

CHAPTER-VI

SUMMARY

6.1 The Problem

6.1.1 Education in general and elementary education in particular because of its usefulness in various walks of life and other fields, is being given a lot of importance all over the world. All nations - big and small, developing and developed, are conscious of the usefulness of education and are taking steps for its spread. In recent years UNICEF has shown a keen interest in the spread of primary/elementary education and has initiated/financed many innovative projects like Comprehensive Access to Primary Education (CAPE), Primary Education Curriculum Renewal (PECR), etc. for improvement of primary/elementary education in the member countries.

Education is multi-functional. It helps the individual to grow to his capacity, to develop a balanced and integrated personality, to think logically and rationally, to grow professionally and above all helps him to have a better and richer life. It plays a major role in the national and economic development of the country. It is very helpful in the successful and smooth functioning of the democracy as it enables the individual to make correct use of his voting right in electing capable persons for governing the country. Keeping in view the usefulness of education, many countries have made seven/eight year education compulsory.

Our national leaders realising the importance of education made it a Constitutional obligation of the State to provide free and compulsory education to its children till they attain the age of fourteen years and they also laid down the time limit i.e. within ten years after the commencement of Constitution, to achieve it. Central and State Governments are making efforts to achieve the Constitutional objective of free and compulsory education by opening new primary and middle schools,

by bringing children within the school-fold through enrolment drives and by offering various incentives like mid-day meals, free text-books, free uniforms, attendance scholarships to girls, scholarships to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children, etc. Consequently, there has been a substantial increase in the number of schools and in enrolment at the elementary stage.

Provision of educational facilities is an essential input for the spread of education and enrolment is an indicator of the utilisation of the educational facilities as well as of the efficiency of the Education System. In order to have a true perspective of the growth of educational facilities and of enrolment, the study entitled 'A Study of the Growth of Educational Facilities and Enrolment at the Elementary stage in India' has been undertaken. The following are the main objectives of the study.

1. To study the growth of educational facilities for primary stage.
2. To study the growth of educational facilities for middle stage.
3. To study the growth of enrolment in classes I-VIII, I-V and VI-VIII in respect of total enrolment, enrolment of girls and of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

This study envisages to investigate and discuss the following issues for the country as a whole and also for the selected States:

1. Growth of educational facilities for primary stage.
2. Growth of educational facilities for middle stage.
3. Unserved habitations and unserved population for primary and middle stages.

4. Imbalances in the availability of educational facilities at primary and middle stages between the States and within the selected States.
5. Growth of enrolment in classes I-VIII, I-V and VI-VIII over years.
6. Growth of enrolment of girls, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes over years.
7. Study of Retention Rates for Classes I-V, and I-VIII.

6.1.2 Assumptions

1. If the educational facilities for primary and middle stages are available in a habitation then those are meant for all, both for boys and girls.
2. It is assumed that all urban areas have primary and middle schools in them and as such these have educational facilities for both primary and middle stages.

6.1.3 Scope

1. This study relates to elementary education comprising primary and middle stages of general education.
2. This study relates to the availability of educational facilities in the rural areas only.
3. This study relates to only the availability of educational facilities and not to their adequacy.
4. Different sets of school classes constitute the primary and middle stages in States. In most of the States classes I-V constitute the primary stage but in States like Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, etc. classes I-IV constitute the primary stage. In most of the States classes VI-VIII constitute the middle stage but there are States like Assam,

Gujarat, Kerala etc. where classes V-VII constitute the middle stage and in Andhra Pradesh classes VI-VII constitute the middle stage. (This structure existed in 1986-87).

The education pattern as recommended by the Centre is classes I-V are to constitute the primary stage and classes VI-VIII the middle stage. As such in this study comparability between the States on the growth of enrolment Retention Rates, etc. has been studied for classes I-VIII (corresponding to elementary stage), classes I-V (primary stage) and classes VI-VIII (middle stage).

6.2 Methodology, Procedure and Analysis of Data

6.2.1 It is a documentation Study. The educational data available in the publications of the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, National Council of Educational Research and Training, Planning Commission, and National Institute of Planning and Administration were scanned, screened and reviewed. The following publications constitute the main reference and source material for the study.

1. Census of India, 1931, Primary Census Abstract General Population
2. Education in India (Volume 1), Ministry of Education (from 1974-75 onwards).
3. A Handbook of Educational and Allied Statistics, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India (1987).
4. Report of the All-India Educational Survey, Ministry of Education, Government of India (1966).
5. Second All-India Educational Survey, National Council of Educational Research and Training (1967).

6. Third All-India Educational Survey-Educational Facilities and Enrolment (School Education), National Council of Educational Research and Training (1979).
7. Fourth All-India Educational Survey, National Council of Educational Research and Training (1982).
8. Fifth All-India Educational Survey-Selected Statistics, National Council of Educational Research and Training (1989).
9. State Tables - Fourth All-India Educational Survey (Manuscripts).
10. State Tables - Fifth All-India Educational Survey (Manuscripts)

6.2.2 The Study covered a span of forty years from 1947 onwards but detailed state-wise analysis was confined to 1973-86. In the State-wise data analysis seventeen states namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were included. Each of the selected states had population of more than one crore except Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir and each state had more than 10 districts. The combined population of the selected States constituted around 97% of the country.

6.2.3 In order to highlight the various facets of growth of educational facilities and of enrolment, the analysis of data was done on the following lines:

- i) Study of changes taking place on the two variables

viz. educational facilities and enrolment over a period of time had been the main focus. In order to elicit growth, comparisons of the following type were done:

- a) Comparison of the State with itself at different points of time.
 - b) Comparison between the States at one or more than one points of time.
 - c) Comparison of the State with the national average.
- ii) To study the change, all data were studied at least at more than one points of time. The points of time to study the data were mainly 1973, 1978 and 1986.
 - iii) Some changes were studied for a period of time e.g. annual growth rates of enrolment for classes I-VIII/I-V/VI-VIII for the periods 1973-86, 1973-78 and 1978-86.
 - iv) Changes in enrolment were studied for composite elementary stage (classes I-VIII) and separately for primary stage (classes I-V) and for middle stage (classes VI-VIII).

6.2.4 In order to study the various aspects of growth of educational facilities and enrolment besides percentage and range, the following indicators were used:

- i) Index of Primary Educational Facilities (IPEF)- the percentage of rural population served for primary stage within one km.
- ii) Index of Middle Educational Facilities (IMEF)- the percentage of rural population served for middle stage within 2 km.
- iii) Number of primary/middle sections per lakh of

population.

- iv) Co-efficient of Equality
- v) Index of Variation (I) - to study imbalances.
- vi) Annual Growth Rate (compound)
- vii) Age specific Enrolment Ratios
- viii) Index of Enrolment Growth(Base year 1973-74)
- ix) Enrolment Indices
- x) Retention Rates

6.2.5 Important Concepts and Definitions

- i) Habitation A habitation is a distinct cluster of houses existing in a compact and contiguous manner with a local name. An inhabited village may have one or more than one habitations.
- ii) Distance means convenient walking distance. The distance between a school and a habitation is the convenient walking distance between the school and the central point of the habitation. Distance between two habitations means the convenient walking distance between the central points of two habitations.
- iii) Distance Criterion
 - a) Primary Stage According to Third (1973), Fourth(1978) and Fifth All-India Educational Survey (1985) if a habitation has primary school/section either within the habitation of residence or within a distance of 1 km, then that habitation is deemed to have facilities for primary stage.
 - b) Middle Stage According to Third, Fourth and Fifth All-India Educational Surveys if

a habitation has a middle school/section either within the habitation of residence or within a distance of 3 km, that habitation is deemed to have facilities for middle stage.

iv) Primary Section Any school having primary stage classes in it has a primary section.

v) Middle Section Any school having middle stage classes in it has a middle section.

6.3 Main Findings

The study relates to the growth of educational facilities for elementary stage comprising primary and middle stages of education and of enrolment which is an indicator of the utilisation of the educational facilities as well as of the efficiency of the Educational System. Some of the salient findings of the study are given below:

6.3.1 Educational Facilities at Primary Stage

6.3.1.1 The country has almost achieved universal provision of educational facilities for primary stage. In 1986, 80.34% rural population had primary schools/sections within the habitation of residence and 94.60% had the facility within a walking distance of 1 km. There had been a steady growth of educational facilities. In 1957, only 59.75% rural population had primary schools/sections within the habitation of residence; in 1973, this percentage rose to 76.12 and to 80.39 in 1986. The percentage of population having the facility within a distance of 1 km rose from 90.34 in 1973 to 94.60 in 1986.

6.3.1.2 Among States in 1986 Nagaland had the highest percentage of population (98.85) served within the habitation of residence followed by Mizoram (98.05) and Gujarat (97.83). Himachal Pradesh

had the lowest percentage of population (46.51) served for primary stage within the habitation of residence and next to it were Uttar Pradesh (55.69) and Tripura (57.04).

- 6.3.1.3 In 1986, the States and Union Territories of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi and Lakshadweep had more than 90% population having the facility for primary stage within the habitation of residence.
- 6.3.1.4 The States and Union Territories with less than 70% rural population served for primary stage within the habitation of residence were Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, A & N Islands and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.
- 6.3.1.5 In 1986 the States of Andhra Pradesh (99.17), Gujarat (99.45), Haryana (99.37), Nagaland (99.45), Punjab (99.60) and Union Territories of Chandigarh (99.67), Lakshadweep (100.00) Delhi (100.00) and Pondicherry (99.02) had more than 99% rural population served for primary stage within a walking distance of 1 km. These have almost achieved the universal provision of educational facilities for primary stage.
- 6.3.1.6 In 1986 the States and Union Territories with less than 90% population served for primary stage within a distance of 1 km were Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, A&N Islands, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli.
- 6.3.1.7 In 1957, 27.26% habitations had primary schools/sections within the habitation of residence as against 44.33% in 1973 and 51.36% in 1986. In 1973, 75.53% habitations had primary schools/

sections within a walking distance of 1 km as against 84.45% habitations in 1986.

- 6.3.1.8 In 1973, 74.96% habitations with population 300 or more had primary schools/sections within the habitation and 90.49% habitations had these within a distance of 1 km. The position improved slightly in 1986 when the percentages of these habitations having primary schools/sections within the habitation and within distance of 1 km were 76.99 and 94.01 respectively.
- 6.3.1.9 In 1986 among States Nagaland had the highest percentage (98.59) of habitations (with population 300 or more) having primary schools/sections within the habitation followed by Mizoram(97.79), Gujarat (95.50) and Punjab (96.26). Uttar Pradesh had the lowest percentage (47.61) of habitations served within the habitation and next to it were Tripura (58.52), Goa (59.59) and Himachal Pradesh(64.12).
- 6.3.1.10 The unserved habitations for primary stage constituted 24.92% habitations in the 1973, 19.77% in 1978 and 15.55% in 1986, thereby indicating that the percentage of unserved habitations was decreasing gradually. In 1986, there were 152230 unserved habitations in the country — 42 in the population slab 5000 and above, 424 in the slab 2000-4999, 2336 in the slab 1000-1999 and 9854 in the slab 500-999. More than one third (34.77%) unserved habitations had population less than 100.
- 6.3.1.11 Of the 42 unserved habitations in population slab 5000 and above, 38 were in Kerala and of the 424 unserved habitations in the population slab 2000-4999, 221 were in Kerala, 97 in Uttar Pradesh and 20 in West Bengal.

6.3.1.12 During 1973-86 in the category 'within the habitation' Rajasthan had the highest increase (10.39) in percentage of population served, followed by Andhra Pradesh (10.21), and Jammu & Kashmir (10.05). West Bengal had a fall in percentage (1.82) of population served. For category 'within 1 km' Himachal Pradesh had the highest increase (11.27) in percentage of population served, followed by Rajasthan (9.98) and Madhya Pradesh (7.19). Assam had a marginal fall (0.28) in percentage of population served. It was observed that educationally backward States had a higher increase in percentage of population served during 1973-86 in comparison to the educationally advanced States.

6.3.1.13 The Index of Variation between the States and Union Territories in the country for the category 'within the habitation' decreased from 0.2737 in 1973 to 0.1883 in 1986 and for the category 'within 1 km' from 0.1339 in 1973 to 0.0751 in 1986, indicating thereby that the variations on percentage of population served 'within the habitation' and 'within 1 km' between States and Union Territories were narrowing down. In 1986 among the selected States the Index within the State for the 'within the habitation' category was the highest (0.4240) for Himachal Pradesh followed by 0.3411 for Uttar Pradesh, and 0.1466 for Jammu and Kashmir. Punjab and Gujarat had the lowest Index (0.0222), next to it was Haryana (0.0359). For the category 'within 1 km' against Himachal Pradesh had the highest Index (0.1397) followed by Rajasthan (0.0524) and Uttar Pradesh (0.0500). The Index was the lowest (0.0040) for Punjab and next

/Jammu &
Kashmir
(0.0923),

to it were Andhra Pradesh (0.0056) and Gujarat (0.0065). Index for the year 1986 for the category 'within the habitation' for the selected States were lower than the corresponding Index for the year 1978 except those of Bihar, Maharashtra, Punjab and Rajasthan and for the category 'within 1 km' also the indices for the year 1986 were lower than the corresponding indices for the year 1978 except for Bihar, Orissa and Punjab. The data indicate that on the whole the variations on the percentage of population served for primary stage within the state for both the categories 'within the habitation' and 'within 1 km' were narrowing down. The indices within the state for the category 'within the habitation' for both the years, the selected States were higher than the corresponding Indices for the category 'within 1 km' indicating thereby that the variations for the category 'within the habitation' were higher and more marked than those for the category 'within 1 km'.

- 6.3.1.14 The educational facilities for primary stage in habitations (S.C.) had improved in 1986 both in terms of percentage of habitations and population served over the year 1978. The percentage of habitations having the facility 'within the habitation' of residence rose from 31.58 in 1978 to 37.67 in 1986 and for the category 'within 1 km', the percentage of population in habitations (S.C.) served within the habitation of residence rose from 62.40 to 66.31 and percentage of population served within 1 km rose from 88.94 in 1978 to 91.14 in 1986.

/rose from 77.96 to 81.59. Similarly the percentage

6.3.1.15 The educational facilities for primary stage in habitations (S.T.) had improved in 1986 both in terms of percentage of habitations and population served over the year 1978. The percentage of habitations having primary schools/sections in them rose from 33.05 in 1978 to 45.43 in 1986 and those having primary schools/sections within a distance of 1 km rose from 58.52 in 1978 to 74.46 in 1986. Similarly, the percentage of population in habitations (S.T.) having primary schools/sections in the habitation of residence rose from 63.96 to 72.18 and for the population having facility within a distance of 1 km the percentage rose from 82.99 to 88.35.

6.3.2 Educational Facilities at Middle Stage

6.3.2.1 The Educational facilities at middle stage improved considerably during the last four decades. In 1957, only 3.13% habitations had middle schools/sections in them. This percentage rose to 8.69 in 1973 and 13.25 in 1986. In 1973, 58.26% habitations had middle schools/sections within a walking distance of 3 km and that percentage rose to 75.80 in 1986.

6.3.2.2 In 1965, 25.45% population had middle schools/sections within the habitation of residence and this percentage rose to 28.86 in 1973 and 36.98 in 1986. In 1973, 71.97% rural population had facilities for middle stage within a distance of 3 km including the population having the facility within the habitation of residence and this percentage rose to 85.39 in 1986.

- 6.3.2.3 In 1986, among States Mizoram had the highest percentage (80.37) of population served for middle stage within the habitation of residence followed by Gujarat (74.90), Kerala (69.17) and Haryana (61.84). Among Union Territories Lakshadweep (98.16), Daman & Diu (60.39), Delhi (58.69) and Chandigarh (56.80) had more than 50% rural population served for middle stage within the habitation of residence. Among States Himachal Pradesh had the lowest percentage (17.73) served within the habitation of residence and next to it were West Bengal (18.47), Uttar Pradesh (20.41), Goa (22.24) and Assam (24.19). Among Union Territories, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, had the lowest percentage (9.14) served.
- 6.3.2.4 In 1986, Andhra Pradesh had the highest percentage (97.28) of population served within a walking distance of 3 km. Other States having more than 90% population served within a distance of 3 km were Gujarat (94.43), Haryana (93.12), Kerala (95.22), Punjab (92.49) and Goa (91.79). All Union Territories except A&N Islands (73.57) and Dadra and Nagar Haveli (65.33) had more than 90% population served within 3 km. Among States Arunachal Pradesh had the lowest percentage (42.19) of population served within 3 km. The other States with less than 80% population served were Himachal Pradesh (76.04), Meghalaya (64.99), Nagaland (66.41), Madhya Pradesh (69.58), Sikkim (76.20) and Rajasthan (77.00).
- 6.3.2.5 Considering the habitations with population 500 or more, in 1973, 24.03% habitations of this type had middle schools/sections in them. This percentage rose to 28.42 in 1978 and 29.93 in 1986. In 1973, 70.73% habitations with popula-

tion 500 or more had middle schools/sections within a distance of 3 km including the population having the facility within the habitation of residence. This percentage rose to 78.42 in 1978 and 84.45 in 1986. Among States Mizoram had the highest percentage (89.64) of habitations of this type having middle schools/sections in them followed by Gujarat (65.88), Kerala (51.16) and Maharashtra (50.98). West Bengal had the lowest percentage (14.53) and next to it were Uttar Pradesh (16.88) and Bihar (19.98). Among Union Territories, in Lakshadweep all the habitations with population 500 or more had middle schools or sections in them, followed by Chandigarh (57.39) and A&N Islands (50.48). Dadra & Nagar Haveli had the lowest percentage (11.76).

6.3.2.6 In 1973, 383439 (41.74%) rural habitations did not have middle schools/sections within 3 km. This percentage came down to 33.14 in 1978 and 24.20 in 1986. In 1996, 2.37 lakh habitations were unserved i.e. these did not have facilities for middle stage within a distance of 3 km. Of the unserved habitations 15958 (6.73%) had population 1000 or more including 121 with population 5000 or more and 2303 having population in between 2000 and 4999 and 181147 (76.44%) unserved habitations had population less than 500.

Of the 121 unserved habitations with population 5000 or more, Kerala had 40 habitations and West Bengal had 39 habitations.

6.3.2.7 During the period 1973-86 among the selected States, Haryana had the highest increase (18.68) in percentage of population served within the habitation of residence followed by Madhya Pradesh (11.98) and Andhra Pradesh (11.11). West Bengal had a fall in percentage of population served. As regards the percentage of population served for middle stage within 3 km, the highest increase in percentage of population served was in Andhra Pradesh (32.68) followed by Madhya Pradesh (17.49) and Rajasthan (17.32).

6.3.2.8 In the selected States, Junagarh District (Gujarat) had the highest percentage (95.04) of population served for middle stage within the habitation of residence and Gonda District (Uttar Pradesh) had the lowest percentage (7.13) of population thus served. The Index of Variation between the States and Union Territories came down from 0.7752 in 1978 to 0.5739 indicating that the variations between States and Union Territories on percentage of population served within the habitation were narrowing down. In the category 'within 3 km' the Index of Variation came down from 0.2646 in 1978 to 0.1483 in 1986. In 1986 for the category 'within the habitation', Himachal Pradesh had the highest (0.6574) Index of Variation followed by Uttar Pradesh (0.4699) and Assam (0.4267). Against this Kerala had the lowest (0.1382) Index of Variation, next to it were Haryana (0.1958), Gujarat (0.2073). For the category 'within 3 km', Jammu & Kashmir had the highest (0.1791) Index of Variation, followed by Assam (0.1707)

and Himachal Pradesh (0.1678). Against this, Andhra Pradesh had the lowest (0.0208) Index of Variation, next to it were Punjab (0.0404) and Haryana (0.0419). For the selected States, the Indices of Variation for the year 1986 for the category 'within 3 km' were lower than the corresponding Indices of Variation for the year 1978 except for Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Indices of Variation in respect of the selected States for the category 'within the habitation' were higher than those for the category 'within 3 km.'

6.3.2.9 The educational facilities for habitations predominantly populated by Scheduled Castes were better in 1986 than those available in 1978. 5.57% habitations (S.C.) accounting for 15.42% population in habitations (S.C.) had facilities for middle stage within the habitation of residence against 3.59% habitations accounting for 12.92% population in habitations (S.C.) having it in 1978. In 1986, 74.43% habitations (S.C.) having in them 79.38% population in habitations (S.C.) had facilities for middle stage within 3 km.

6.3.2.10 In 1986, 6.55% habitations (S.T.) accounting for 18.71% population in habitations (S.T.) had middle schools/sections in them against 4.35% habitations (S.T.) having 13.35% population in habitations (S.T.) having middle schools/sections in them in 1978. In 1986, 52.99% habitations (S.T.) accounting for 63.36% population in habitations (S.T.) were served for middle stage within 3 km.

6.3.3 Primary /Middle Sections per lakh of Population

6.3.3.1 In 1973, there were 102 schools with primary classes per lakh of population within rural areas but

in 1986, their number came down to 94.

6.3.3.2 In 1973, there were 20 schools with middle stage classes per lakh of population in the rural areas and their number rose to 24 in 1986.

6.3.3.3 In rural areas, there was one middle section for every 5.12 primary sections in 1973; for 4.38 primary sections in 1978 and for 3.84 primary sections in 1986. In 1986 Kerala had one middle section for every 1.80 primary sections and West Bengal had 6.63 primary sections per middle section.

6.3.4 Growth of Enrolment

6.3.4.1 In 1986 (as on 30.9.86) the enrolment at the elementary stage (classes I-VIII) was 1139 lakhs including 846 lakhs (74.28%) in the schools in rural areas. The enrolment in classes I-V was 367 lakhs and in classes VI-VIII it was 272 lakhs. The enrolment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes was 191 lakhs and 84 lakhs respectively. Girls constituted 39.79% of the total enrolment at the elementary stage.

6.3.4.2 During 1973-86, the percentage increase in enrolment in classes I-VIII, I-V, and VI-VIII was 51.43, 41.51 and 94.99 respectively. The corresponding percentage increases for girls were 65.36, 54.33 and 124.39 which were higher than the percentage increases in the total.

6.3.4.3 Annual Growth Rate (compound) for the period 1973-86 for classes I-VIII was 3.24 per cent. The corresponding Growth Rates for girls,

Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were 3.94, 5.70 and 5.90 respectively. The educationally backward States like Rajasthan (5.72), Bihar (4.80), Andhra Pradesh (4.62), Jammu & Kashmir (4.34), Assam (4.20) etc. had higher growth rates than the educationally advanced States like Kerala (0.15), Punjab (0.87) etc.

6.3.4.4. Index of Enrolment Growth (IEG) at the elementary stage (classes I-VIII) (Base Year 1973-74 = 100) was 115 for the year 1978 and 151 for the year 1986. For the years 1978 and 1986, the corresponding IEGs for classes I-V were 112 and 142 respectively and for classes VI-VIII were 129 and 195 respectively.

6.3.4.5 The enrolment in classes I-VIII per lakh of population (Enrolment Index) for the years 1973 and 1986 was 12922 and 14525 respectively. In 1986, Himachal Pradesh had the highest index (19240) and Uttar Pradesh the lowest (11940).

6.3.4.6 The coefficient of equality for classes I-VIII ^(rural) improved from 70.31 in 1973 to 87.79 in 1986. There was significant improvement in this coefficient in respect of enrolment of boys, girls, Scheduled Tribes during the period 1973-86. By and large girls are lagging behind the boys but in the urban areas of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Punjab girls were ahead of boys in 1986.

6.3.4.7 In 1986, about five crore children in the age-group 6 to below 14 were out of school. The Age Specific Enrolment Ratios for the age-group 6-11, 11-14, and 6-14 in 1986 were 75.89, 51.17 and 66.55 respectively. The Age Specific Enrolment Ratios of boys were higher than the corresponding Age Specific Enrolment Ratios of girls.

The Age Specific Enrolment Ratios for boys for the age-groups 6 to 11 and 11 to 14 were 86.43 and 63.11 respectively and corresponding Ratios for girls were 64.59 and 38.41.

- 6.3.4.8 Out of 100 children admitted in class I in 1976-77, 41.11 reached class V in 1980-81 and 30.07 reached class VIII in 1983-84. This indicates high incidence of wastage and poor retention rates of the system. The data indicate that the retention rates of boys were higher than those of girls except in the case of West Bengal. By and large the retention rates of students for class five and class eight were improving in States. Among the selected States, for the cohort 1976-77 to 1983-84 Kerala had the highest retention rate of 77.73 for classes I-VIII. These rates for boys and girls were 78.59 and 76.93 respectively.

The country has almost achieved universal provision of educational facilities for primary stage. About ninety five per cent rural population has got facilities for this stage within a walking distance of 1 km. Leaving a few exceptions, all the habitations with population 300 or more have primary schools/sections within a walking distance of 1 km. The unserved habitations for this stage are small-sized ones with population less than 200. It might not be feasible to provide primary schools to these habitations in the near future. These should be provided with non-formal education centres.

In view of the Constitutional Commitment for free and compulsory education to all children till they

attain the age of 14, it is necessary to improve the facilities for middle stage considerably. Children in general and girls in particular discontinue their studies after primary stage because of the non-availability of a school with middle stage classes either within the habitation of residence or in the immediate neighbourhood. A Model on the lines of Single-teacher Primary Schools will have to be evolved for middle stage education. As per Fifth All-India Educational Survey (1986), about one-third children in the age-group 6-14 were out of school. The country is to achieve UEE by 1995 which seems to be an unachievable target under the present circumstances.

Poor retention rates of the education system are a big hurdle in achieving UEE. In NPE (1986), emphasis has been laid on improving the retention rates. The micro level planning at the village and school levels will be helpful in achieving universal retention as well as in improving the quality of education.