts on earnings and a positive effect on the productivity of various sectors.

Human Development Indicators: The acute backwardness of the state is reflected in most of the human development indicators, which is evident from Table 4. In spite of impressive growth in literacy, Bihar with 64 percent of literates is much behind the national average, although the gap has narrowed overtime. However, the dropout rate is a major concern. The dropout rate (class 1-8) during 2007-08 was about 71 percent in Bihar as compared to 44 percent in India. Bihar's infant mortality rates are almost similar to India's average, but the contrast with Kerala is highly noticeable. The birth rate in Bihar is much higher than most of the states. The maternal mortality rate in Bihar is also much higher. Although the percentage of safe delivery has increased to 53% in the state, it is much lower than the all-India's average of over 76 percent. Bihar had only 49% of full vaccination in 2009 compared to 61% in India.

Of late, however, Authorities of education system are helping Bihar to work its way up and reclaim its past glory and Bihar has emerged as one of the major centres of learning in India. Schools in Patna are either run by the state government or run by private trusts, organisations, missionaries. Government schools are affiliated with the Bihar School Examination Board and most private schools are affiliated with the ICSE, CBSE or NIOS boards. Some of the prominent old schools Patna like St. Joseph's Convent, St. Michael's High School, St. Xavier's School, were established by missionaries during the British Raj . Patna imparts education in fields like technology, medicine, management, law and fashion. Institutions of national repute have opened up in Patna increasing the opportunities in higher

education in the state capital. Colleges such as Indian Institute of Technology Patna, Birla Institute of Technology, Patna and National Institute of Technology, Patna are the prominent engineering colleges in Patna. Other colleges include the newly opened National Institute of Fashion Technology Patna and medical schools such as Indira Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna Medical College and Hospital and Nalanda Medical College and Hospital. Science College, Patna College, Langat Singh College, B N College, etc. are among the best-known colleges for science, commerce and humanities besides for a range of PG courses.

The government is designing fool-proof education plans such as- 'Skill development initiatives and vocational training' and **'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan'** to bring Bihar among the top most literate and educationally advanced states of India. Proper support (in terms of financial donation and preparation of the education system) from central and state government has paid off a lot. Education minister of Bihar has already set the plan in motion, where schools are planned to be transformed on the model of community colleges of U.S. Students have started to flock to the state of Bihar for their education, whether it is primary, secondary or higher education.

After coming to power, the Nitish Kumar led government opened the Chanakya National Law University, a national law university and a B-school called Chandragupt Institute of Management. Both these institutes have attracted students from not just within Bihar but also students from far flung states. A N Sinha Institute of Social Sciences, Rajendra Memorial Research Institute, Bihar Research Institute are the research institutes in Patna. The Patna University, the first university in Bihar, was established in 1917, and is the 7th oldest university of the Indian subcontinent. Patna also houses one of India's world-renowned libraries, the Khuda Baksh Oriental Library and the Sinha Library, which is one of the largest in the region.

As on date, there are six engineering colleges for boys and one for girls in public sector and nine others in the private sector in Bihar. The overall annual intake of these technical institutes offering engineering education to students in Bihar is merely 4,559. The process to create infrastructure for three new engineering colleges—one each at Madhepura, Begusarai and Sitamarhi—has started. Bihar government is also supposed to launch new medical college in Bihar.

Patna has emerged as a major center for engineering and civil services coaching. The major private IIT-JEE coaching institutes have opened up their branches in Bihar and this has reduced the number of students who go to, for example, Kota and Delhi for engineering/medical coaching.

One thing that development economists agree on is the importance of education. Put simply, if development is to be sustainable, people need to be better educated. Just looking at economic output, education contributes to growth by increasing the level of human capital of the workforce – as India has discovered in the IT sector. Looking beyond the statistics, education can equip people with the tools for a more fulfilling and enjoyable life.

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.

Recent policy initiatives and improvements in primary school enrolment show that Bihar is making progress in improving its education. Recent policies have focused on lowering the cost of schooling through subsidising or providing textbooks, uniforms, bicycles and cash transfers for attendance. While these have reduced the costs of schooling in Bihar, much remains to be done to boost schooling infrastructure and improve conditions for both students and teachers.

In spite of the inadequate investment on education in Bihar, compared to other poorer Indian states, the students have done well. National institutes of learning such as IIT,IIM, AIIMS, IISER, NISER, etc. have had a good representation from Bihar. A survey by Pratham rated the absorption of their teaching by the Bihar children better than those in other states. According to the government, out-of-school rate in the age group 6-14 was 6.3% in 2017, a big drop from 12.8 per cent in 2016

For accelerating the pace of educational development, policymakers must universally provide drinking water facilities, and separate toilets for girls in schools. They must also improve the student-teacher ratio and ensure that classrooms are in good condition. Finally, given the high cost effectiveness of information campaigns regarding the returns to education, the government of Bihar should seriously look into this policy option. More generally, understanding the determinants of household's decision to 'invest' in education should be an important component of academic research and policy in the area of education, which has previously tended to focus more on improving the quantity and quality of educational inputs.

There are also lack of entrepreneur skills in youth of Bihar. They say Karnataka has Narayan Murthy (of Infosys), Gujrat has Ambanis but Bihar has none. This is the main reason for people of Bihar to lack behind these states. We need a great team, a corporate house that develop the business opportunities in Bihar. There must be foreign direct investment to make it a huge factor to stop migration. These all steps begin at home when one tries to educate the youth. With proper guidance and great education, youth of Bihar can do wonders.

We also need an initiative from education ministry of Bihar to take proper steps in opening technical institutes for students of Bihar which will help them to stay in their state and also attract students from different states. If we all work towards these steps, we will see a rise in education system of Bihar which will be very fruitful for betterment of Bihar and its people. We believe education system and education culture can definitely change if youth takes up the responsibility to make this change. On this note, the research is being transiently finished with a hope to see a great future for Bihar and its students.

There are three important determinants of the supply of education services. These are : time precedence, in the sense that the supply must be available many years before it is needed; in the sense that all types of schools must expand at the same time; and complementarily, in the sense that due proportions must be observed in the supply of components of the services: teachers, accommodation, equipment and administration. All these components have to be present in fixed proportions or at least in proportion which can vary only within narrow limits.

The realities regarding our educational system may be epitomised as follows:

- That our educational system needs some radical metamorphosis.
- That the growth and coverage of our educational system have not been satisfactory.
- That the faculty development programmes followed by our educational system needs some improvement for all round development of the students and to enable the teaching staff to keep abreast of the latest advances and techniques in pedagogy.
- That the financial allocation to our educational system are meager to sustain all round development of human resources available in our state.
- That the financial management of our educational system also needs certain extent of rationalisation.

The Structural Adjustment policy in the post economic reforms in the 1990s result in market interference in higher education decision making process. This is reflected in terms of privatisation of public institution and encouragement of private sector. However, the availability of resources at the institution level was found to be inadequate to meet the growing demand for student enrolment. Consequently, many higher educational institutions in Urban India have started cost recovery measures mostly in the form of levying higher rates of student fees and resource mobilisation strategies. But, it is difficult to mobilize resources in the less developed regions and rural areas. So, it seems there has been widening of inequalities between rural and urban areas and central and state universities in access to funds and in terms of the outcomes of higher education. It is against the goal of Inclusive growth. Nearly 20% of Indian population is below poverty line. They will not realize the benefit of higher education if it is not funded by public fund. So, the present study is essential to judge the need of public funded higher educational institutions in India. This research project attempts to look into the issues related to changing nature of financing of higher education.

In the light of the above discussion, the following questions need to be explored by all stake holders in our educational set up:

- What are the different sources of funding of higher education institutions?
- What is the utilization pattern of the resources by the higher education institutions?
- What is the extent of resource gaps at the institutional level?
- What activities are affected by reduced resource availability at the institutional level?
- What are the strategies adopted by the institution to mobilize additional resources?

If education has to raise the quality of human resources, the following changes will have to be made in the existing educational system:

First of all, restrictions should be introduced on higher education. The essential conditions for university education should be laid down and only those who satisfy them should be admitted to postgraduate courses. Most of the research work done in Indian Universities is unproductive and the expenditure involved is a colossal waste. For making research both meaningful and productive, emphasis should be on quality and not on quantity.

Secondly, education should be made job-oriented. In other words, emphasis should be on vocational education rather than on general education.

Thirdly, education in science is costly and its expansion should be carefully planned. There is no point in producing science graduates if they can get only clerical jobs. For these jobs, commerce and arts graduates will not be less competent while the expenditure on their education will be much smaller.

Fourthly, in rural areas emphasis should e on agriculture and vocational education. General education has been found less useful in these areas. In certain cases it has proved to be disastrous. For instance, rural people after getting some education lose interest in agriculture and migrate to cities in search of employment where very few jobs exist for them.

Fifthly, technical education should be properly planned. Since it involves heavy cost, the government must ensure jobs to all the technical hands.

Further, if a person getting technical education at the State's expense wants to go abroad, the government must claim the money which it has spent on his education from him. *Sixthly,* instead of opening new colleges and higher secondary schools, the government must try to raise the standards of education at higher secondary and university levels.

Conclusion:

With above discussion we conclude that government must investigate the reasons for the large number of dropouts and should make attempts to solve this problem. In this respect, it is necessary to overcome the 'discouragement effect' about which we have written above. Overcoming this effect depends crucially on improving the accessibility, affordability and quality of schooling in India. According to Dreze and Sen, much can be done without delay in this field like opening more schools, improving the infrastructure, appointing more teachers, simplifying the curriculum, organizing enrolment drives, providing free textbooks etc. However, the primary challenge would be to improve the teaching standards in the classroom.

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