



An insight into the performance of learning outcome at elementary educational level in Odisha

Pradipta Kumar Sarangi¹, Sabitribala Dash²

¹ District Planning Coordinator, OSEPA, DPO, Nabarangpur, Odisha, India

² District Planning Coordinator, OSEPA, DPO, Ganjam, Odisha, India

Abstract

Education is recognized as a human right since the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 besides health and shelter. Education for all Goals was established where more than 150 governments have adopted world declaration on Education for all policy to support the universal right for education. Quality of education at elementary level acts as a significant factor in the process of development of nations and establishes the foundation from which the learning of a person takes place. Having a significant role of quality education for the betterment of society, an inter-governmental agreement (Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) made by UN countries taking 17 goals with 169 targets and 304 indicators, out of which Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all is one of the 17 Goals set in the SDGs as proposed by the United Nation General Assembly to be achieved by 2030. In order to enhance quality of elementary education & improvement of learning achievement, the Odisha Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (ORCFCE) Act, 2010 came into force in this state and a number of steps taken by S&ME Department, Govt. of Odisha like SAMIKSHA: The Monitoring Mechanism, CCE, SAHAJA, LINDICS, PINDICS, initiation of Learning Enhancement Programme by introducing supplementary remediation materials for primary and Upper Primary section in the name of Ujjwal & Utthan, teachers training, Shalla Siddhi etc. As a consequence, the average percentage of achievement level of Odisha is 62.0 in Class-III, 54.0 in Class-V & 45.5 in Class-VIII which are comparatively lower than the national average i.e. 65.7, 56.0 and 46.8 in Class-III, V & VIII respectively (NAS Report, 2017) published by NCERT. Educational reports published by MHRD, NCERT, ASER and OSEPA on the performance level and learning outcome of students at Elementary School Level i.e Class-I-VIII and different interventions and steps taken by the School & Mass Education Department towards improving learning level of students at elementary level in Odisha.

Keywords: learning outcome, elementary education, assessment

Introduction

Education is an essential tool for social and economic growth of any country. The basic educational skills i.e. reading and writing increases one person's income up to 10% and acting as a ladder that brings development for eradication of poverty and hunger. Different nations of the World have declared that, it is the right of every person to get education by speaking through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (World Education Forum, 2000). Since then, numerous organizations have struggled to promote education through the implementation of new educational strategies and policies. These organizations include; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1981) (UNICEF, 2007).

Education for All policy (EFA) has launched at World Conference in 1990 as a universal commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth, and adults. Education for All Goals were established at Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990, where more than 150 countries adopted world declaration on Education for All policy and committed to support the universal right for education by achieving free quality education access.

Providing quality education is a challenge for developing countries to overcome their poverty level and let children

live up to their full potential in a sustainable way in order to create a brighter future for themselves. The Sustainable Development Goals are a set of seventeen pointer targets that all the countries which are members of the UN agreed to work upon for the better future of the country. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is an inter-Governmental agreement formulated to act as post-2015 Development agenda, its predecessor being Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all is one of the 17 Goals set in the SDGs. School and Mass Education Department, Govt. of Odisha is taking lot of initiatives towards ensuring Quality Elementary Education in Odisha at the desired level.

Review of Literature

Improving all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills. Quality is at the heart of education, and what takes place in classrooms and other learning environments is fundamentally important to the future well-being of children, young people and adults. A quality education is one that satisfies basic learning needs, and enriches the lives of learners and their overall experience of living. Evidence over the past decade has shown that efforts to expand enrolment must be accompanied by attempts to enhance educational quality if

children are to be attracted to school, stay there and achieve meaningful learning outcomes. (UNESCO, 2000, Goal 6 and paras 42-3). ‘Education is one of the basic needs for human development and to escape from poverty’ (Sivakumar & Sarvalingam, 2010, p. 20), it is necessary for national development and a prosperous society. According to Rahman and Uddin (2009) education is the responsibility of the government and should be managed through national resources.

Educational policy is considered as a program related to the design of Education for All program, concentrating on specific area of its quality (Haddad & Demsky, 2005). Quality of education is a broad concept and there is no single definition that has identified the exact meaning of quality due to its complex nature. Terms; like effectiveness, equity, efficiency, and quality have often been used synonymously (Adams, 1993). The definition of quality should always be flexible for change to cope with educational evolution and its continuous progress (Glasser, 1990) as quality is influenced by various changing factors; such as, politics, culture, and economy. Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world (Nelson Mandela).

Quality of education was assured but the quality control measures were not taken in due course to keep the primary education quality on track. The Government of India made policies which it thought could keep the quality intact, but we see otherwise. In words of Prof. Hanushek, quality is impossible to dictate through policies; policies often end up providing the schools with resources (Hanushek, 2003), more supply-side activities. Educationists are unanimous in their view that the foundations of learning are laid down in the childhood so it is important to care for the children and provide them with a quality education to assure them a better future in life (Kaushik, 2009). So the need for a quality check at the primary level is necessary and development of better supply of education in a necessity. Sipahimalani presents certain evidences that show school's quality being one of the root causes of school participation (Sipahimalani, 1999, V. Ramachandran, 2007). School inputs do not determine schooling outcomes in developing countries (Hanushek, 1995). It has been found that there are

many children in standard IV and V who cannot even recognize letters, words, etc. (ASER).

Objectives of the study

To assess the scenario and performance of learning outcomes at Elementary Level i.e. from Class-I-VIII and the intervention taken up for improvement of quality Elementary education in Odisha. The objectives of the study are;

1. To know the performance and learning outcome of students at Elementary Level i.e Class-I-VIII.
2. Understanding about the different interventions and steps taken by the School & Mass Education Department towards improving learning level of students at elementary level.

Methodology and research design

The collection of data will be made through secondary sources. The data of the study will be based on 30 districts of Odisha from the year 2014-15 to 2018-19 covered 5 years. Data are drawn from the Census reports, selected educational statistics, MHRD report and Directorate of Elementary Education followed by DISE report, Report published by OSEPA, Bhubaneswar, NAS report of NCERT etc. Simple statistical tools like mean, average, and percentage are used to analysis the data available and also to be explained through Bar diagram, charts etc.

Learning achievement level by nas (NCERT)

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) conducted National Achievement Survey throughout the country on November 13, 2017 for Classes-III, V & VIII in Govt. & Govt. Aided Schools. The Survey tools used multiple test booklets in Class-III, V & VIII in Language, Mathematics, Environmental Sciences, Sciences and Social Sciences. The competency based test questions developed reflected Learning Outcomes which were recently incorporated in the central rule for RCFCE Act by the Govt. of India. This is the latest Assessment survey conducted in the country and a comparative information on the attainment of the competency based learning outcomes at National and State of Odisha level is as Follows.

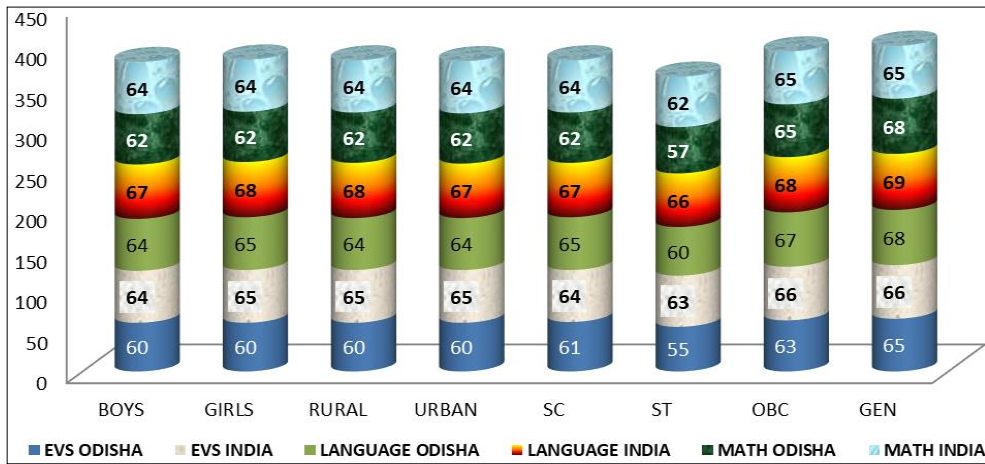
Table 1: Category wise average performance level on different subject

Class	Subjects	Odisha						India					
		Boy	Girl	SC	ST	OBC	GEN	Boy	Girl	SC	ST	OBC	GEN
Performance-III	EVS	60	60	61	55	63	65	64	65	64	63	66	66
	Language	64	65	65	60	67	68	67	68	67	66	68	69
	Math	62	62	62	57	65	68	64	64	64	62	65	65
Performance-V	EVS	56	56	56	52	59	60	57	57	56	55	58	57
	Language	51	53	52	47	55	56	58	59	57	55	60	60
	Math	57	57	56	52	61	61	54	54	53	51	56	54
Performance-VIII	Language	52	53	52	47	56	58	56	57	55	53	58	58
	Math	44	44	43	40	46	46	42	42	40	40	44	42
	Science	44	43	43	41	46	46	44	44	43	43	46	44
	Social science	41	41	40	38	43	42	44	45	42	43	45	44

Source: NAS Report-2017, NCERT

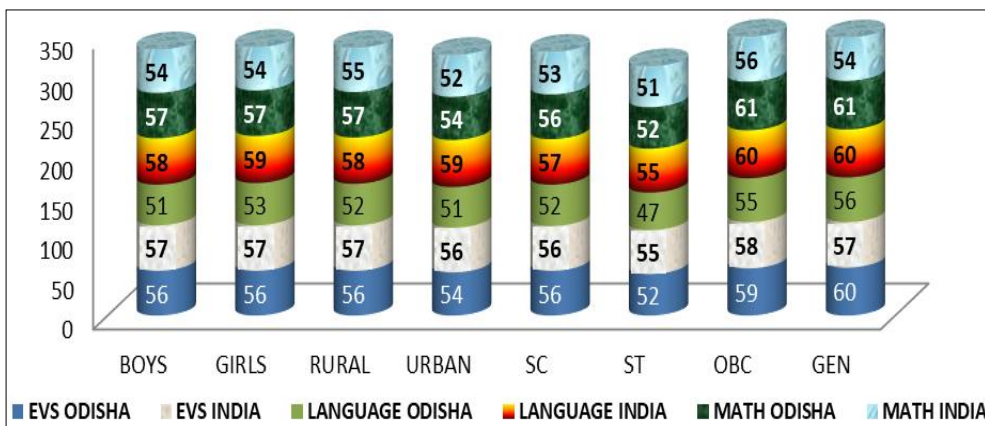
The comparative average performance level of students of National level and state Odisha in Environment Science, Mathematics & languages of Class-III, V and Language, Mathematics, Science and Social Sciences in Class-VIII shows that, there is low performance in Odisha in all respect

that of national average. Out of all three classes (Class-III, V & VIII), the performance level at Class-V is better than Class-VIII & Class-III is better than Class-V. The detail of average performance level is reflected in the following bar diagram as follows.



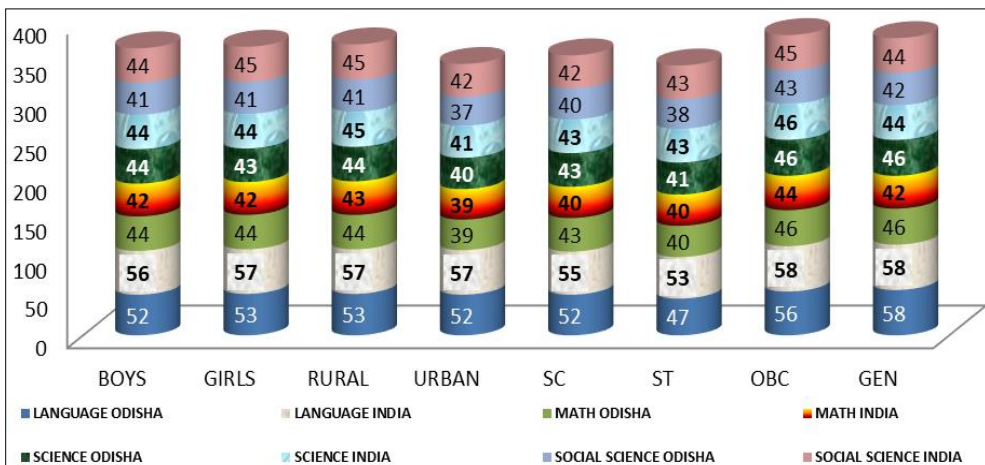
Source: NAS Report-2017, NCERT

Fig 1: Performance of class-III



Source: NAS Report-2017, NCERT

Fig 2: Performance of Class-V



Source: NAS Report-2017, NCERT

Fig 3: Performance of Class-VIII

From the above three bar diagram, it is revealed that, the average performance level of students of Odisha in Class-III in all three subjects i.e EVS, Language & Math is coming under the range of 57%-67%, whereas at national level it is 62%-69%. Similarly, the average performance level of students of Odisha in Class-V in all three subjects i.e EVS, Language & Math is coming under the range of 47%-61%, whereas at national level it is 51%-60%. The average performance level of students of Odisha in Class-VIII in all four subjects i.e Language, Math, Science & Social Science are coming under the range of 38%-58%, whereas at

national level it is 40-58. Mostly, the average performance levels of students of Class-VIII both National as well as State levels are low in comparison to Class-V & Class-III. Further, it is found that the average performance of learning level under different range as defined by NCERT that in Odisha where maximum of 16% students of Class-III secured upto 30 % marks at the same time in class-V it is 20% and in Class-VIII it is 37%. So, students of upper primary section need more attention and remediation for their improvement in learning level.

Table 2: Achievement level of students under different range

Grade	Subject	Upto 30%	30-50%	50-75%	Above-75%
Class-III	Language	10.80	18.30	36.80	34.00
	Math	15.10	20.00	33.00	31.80
	EVS	16.30	19.80	36.40	27.60
Class-V	Language	20.30	29.00	35.20	15.30
	Math	18.10	25.00	33.00	24.10
	EVS	16.40	24.60	38.80	20.20
Class-VIII	Language	20.40	26.10	37.90	15.60
	Math	35.90	30.00	22.00	11.90
	Science	33.80	32.00	23.70	10.50
	Social Science	37.80	32.70	23.40	6.10

Source: NAS Report-2017, NCERT

Steps taken for ensuring enrolment, attendance and quality elementary education

Different key activities has been taken to ensure 100% enrollment, attendance, retention of students and improving quality elementary education in the state are as follows.

1. Transport and escort facilities are being provided to children who are unable to attend schools in remote areas.
2. Children of migrant families are retained in the Seasonal Hostels in the districts like Bargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Mayurbhanj and Nuapada at source point and Cuttack and Khurda at destination point.
3. Urban deprived children are rehabilitated in the Residential hostel functioning in 11 districts.
4. Residential school in LWE districts at Malkangiri has been functional with 60 children.
5. The policy of rationalization of schools is made to merge the non feasible school with the Lead Schools.
6. Textbooks & MDM provided to all students from Class-I to VIII in Govt. & Govt. Aided schools. All blind students were also provided with Braille books.
7. Uniforms and School Shoes provided to all Girls and Boys belonging to SC/ST/BPL categories studying in Govt. Elementary Schools. State Govt. has taken steps to provide uniform to APL boys in Govt. schools and all children in Govt. Aided schools.
8. Under Bal Jyoti programme screening and testing of Visually Impaired Children through mobile ophthalmic unit are conducted. The objective of the programme is to provide eye care facilities like vision screening, on the spot spectacles distribution and to provide eye surgery.
9. MLE implemented in 21 tribal languages for children belonging to tribal community from class I to V in 1485 schools of 17 tribal dominated districts.
10. 3364 Shiksha Sahayaks for 20 languages in 15 districts and 231 Language Instructors are in position to impart teaching in Mother Tongue.
11. Addressing issues of girls drop out in Upper Primary Schools, gender and regional disparity in literacy level especially for girls belonging to SC, ST, OBC and minority in educationally backward blocks. 182 KGBVs have been operationalized in 23 districts enrolling 18,400 girls. Particularly 1 KGBV has been opened in Bhadrak district for Muslim minority girls and Vocational training imparted in all KGBVs boarders.
12. Remedial teaching is being provided by the Part Time Teachers to the KGBV inmates.
13. Children were provided assistive devices, escort &

transport allowance

14. District Resource Center functioning for CWSN at district level-16 districts
15. 632 nos. of BRP (CWSN) are extending resource support to CWSN and ensure their mainstreaming in formal school.
16. 1212 PH IE Volunteers are also providing support services to CWSN at their door step on home based education.
17. 36753 School children provided with Spectacles through Bal Jyoti & SUNETRA Programme in 2018-19.
18. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) for classes 1 to 8 implemented in the State as per the provisions of Right to Education Act.
19. CAL programme is implemented in 3102 Govt. Upper Primary schools.
20. Database of all Students with AADHAAR tagging and Assessment Tracking is being carried out since 2017-18 through SD MIS and maintained.
21. On-line Teacher Profile has been maintained for all Teachers working in Government & Aided schools of the state.
22. Private School Management Portal introduced to facilitate Private Schools to register on-line, provide information on 25% reservation of seats for socially backward children and obtain NOC/COR.
23. Online School Monitoring App has been implemented for overall monitoring of the school Education System by the CRCC/BEO/DEO/DPC/Coordinators & Nodal Officer of respective districts.

Specific steps taken for improving quality education

The Govt. of Odisha has taken a number of steps for improvement of learning level of children which ultimately helps for improvement of quality education as follows:

Learning enhancement programme ujjwala and uthhan

The Govt. of Odisha, Department of School and Mass Education is conducting a Learning Enhancement Programme for all Govt. Schools. This programme has begun from 2nd April 2018 named as UJJWAL for class II to V and UTTHAN for class VI to VIII during the academic session 2018-19 and it is also continuing in 2019-20. The programme Ujjwal has been modified to make it more effective inclusive and continuous.

The Remediation Programme 'UJJWAL' and 'UTTHAN' is a paradigm shift from syllabus based Education to Competencies based Education in the learning process of children. The entire remediation programme UJJWAL and UTTHAN has been conducted for all students by all teachers.

The Programme has been conducted in two phase;

- A. First Phase is Learning Camp (LC): This Camp has conducted in all Govt. schools for 40 days. The learning camp UJJWAL & UTTHAN are completed in a mission mode for the whole School day in the first 40 days. The purpose of Learning Camp is to focus on increasing basic literacy, numeracy skills of the students before the syllabus teaching starts.
- B. The Second Phase (i.e. Rest of the year (ROY) already started from 01.08.2019 and continue upto 28th February 2020. One period of all grades daily are devoted for ROY.

In ujjwal while roy (1 period per day)

- Class II and III will do 3 days Odia, 3 days Math in a week
- Class IV and V will do 2days Odia, 2 days Math, 2 days English in a week.

In utthan while roy (1 period per day)

- Class VI, VII and VIII will do 1 day Odia, 1 day Math, 1day English, and 2 days Science per week.

All teachers of Primary and Upper Primary were undergone capacity building training who to transact the supplementary remediation material in first 40 day during the learning Camp and remaining the year. The required supplementary materials both reading and writing for UJJWAL & UTHHAN were supplied from state to all block point and concerned Block Education Officer distributed to their schools. Each eligible student received the supplementary material over and above the normal text book.

Garima award: A school certification programme

Department of School and Mass Education is the nodal department for managing Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Teachers Training, Sanskrit Education, Computer Education, Special Education and Mass Education in the State. The department manages over 60,000 schools in the state and responsible for the education of about 65 lakh students. The literacy rate of Odisha as per 2011 Census is 72.9%, however, in terms of learning outcomes according to the latest NAS survey, only 53% students were able to answer question on basic competencies correctly.

In September 2017, SATH program was launched in partnership with NITI Aayog to improve the learning outcomes and make Odisha a model state for education in India. Several initiatives have been launched under Project SATH in the past year. Two of these initiatives- Learning Enhancement Program (LEP) and Odisha School Monitoring App (OSMA) are particularly critical to drive

learning outcome and school improvement.

Both initiatives are being implemented in all schools, blocks and districts. In order to sustain the momentum, it is proposed to recognize and reward best performing schools in terms of Learning Outcomes and motivate the rest to improve performance. Most importantly, it is imperative to communicate that improving learning outcomes is the end objective. To achieve this objective, the state has decided to launch the School Certification program to recognize and reward schools that are making progress. Under this program, schools can nominate themselves to be assessed and certified under three categories. Certified schools will be recognized and rewarded. This concept note outlines the levels of certification, rewards thereof, the process of certification and the role of each level in the process.

Key objectives of the Certification program

- To identify good performing schools basis academic performance
- To encourage school to help students to accomplish grade level Learning Outcomes
- To generate healthy competition amongst schools in the block/ district
- To recognize and reward these schools HMs and Teachers
- To recognize and reward schools, clusters and blocks that are ensuring students at appropriate learning outcomes.

Features of the Certification program

- Metrics for certifying schools are based on Learning outcomes
- Engagement of all stakeholders
- Levels of Certification- Bronze, Silver and Gold
- Unbiased assessment
- Rewards & incentives

Schools level metrics to be tested**Table 3**

Category	Academic Parameters	Pre-verification Parameters
Bronze	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 80% of students of Class II-III know basic competencies (Grade-1), Class IV-V know (Grade-2) basic competencies (Language, Math) ▪ 80% of students of Class VI-VIII know Grade 3 competencies (Language, Math and English) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verification of pre-verification parameters ▪ >70% Avg. Teacher attendance (in last 30 working days) ▪ >70% Avg. Student attendance (in last 30 working days)
Silver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 70% of Class II-III students know basic competencies ▪ 70% of present Class IV-V students know Grade 3 competencies (Language, Math) ▪ 70% Class VI-VIII students know level 5 competencies (Language, math and English) 	
Gold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 70% of students of all classes know grade level competencies in Language, Math and English 	

Findings of the study

It was a great challenge for the state of Odisha for taking necessary steps for improvement of quality education since DPEP which was implemented in less number of districts and later on covered all over the state with an objective of

coverage of all children under the umbrella of education. But it was also too difficult to mainstream of all children due to lack of accessibility. But consequently, steps were taken for providing access to school for all either through formal schooling or by residential facilities.

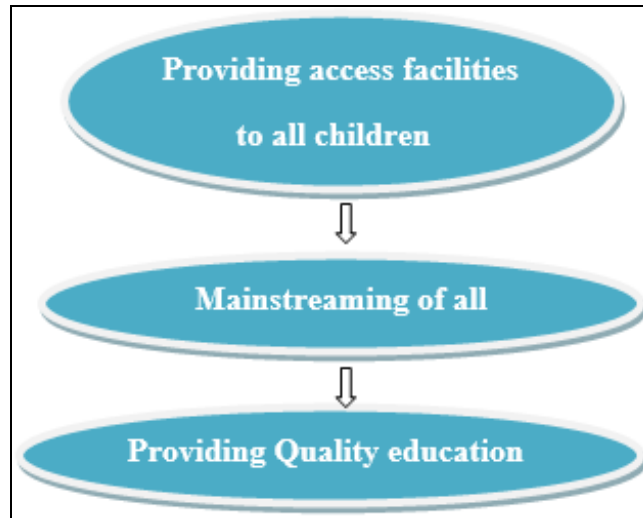


Fig 4: Major challenges of govt. of Odisha on educational sector

Since 1995-96, the S&ME department, the Govt. of Odisha has been tried to fulfill the 1st and 2nd challenges i.e. access facilities and mainstreaming of children within the ambit of educational structure and achieved a lot. But the third one i.e. providing quality education was the first and foremost challenge for the Govt. to fulfill 100% achievement. To get success, a number of steps are undertaken yet and it is still under a major concern of all. It is stated that, after taking so many intervention to ensure

100% enrollment, attendance and quality elementary Education, still it is lagging behind. Still there is 0.5% dropout rate. In 2018-19, the completion rate of elementary cycle is only 87.16%. The transition rate from class-V to Class-VIII is 90.94 %. Still some students are also in repetition in the same class during the elementary cycle. The quality elementary education is a process. The last five year information on different parameter is as follows.

Table 4: Status of indicators of Odisha At elementary level from 2014-15 to 2018-19

Sl. No.	Completion Rate		Transition rate from PS to UPS	Retention Rate		Repetition rate	Out of school children (6-14 YRS) in lakhs	
	YEAR	Ele.	Ele.	PS	UPS	Ele.	BOYS	GIRLS
1	2014-15	86.6	91.06	86.12	79.66	0.65	0.30	0.02
2	2015-16	88.71	91.32	88.63	79.69	0.08	0.00	0.00
3	2016-17	90.81	90.59	90.66	72.21	0.1	0.21	0.21
4	2017-18	89.39	90.85	89.01	73.22	0.43	0.02	0.02
5	2018-19	87.16	90.94	86.77	72.58	0.44	0.05	0.05

Source- OSEPA, Bhubaneswar

The paper studies the impact of steps on enhancing quality education at elementary level by analyzing the status of educational indicators and NAS report which are the majoring rod of quality education. The detail analysis is depicted below:

1. In the context of Odisha as a whole, the impact of steps taken by Govt. on improving quality education is a positive manner as it can be rightly says that the out of school children at elementary level is downward trend in the subsequent years. This indicator clearly depicts that the improvement of quality education helps for reducing dropout rate in the schools.
2. Similarly, the completion rate at elementary level is a upward sloping trend means that most of the children can capable to pass out the elementary class and complete the education upto class-VIII which happened purely due to influence of several steps of Govt. for improvement of quality education.
3. Due to positive impact of steps for enhancing quality education, the children can able to promote from primary to upper primary level which can be assessed by the indicator of transition rate. Similarly, the impact can be analysed through the status of retention rate also.
4. Among all the indicators, the impact of several steps is

positively related to quality education that can be analysed through the repetition rate which is the best indicator for showing the improvement of quality education by reducing the repetitive case particularly in a single class which is a decreasing trend means passed out of students is positive.

5. The progress status of all the indicators is the result of enhancing quality education done by taking a number of initiatives by Govt. from time to time.
6. In spite of several steps, the indicators are showing less than 100 percent which clearly depicts that the quality education is yet to be achieved not partially but a means of cent percent and coverage of all students under the privilege of quality education.

Suggestion

Undoubtedly, the Govt. of Odisha has been taken a number of steps for improving quality education from time to time but yet to be achieved 100% which could not succeed last days as per the report of NAS for which the following suggestions may be taken into consideration:

1. Concentrated on the improvement of learning environment, including infrastructure, provision of classroom libraries, and learning materials.

2. Focused on the critical matter of teacher through training programs or weekly workshops that took place within the schools" premises.
3. Focused on quality instructional practices to facilitate change in teachers" knowledge, skills and attitudes to improve the overall teaching methods and the ability to work more effectively with the local culture and community.
4. Focused on strengthening learning and improving self-esteem on assisting lower-achieving students through workshops.
5. Appointment of Subject wise teacher or at least one teacher for each class helps for improvement of quality education by emphasizing on the learning level of a child particularly by the class teacher.
6. Special focus to low achievers for improving their competency level through providing special class/doubt clearing class.
7. Preparation of notebook with key notes of each and every concept should be done by the teachers after completion of a particular subject and simultaneously correction must be made.
8. Conducting class test of each paper at least once in a week helps for improving skill in learning of a student,
9. Appreciation must be given to a child in his/her success in the test which will encourage further for improvement.
10. Proper use of teaching learning materials (TLM) for better understanding of classroom transaction.
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Conclusion

Quality education is an essential factor for the economic, social and psychological development in this 21st century which can only be achieved by adopting innovative measures and developing unique systems. Further, it is an integral feature of the educational process; it is not only the duty of the Govt. but also of all teachers, community to ensure quality education. Once a successful steps taken then focus should be given on its results to ensure the sustainability. The system must have to be able to ready for continuous improvement by adopting cutting edge solutions and at the same time it must have to be user or beneficiary centric. Although, the education should child centric that further helps for improvement of inner capability of learning and strengthening the understanding level of the students. That is why, it can be rightly says that the new techniques/methods to be adopted which will go in a positive manner and for improvement of quality education in future.

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