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Critical Evaluation of Educational Development in Punjab

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An Abstract

Paper focuses upon various facets of educational growth in the state of Punjab. Attempt is to build a critical perspective on educational growth story of state so as to indentify actionable points. Both census and survey data have been used to assess the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of educational build up. Analysis proceeds by exploring overall progress, gaps and imbalances in educational growth in both absolute and comparative contexts in inter-temporal and inter-spatial manner. Composite picture has been developed by comparing and contrasting the educational growth across regions, sub-regions, sexes, locations, age cohorts and other relevant social and economic categories. Inner dynamics of educational progress has been captured by collating vital educational indicators such as examination results, learning outcomes, education levels and non-completion rates, etc. The analysis shows that education sector of state demands far more serious policy attention than hitherto in order to address quality and quantity concerns.

Key Word: Literacy, Drop Out, Enrollment, Education Levels, Results

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1. Introduction

The state of Punjab holds a complex structure which engrosses comparatively higher level of economic growth and prosperity with moderate level of human resources more so when the latter being examined on the basis of universally accepted parameters of educational build up in any society. The state has been experiencing higher levels of per capita incomes with the big push being initially provided by its highly mechanized and commercialized modern agricultural sector. The state realized structural transformation relatively earlier compared to vast majority of other states with rise in the weight of industrial and service sectors in the state income. But, the state has not shown the same vigor and commitment in translating its economic advantage into better quality human resources by enhancing educational delivery mechanism. For example, in terms of overall literacy, the rank of Punjab among all the 35 states and union territories of the country was 15 from above during 2001. Notably it slipped to 21st position during 2011; and more so it was 24th in case of males' literacy and 18th in females' literacy (Census of India, 2011). Further, as per DISE data, during 2011-12, on the basis of Educational Development Index (EDI) the state stood at 32nd and 35th rank so far 'Educational Outcomes' are concerned respectively for primary and upper primary levels of schooling though relatively better placed on other three components of EDI namely 'Access', 'Infrastructure' and 'Teachers' (DISE, 2011-12).

The education sector of the state during the last about two decades under the national level adoption of new economic and educational dispensation witnessed drastic change and transformation. The private sector of huge variety and forms has emerged in a big way in all the types and stages of education in a deregulated environment across the rural and urban locations and population settlements in the state. The dwindled sate interest because of plethora of factors has given serious jolt to the educational effectiveness of directly government controlled and backed educational institutions which have sizeable share in student enrollment. The under governance of educational sector has badly shaken the public interest in usefulness of availing of government institutions for their wards. Resultantly, the households who can afford have started utilizing the services of private education service suppliers. The educational choices of households even for basic education got a deep connection with the affordability factor. The vertical split of education sector on the lines of institutions for under privileged and those of better off has affected the process of education formation in the state in a serious manner. Rest of the paper in such a framework and perspective examines the educational progress of the state. The following Section II provides the details of educational progress of the state in terms of literacy indicators in the national context as well as that of in respect to other states. It also provides the rural and urban literacy scenario of the state including inter district variations. Section III gives information about the education levels among the workers including means years of schooling. The Section IV deals with the enrollment patterns and levels. The Section V profiles the most disturbing aspects of the education sector of the state by focusing upon the drop out and out of school children. Section VI brings out the quality and performance issues by using suitable parameters. The Section VII sums up the discussion and analysis with concluding observations.

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2. Comparative Literacy Progress

Literacy though being considered as very crude and rudimentary yardstick of educational attainment yet it throws enough light upon the educational happenings in a society historically placed in lower level equilibrium trap. Literacy being the direct product of formal education systems emanates from the spread of basic education in any politico-administrative set up. The continuous rise in the level of literacy over a specified period shows the growing involvement of larger number of persons in the ambit of schooling. The quicker progress of literacy has been considered more desirable for realization of numerous direct and indirect as well short and long terms benefits associated with educational build up. The slower progress on educational front in fact implies simultaneous existence of more number of illiterate generations. The societies which succeeded in attaining higher levels of literacy in relatively shorter span established their economic supremacy by overcoming problems of general backwardness and dogma.

The literacy progress in Punjab closely resembles and moves with the national scenario of literacy build up (Table 1). The literacy rate of the state was slightly on lower side to national average during 1971 and 1981 but crossed it marginally during 1991 onwards (Chart 1). In both cases, i.e. Punjab and India, the literacy rates rose consistently during each and every census but at a slower pace as it took very long period for literacy rates to show any worthwhile levels. In case of India as a whole, the literacy rate rose from 34.45 per cent to 74.04 per cent over the period from 1971 to 2011. In case of Punjab, literacy rates rose from 33.67 per cent to 76.70 per cent during corresponding years. This has been the case for both Punjab and India in case of all literacy categories reported such as males and females literacy. The gap in males and females literacy rates narrowed both in case of Punjab and India but it happened more at the all India level as it declined from 23.98 per cent to 16.68 per cent from 1971 to 2011. But, in Punjab the gap was 10.20 per cent during 2011. The slow pace of progress of literacy in Punjab has also been corroborated by five rounds of NSSO data (Table 2) during the period from 1993 to 2004-05.

In India, three units namely Kerala, Lakshadweep, Mizoram crossed the literacy mark of 90 per cent when the achieved literacy rates were clubbed into seven ranges of five percent starting from 60 per cent to more than 90 per cent during 2011 (Table 3). Punjab falls into the middle category of 75-80 per cent with other nine states and union territories, viz. Manipur, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka and Meghalaya. Alternatively putting the matter exactly 15 states and union territories occupied higher position than the literacy range to which the state belongs.

The perusal of literacy data over the period of forty years from 1971 to 2011 substantiates the fact of slower pace of literacy build up in the state (Table 4). The level of literacy, in case of persons, for the state as whole rose from 33.67 per cent during 1971 to 76.70 per cent during 2011. For males it rose from 40.38 per cent to 81.50 per cent and for females from 25.90 per cent to 71.30 per cent during corresponding years. The decadal progress happened to be on higher side during the period from 1991 over 1981 as compare to other periods. During this decade, the additions on per cent basis points were 17.65 for persons, 18.50 for males and 16.72 for females. This has also been true in case of rural and urban literacy rate both for males and females. But, on the other side the gaps in literacy levels somewhat narrowed down over the study period as females literacy progressed at higher rate than that of males in case of all literacy categories reported during 2001and 2011. But, the literacy progress viewed in terms of different sections of society presents a picture of

gap and neglect also (Table 5). The perusal of data pertaining to the deep division of society in terms of Scheduled Castes and Non-Scheduled Castes categories shows that the former has considerably lower level of literacy than that of the latter. As per 2011 Census, the literacy rates were (64.81per cent) in case of Scheduled Castes and (82.07per cent) of Non-Scheduled Castes with gap of 17.26 per cent. The gaps were found to be slightly on lower side for rural segments than their urban counter parts. But, on other side, the literacy rate was highest in case of 'Non-SC Urban Males' (90.65 per cent) and lowest for 'SC Rural Females' (58.39 per cent). This shows that different sections of society stand at historically different stages of progress of literacy in the state. Notably, Scheduled Castes constituted 31.94 per cent of overall population of the state as per population census-2011(PCA, 2011).

The inter-district literacy levels of state present interesting details with good degree of variation across all the 20 districts of state during 2011(Table 6). The district of Mansa stands at the bottom with literacy rate of 62.8 per cent compared to 85.4 per cent of Hoshiarpur; district with highest level of literacy. Moreover, as many as 10 districts (Moga, Firozpur, Muktsar, Faridkot, Bathinda, Mansa, Patiala, Tarn Taran, Sangrur and Barnala) has literacy rate lower than state average of 76.7 per cent. Further, Hoshiarpur occupies the top position both for males' literacy (89.9 per cent) and females' literacy (80.8 per cent) and that of rural males (89.48 per cent), rural females (79.56 per cent) and urban females (85.48 per cent). And, Mansa remained at the bottom in both males' literacy and females' literacy levels. However, in case of urban males SAS Nagar top the literacy scene by achieving 92.28 per cent literacy level. By comparing and contrasting all the seven categories of literacy reported here it emerges that urban males of SAS Nagar (92.28 per cent) formed the most literate stock of state with rural females of Mansa (52.47 per cent) the least indicating that the state has to tread long journey in order to bridge inter-location and inter-gender literacy gaps.

Table 1: Progress of Literacy Rate in Punjab and India, 1971 -2011, Per Cent

Literacy	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
India:					
(a) Persons	34.45	43.67	52.21	64.83	74.04
(b) Male	45.95	56.50	64.13	75.26	82.14
(c) Female	21.97	29.85	39.29	53.67	65.46
(d) Gap	23.98	26.65	24.84	21.59	16.68
Punjab:					
(a) Persons	33.67	40.86	58.51	69.70	76.70
(b) Male	40.38	47.16	65.66	75.23	81.50
(c) Female	25.90	33.69	50.41	63.36	71.30
(d) Gap	14.48	13.47	15.25	11.87	10.20

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, ESO, Chandigarh (various issues).

Table 2: Literacy Rate in Punjab and India according to NSSO Survey Rounds

Period	1993	1995-96	1997-98	1999-2000	2004-05
Punjab	63.00	66.00	70.00	68.00	67.00
India	56.00	59.00	62.00	62.00	64.00

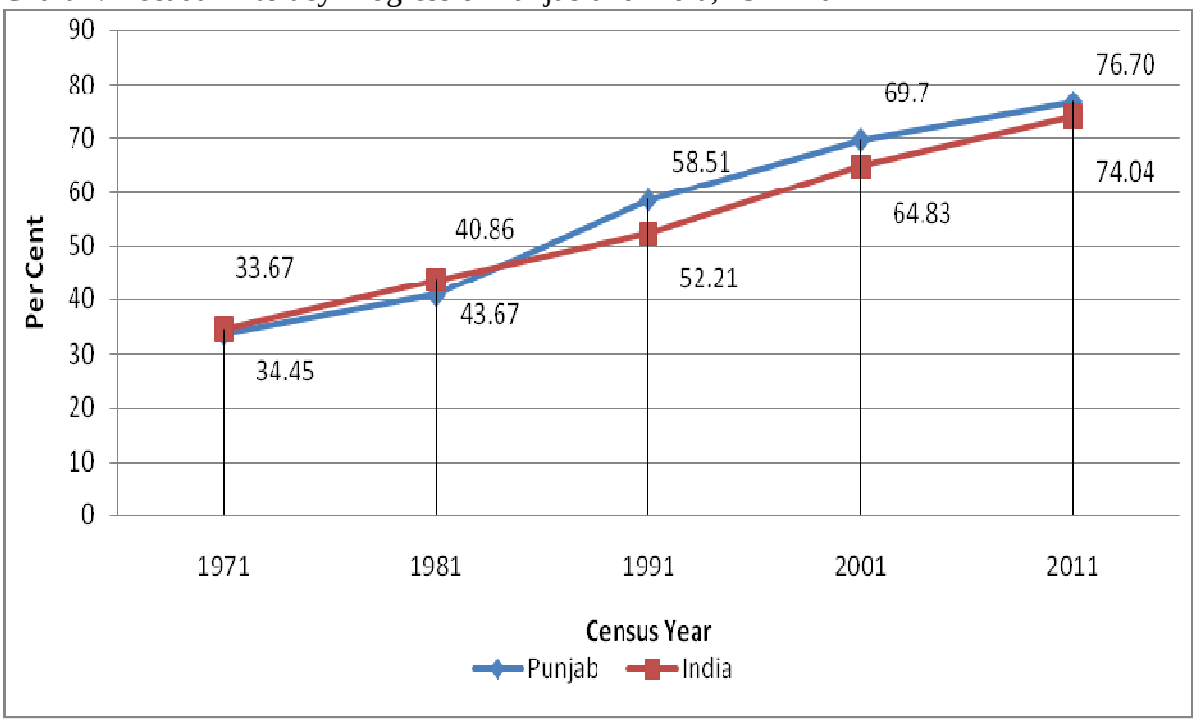
Source: CSO (2011), Table 3.2, P. 74

Table 3: Position of Punjab in States and UT according to Literacy Ranges, 2011

Literacy Range, Per Cent	States/UT	Number
a. > 90	Kerala, Lakshadweep, Mizoram	3
b. 85-90	Tripura, Goa, Daman & Diu, Puducherry, Chandigarh, Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar Islands	7
c. 80-85	Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu , Nagaland	5
d. 75-80	Manipur, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, West Bengal, Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka, Meghalaya	9
e. 70-75	Orissa, Assam, Chhatisgarh, Madhya Pradesh	4
f. 65-70	Uttar Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh	6
g. 60-65	Bihar	1

Note: Total number of states and union territories is 35.
Source: Census of India (2011), Statement 23 (1).

Chart 1: Decadal Literacy Progress of Punjab and India, 1971-2011



Source: Based on Data of Table 1.

Table 4: Literacy Rate, Punjab, 1971 to 2011, Per Cent

Literacy	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
Persons	33.67	40.86(7.19)	58.51(17.65)	69.70(11.19)	76.70(7.00)
Male	40.38	47.16(6.78)	65.66(18.50)	75.23(9.57)	81.50(6.27)
Female	25.90	33.69(7.79)	50.41(16.72)	63.36(12.95)	71.30(7.94)
Gap	14.48	13.47	15.25	11.87	10.20
Rural Literacy					
Persons	27.60	35.20(7.60)	52.77(17.57)	64.72(11.95)	72.45(7.73)
Males	34.55	41.91(7.36)	60.73(18.82)	71.05(10.32)	77.92(6.87)
Females	19.58	27.63(8.05)	43.85(16.22)	57.72(13.87)	66.47(8.75)
Gap	14.97	14.28	16.88	13.33	11.45
Urban Literacy					
Persons	48.10	55.63(7.53)	72.08(16.45)	79.10(7.02)	83.70(4.60)
Males	54.40	60.73(6.33)	77.26(16.53)	83.05(5.79)	87.28(4.23)
Females	40.80	49.72(8.92)	66.13(16.41)	74.49(8.36)	79.62(5.13)
Gap	13.60	11.01	11.13	8.56	7.66

Note: figures in brackets indicate decadal percentage basis differences.
Source: CSO (2011) Table 3.2, P. 73

Table 5: Literacy Rate of SC versus Non-SC Population, 2011

Group	**Total**	**Rural**	**Urban**
(a).SC Population	64.81	62.98	69.78
(b).Non-SC Population	82.07	77.91	87.70
Gap (a-b)	17.26	14.93	17.92
Males			
(a).SC Population	70.66	68.94	75.30
(b).Non-SC Population	86.34	83.08	90.65
Gap (a-b)	15.68	14.14	15.35
Females			
(a).SC Population	58.39	56.47	63.66
(b).Non-SC Population	77.28	72.24	84.29
Gap (a-b)	18.89	15.77	20.63

Source: Calculated from two sources (1) Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2012, ESO, Chandigarh and (2) PCA (2011)

Table 6: District Wise Literacy among Various Categories in Punjab, 2011

	Persons	Males	Females	Rural Males	Rural Females	Urban Males	Urban Females
Gurdaspur	81.1	85.9	75.7	83.49	72.60	91.54	83.83
Kapurthala	80.2	84.6	75.4	82.15	71.80	88.95	82.22
Jalandhar	82.4	86.1	78.3	84.19	74.26	87.81	82.03
Hoshiarpur	85.4	89.9	80.8	89.48	79.56	91.61	85.48
SBS Nagar	80.3	86.2	74.3	85.94	73.32	87.03	78.12
Fatehgarh Sahib	80.3	84.5	75.5	83.15	73.42	87.56	80.47
Ludhiana	82.5	86.3	78.2	83.96	74.02	87.97	81.13
Moga	71.6	75.3	67.4	72.98	64.64	83.42	76.98
Firozpur	69.8	76.7	62.2	73.70	57.69	84.42	74.45
Muktsar	66.8	72.9	60.0	69.28	55.70	82.21	71.25
Faridkot	70.6	75.9	64.8	71.39	59.94	83.97	73.96
Bathinda	69.6	75.3	62.9	69.44	56.29	85.78	74.96
Mansa	62.8	68.4	56.4	64.74	52.47	82.20	70.85
Patiala	76.3	81.4	70.5	76.32	63.25	88.90	81.02
Amritsar	77.2	81.2	72.8	73.74	63.27	87.36	80.94
Tarn Taran	69.4	75.4	62.9	74.31	61.42	82.70	73.01
Rupnagar	83.3	88.9	77.2	88.23	75.15	90.77	82.92
SAS Nagar	84.9	89.2	80.0	85.37	73.65	92.28	85.10
Sangrur	68.9	74.2	62.9	71.37	59.42	80.60	70.49
Barnala	69.9	73.1	64.1	70.09	61.13	79.54	70.65
Punjab	76.7	81.5	71.3	77.92	66.47	87.28	79.62

Source: Statistical Abstract of Punjab, 2012, ESO, Chandigarh, Table 2.8

3. Education Levels

The actual levels of education attained by the labour force in any particular set up have been considered as the very strong method of measuring the economically relevant method of educational progress in any society. In fact, the externality of education in both the market and household domain essentially flows from the levels and types of education actually received by the growing stock of population particularly in the working age group. This age group comes in direct contact with the production process in the form of very active factor of production by handling all the economic activities in multiple ways. Table 7 provides education levels of population by using the National Family Health Survey data collected during 2005-06 by locations and sex for various levels of education for the population aged six years and above. Importantly, 22.6 per cent of overall population of the state was not formally educated at all. The proportion for males was 20.7 per cent and for females 33.0 per cent. And, the proportion of those with less than five years of education was 14.4 per cent. Amazing 13 per cent of population of the state falls into the category of those who had completed ‘twelve and more years of education’. Moreover, as high as about 38 per cent of rural females were found to be without any education. The situation was reported to be worse in case of rural areas and females than their respective counterparts.

Table 7: Residence and Sex Wise Education Level of Population of Punjab, 2005-06

S. No.	Level of Education	Rural			Urban			Overall		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.	No Education	25.2	37.9	31.4	13.6	24.0	18.3	20.7	33.0	22.6
2.	< 5 years complete	17.0	13.4	15.2	14.7	10.9	13.0	16.1	12.5	14.4
3.	5-9 years complete	33.9	30.0	32.0	30.6	26.3	28.6	32.6	28.7	30.8
4.	10-11 years complete	15.4	11.4	13.4	20.1	16.1	18.3	17.2	13.1	15.2
5.	12 or more years complete	8.4	7.2	7.9	21.0	22.7	21.8	13.2	12.7	13.0

Note: The data pertains to population age six years and above. The sum of first five rows may not be equal to hundred because of missing values/do not know response on-reporting by sampled respondent households.

Source: NFHS (2008) P. 30

Table 8: Education Levels of Labour Force (Age 15+), Usual Status (PS+SS); Both (Rural and Urban), 2007-08

Education Levels	Punjab	Haryana	Himachal Pradesh	Kerala	India
1.Not Literate	27.67	28.97	21.90	5.39	34.53
2.Literate up to Primary	21.28	22.98	25.50	24.45	24.72
3.Middle	12.99	13.99	12.90	32.63	16.72
4.Secondary	19.08	16.88	20.50	15.47	10.11
5.Higher Secondary	8.79	8.59	9.90	4.49	5.21
6.Diploma/Certificate	1.70	2.70	2.60	7.29	1.90
7.Degree and Post Graduation	8.49	5.89	6.70	10.28	6.81
Total (1 to 7)	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Mean Years of Schooling	6.551	6.222	6.893	8.408	5.482

Source: Planning Commission (2014).

Table 8 provides the detailed break up of information of the labour force (age 15 +) both for rural and urban areas in case of employment category called Usual Status for 2007-08 for four states comprising Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and overall India. Importantly, in such a framework the position of state of Punjab is slightly better than national average but considerably poor than that of Kerala. For the type of labour force reported here, as high as more than one fourth (27.67 per cent) was illiterate with comparable proportion of just 5.39 per cent in Kerala. Moreover, Kerala secured better rank by and large for all seven categories of education levels reported. The education levels attained by the labour force seems to be more skewed in case of Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh as the proportion of those falling in the category of not literate, literate up to primary and that of middle was found to be on higher side. However, these three states holds better position so far labour force with secondary education is concerned. The perusal of education levels further establish the weak position of labour force so far getting of skills in the form of diploma and certificates in Punjab in particular as just 1.70 per cent of the labour force has been endowed with it. Kerala has given more attention towards such type of skills. This is also reflected by the data on Mean Years of Schooling attained by the labour force of these

states. Here too as obvious Kerala occupies the top slot with level of 8.408. Among the three neighboring states reported here Himachal Pradesh has better position than that of Punjab and Haryana with respective level of 6.893, 6.551 and 6.222.

Similarly from Table 9 it is evident that the education levels of households engaged into farming were found to be low when measured in terms of years put into formal schooling both in case of Agro-Climatic Zones and size class of operational holding. The average number of years put into schooling by heads of farm holds in overall was equivalent to 5.9 during 2005-06. And, heads of households with education of twelve years and more was extremely low. It was nil in case of Semi-Hilly Zone, 7.6 per cent in Central Zone, and 3.5 per cent in South-West Zone; with overall level of 5.5 per cent. In the same way, the number of years of schooling by heads of farm households across the various size-classes of farmers was very low as follows: Marginal (5.9 years), Small (5.5 years), Semi-Medium (5.5 years), Medium (6.1 years) and Large (7.1 years). And, the proportion of heads of farm households having education of twelve years and more was too abysmal as reported herewith: Marginal (4.7 per cent), Small (4.0 per cent), Semi-Medium (3.2 per cent), Medium (8.0 per cent) and Large (9.7 per cent). Thus, the households engaged into cultivation in the form of marginal, small and semi-medium size of operational holdings lack educational progress which is fundamental to transformation of rural economy. It is to be noted that out of 10, 52,554 operational holdings in the state, the proportion of marginal, small and semi-medium category of farmers respectively was 15.62 per cent, 18.57 per cent and 30.83 per cent during 2010-11. The total number of these three categories was 6, 84,385 with collective share of 65.02 per cent (SAP, 2012: 120-121). Thus, the huge proportion of farming community of the state has not reached that critical level of educational buildup which triggers the modernization of family economies by facilitating the entry of family members into off-farm and non-farm employment and livelihood.

Table 9: Education Level of Head of Farm Households in Punjab, 2005-06

Education Attained	Agro-Climatic Zones				
	Semi-Hilly	Central	South-West	Overall	
Number of Years in Schools	7.0	6.1	5.4	5.9	
Per cent of households with education of 12 years and more	0.0	7.6	3.5	5.5	
Education Attained	Farm-Size Category (Operational Holdings in Hectares)				
	Marginal (up to 1)	Small (1.01-2)	Semi Medium (2.01-4)	Medium (4.01-6)	Large (above 6)
Number of Years in Schools	5.9	5.5	5.5	6.1	7.1
Per cent of households with education of 12 years and more	4.7	4.0	3.2	8.0	9.7

Source: Singh et al. (2007) Table 3.1 and 3.3.

4. Enrollment Rates and Patterns

Much has happened in the state so far the opening up of education sector to the private players is concerned. The structure of education sector changed drastically with the change in relative proportion of different types of service suppliers in the school sector. The private sector has made strong additions to the existing government controlled schools and government aided privately managed schools in the state. This comes up very clearly from the data put into Table 10. During 2008-09, in case of primary, out of total enrollment the proportionate shares of government schools, aided private schools and private schools were 74.54 per cent, 5 per cent and 20.46 per cent. At upper primary level, the corresponding shares were 74.23 per cent, 8.09 per cent and 17.68 per cent. During elementary as a whole the respective figures were 74.42 per cent, 6.16 per cent and 19.42 per cent. Thus it indicates that about one-fifth of school enrolled students got associated with private schools in the state. Further, girl students constitute about forty per cent of the total enrollment in private schools. The data are also the pointer to the rising and significant role of private sector in imparting education to the schools in the state.

The changed structure of schooling strongly affects the enrollment levels as growing addition of service suppliers increase the access at least by making the service availability at more locations. Table 11 provides the information for the state during 2004-05 on the basis of Gross Enrollment Ratio for eight categories of student age groups which in fact correspond to different levels of education. Notably, the Gross Enrollment Ratios were quite on lower side in the state during 2004-05. At primary level (6-11 years age group), Gross Enrollment Ratios were 74.49 per cent for boys, 80.52 per cent for girls and 77.20 per cent in overall. In upper primary level, the corresponding figures were 63.78 per cent, 67.40 per cent and 65.42 per cent. For full elementary stage the levels were 70.30 per cent, 75.34 per cent and 72.57 per cent respectively. However, the Gross Enrollment Ratios declined considerably in case of secondary education level. Importantly, the enrollment ratio declined very steeply during the next stage of senior secondary. During Senior Secondary stage, the Gross Enrollment Ratios for the boys, girls and in overall were just 28.20 per cent, 27.48 per cent and 27.87 per cent respectively. During school education from I-X class the respective ratios were 59.58 per cent, 63.01 per cent and 61.13 per cent. In overall the Gross Enrollment Ratios indicates that the rate of enrollment were considerably on lower side than that of desired level.

The Gross Enrollment Ratio though indicates much about the state of education but it has one important limitation in the form of as it refer to the enrollment of all the students in a particular stage of education irrespective of age of the student. That is why a different concept of Net Enrollment ratio has been used which excludes the students from measurement who do not belong to that age cohort. Such data for the state have been presented in Table 12. The perusal of data shows that the level of Net Enrollment Ratios further declined compared to Gross Enrollment Ratio. Moreover, the state has considerably lower ratios than that of all India both for primary and upper primary stage over the period of six years from 2005-06 to 2010-11. During primary stage, the Net Enrollment Ratio of Punjab was 51.78 per cent as compared to 84.53 per cent for India. Similarly, during upper primary stage the corresponding ratios were 37.68 per cent and 43.14 per cent during 2004-05. Moreover, the Net Enrollment Ratios improve consistently in case of all India average but not so in case of Punjab during primary stage. But, during upper primary stage the Net Enrollment Ratios improved to some extent in case of Punjab and crossed that of India. But, the fact which demand notice is that even during the year 2010-11 the Net Enrollment Ratio at primary level in the state was 89.41 per cent indicating thereby that 10.59 per cent of the

students of eligible age group were not enrolled in the various schools of the state. This turned out to be good number keeping in view the huge proportion of child population in the society of state particularly large proportion of weaker sections such as Scheduled Castes and marginal and small farmers in the state.

Table 10: Management-Wise Pattern of Enrollment in Punjab, 2008-09 (30 September)

Standard	Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Total
Primary (I-V)	1247180(74.54) [47.20]	83631(5.00) [46.12]	342399(20.46) [40.43]	1,673,210(100) [45.76]
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	749040(74.23) [47.62]	81606(8.09) [44.39]	178395(17.68) [40.26]	1,009,041(100) [46.05]
Elementary (I-VIII)	1996220(74.42) [47.35]	165237(6.16) [45.26]	520794(19.42) [40.37]	2,682,251(100) [45.87]

Note: 1. Figures in round brackets indicate the management wise percentage share of total enrolment.
2. Figures in Square Brackets indicate the percentage share of girls in respective category.
Source: DISE (2008-09) Tables: 3.5(p. 45), 3.7(p. 47), and 3.19 (p.59)

Table 11: Gross Enrollment Ratio in Punjab for Boys, Girls and Overall during 2004-05

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total
1. I-V (6-11yrs)	74.49	80.52	77.20
2. VI-VIII (11-14 yrs)	63.78	67.40	65.42
3. I-VIII (6-14 yrs)	70.30	75.34	72.57
4. IX-X (14-16 yrs)	50.21	52.97	51.47
5. XI-XII (16-18 yrs)	28.20	27.48	27.87
6. IX-XII (14-18 yrs)	39.17	40.10	39.60
7. I-XII (6-18 yrs)	59.58	63.01	61.13
8. HE (18-24 yrs)	9.40	11.23	10.24

Source: MHRD (2004-05), Table 8, P. 61

Table 12: Net Enrollment Ratio, Punjab versus India

Year	Primary		Upper Primary	
	Punjab	India	Punjab	India
2005-06	51.78	84.53	37.68	43.14
2006-07	55.49	92.75	44.02	48.45
2007-08	53.02	95.92	42.10	52.55
2008-09	59.69	98.59	49.64	56.22
2009-10	63.05	98.28	52.21	58.29
2010-11	89.41	99.89	71.76	61.82

Source: DISE (2011-12) P. 36

5. Non-Completion and Excluded

There are some estimates available about the number of children not enrolled in schools called out-of-school children. In case of Punjab as per data reported in Table 13 the number of out-of-school children was found to be high. During January 2008, the total number of such children was equivalent to 1, 00,457. Out of these, the number and proportion of girls was 46892 forming 46.68 per cent of total. Further, no district of the state was free from this problem as out-of-school children were found in each and every district. The number in absolute sense was the maximum in Firozpur (12680) and minimum in SBS Nagar (899); comprising respectively 12.62 per cent and 0.89 per cent of total. The huge number of out-of-school children in all the districts indicates the much complexity of public access

problem of school systems of the state. It also indicate that the creation of public access simply in the physical sense will not solve the problem of non-availing of existing infrastructure. It is also obvious that overwhelming proportion of such children must be belonging to the households which have been deprived off from education due to multitude of factors.

The drop-out-rate among the students may be contributing to the ongoing problem of prevalence of large number of out-of-school children. The drop-out-rate of students in the state was quite on higher side over the period from 1990-00 to 2005-06 both for primary and elementary stages of education (Table 14). For example, in case of primary stage, the drop-out-rate actually increased from 22.17 per cent to 23.66 per cent from 1999-00 to 2005-06. For boys it increased from 24.12 per cent to 25.71 per cent. The corresponding figures for the girls were 19.99 per cent and 23.66 per cent. During elementary stage, the drop-out-rate too increased from 23.66 per cent to 32.98 per cent over the period from 1999-00 to 2005-06. Amazingly, it had happened both in the case of boys and girls. More importantly, the drop-out-rate increased with the rise in the stage of education. The drop-out-rate was much higher during elementary stage as compared to primary stage. The existence of extremely higher level of drop-out-rate firmly establishes the fact that the system of education in the state operates at very lower level of efficiency and indulges in wastage of resources. The problem of drop-out-rate was found to be still more serious among the weaker sections of society (Table 15). For example, during 2007-08, the drop-out-rate was as high as 43.27 per cent during the elementary stage of education. It was 43.87 per cent for boys and 42.58 per cent for girls. But, the drop-out-rate rose to extremely higher level in case of secondary stage of education. The drop-out-rate was 63.79 per cent for boys, 66.34 per cent for girls and 65 per cent in overall. It implies that in case of such category of students the proportion of those who complete a particular stage of education was substantially on lower side than those leave the cycle in between without completing that stage of education.

The high rate of dropping from the schools apart from other reasons has also a deep connection with not joining the schools at right stage of life. This also leads to adjustment with the peer group specific to that standard of study and activities. In the state, the number of under-age and over-age students was reported to be on higher side both during the primary and upper primary stages across the districts (Table 16). For example, in case of under-age-children, during primary stage, the proportion was as high as 10.28 per cent during 2009-10 which rose to 10.94 during 2011-12. And, during upper primary stage, the corresponding figures were 5.90 per cent and 7.43 per cent. Similarly, in case of over-age-children, during primary stage, the proportions were 11.32 per cent and 9.63 per cent during 2009-10 and 2011-12. And, during upper primary stage, the respective proportions were 16.22 per cent and 13.62 per cent. Thus, by taking collective view of the situation in the form of students who falls beyond the education stage specific age-cohort either in the form of under-age or over-age the number of students who join at right age and progress smoothly comes down than depicted by normal enrollment figures. It implies that the education system has not been connected deeply with the educational requirements of the households especially those which face multiple deprivations. Interestingly the problem prevails even after launching of so many national and state level schemes related to schools in the form of infrastructure building, provision of stationery and books, providing of alternative and innovative teaching, various inclusionary measures, constitution of education development committees at village, school and block levels, girl-student oriented policy programs, special teacher training and orientation programs and family specific initiatives. This brings to forth the under efficacy of the public resources put into basic education by the state and national level public authorities.

Table 13: Out of School Children in Punjab, Age Group (6-14 Years), January, 2008

District	Boys	Girls	Total	Per Cent of Total	Per Cent Share of Girls
Amritsar	4349	4234	8583	8.54	49.33
Barnala	947	752	1699	1.69	44.26
Bathinda	3963	3093	7056	7.02	43.84
Faridkot	2061	1775	3836	3.82	46.27
Fatehgarh	598	462	1060	1.06	43.58
Firozpur	6401	6279	12680	12.62	49.52
Gurdaspur	2236	2158	4394	4.37	49.11
Hoshiarpur	2246	1939	4185	4.17	46.33
Jalandhar	3424	2805	6229	6.20	45.03
Kapurthala	776	659	1435	1.43	45.92
Ludhiana	4446	3788	8234	8.20	46.00
Mansa	2743	2311	5054	5.03	45.73
Moga	2270	1820	4090	4.07	44.50
Mohali	843	807	1650	1.64	48.91
Muktsar	3381	2821	6202	6.17	45.49
SBS Nagar	517	382	899	0.89	42.49
Patiala	3788	3266	7054	7.02	46.30
Rupnagar	1420	1264	2684	2.67	47.09
Sangrur	3693	2926	6619	6.59	44.21
Tarn Taran	3463	3351	6814	6.78	49.18
Punjab	53,565	46,892	1,00,457	100.00	46.68

Source: 1. SSA (2006-07) P. 68 and SSA (2007-08) P. 72.

Table 14: Drop-Out-Rate of Students in Punjab, 1999-00 to 2005-06

Year	I-V			I-VIII		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1999-00	24.12	19.99	22.17	25.71	21.33	23.66
2001-02	21.28	19.28	20.34	35.31	38.82	36.99
2002-03	26.37	24.07	25.29	33.71	31.67	32.75
2003-04	23.60	20.21	22.03	35.13	35.26	35.19
2004-05	27.42	19.91	23.96	32.64	34.82	33.67
2005-06	25.71	21.33	23.66	31.42	34.71	32.98

Source: Figures for Drop-Out Rates are based on: (1). *Economic Survey of Punjab* 1999-2000 and 2005-2006 (p.17), ESO, Chandigarh; and (2). Figures for year 2006-07 are based on *Economic Survey*, 2009-10, ESO, Chandigarh, p.97.

Table 15: Drop Out Rate among SC-Students, 2007-08

Standard	Boys	Girls	Total
I-VIII	43.87	42.58	43.27
I-X	63.79	66.34	65.00

Source: Rao (2011-12) Table 10.13, p. 18

Table 16: Under-Age and Over-Age Children in Schools of Punjab

Year	Under-Age Children		Over-Age Children	
	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary
2009-10	10.28	5.90	11.32	16.22
2010-11	10.94	6.53	9.37	14.18
2011-12	10.94	7.43	9.63	13.62

Source: DISE (2011-12) P. 29

6. Quality and Performance

The spread and growth of education in a typical numerical sense though is very crucial but is not sufficient to generate any meaningful impact in the system until and unless it embodied the recipient with good quality of education in the form of right package of reading, writing, numerical and other useful life skills and abilities. The challenge of providing of education of reasonably good quality seems to be far more serious than that of expanding education in a numerical mode as has been emerged as the primary objective in practice. Table 17 provides the information pertaining to the performance of children in rural areas on the basis of testing of learning level in three domains, i.e. general reading ability, English reading ability and arithmetic doing ability. The performance in above three specified domains has been tested for the primary stage both for all the five standards from first to fifth. Within each category different set activities have been tested by using specific tests. Punjab has no doubt secured higher position than that of India among all the categories and subcategories for all of the classes. The all India situation was found to be quite pathetic as learning levels were found to be quite on lower side. The reading and arithmetic ability was found to be miserably low. For example, just 25.7 per cent of children of Standard V could read English sentences. And, 38 per cent could do division and 52.8 per cent read. Importantly it has been the situation during 2009. In case of Punjab, under first category, i.e. percentage of children who can read English (sub category namely reading English capital letters), 67.7 per cent children of Standard I were found to have acquired this skill.

In case of mathematical ability, importantly 82.7 per cent of children of Standard I of rural Punjab could identify the numbers from 1-9. The remaining proportion of children, i.e. 17.3 per cent had not acquired such capability. Similarly, the large proportion of students was found to be deficient so far subtraction and division were concerned. The proportion of students who had not acquired basic skills pertaining to reading and arithmetic was high in state with long term implications for promotion to higher classes and retention. The low level of learning outcomes defeats the basic purpose of education which involves the enhancement of cognitive skills of students by enhancing and fine tuning their basic reading, writing and numerical ability in order to endow with problem solving capabilities. This has also been corroborated by the analysis of examination results of students from the state for high and senior secondary levels. The perusal of data (Table 18) brings out this more vividly. It has been the case for all students as well as SC students during 2005. Of all the categories of results reported here girls performed better than those of boys both during secondary and senior secondary examinations. For example, in class X results, in case of all students the proportion of girls who passed the examination was 72.50 per cent compared to 66.20 per cent of boys. In higher secondary, the respective proportions were 79.90 per cent and 69.30 per cent. It has also been the case as girls belonging to SC families has outperformed the boys belonging to such families. But, in overall the results from the category called overall students was on higher side as compared to SC students. It implicitly implies that the non-SC students' results were on quite higher side than their counterparts in the form of SC-students because inclusion of results from SC-students brings down the state average. This further

implies that the state has not paid adequate attention to the education of students from weaker sections those have been suffering from multiple social and economic deprivations and depending more on government and low quality private schools with negligible support from their families because of economic hardship in the situation of lower incomes, vulnerability to income shocks, rising health care expenses and livelihood problems.

Table 17: Performance of Children, Rural, Punjab versus India, 2009

STD	Percentage of Children who can Read			Percentage of Children who can read English			Percentage of Children who Can do Arithmetic		
	Category	Punjab	India	Category	Punjab	India	Category	Punjab	India
STD I	Letters or More	85.6	68.8	Capital Letters or More	67.7	43.8	Recognize Numbers 1-9 or More	82.7	69.3
STD II	Words or More	61.0	55.2	Capital Letters or More	83.4	66.2	Recognize Numbers 11-99or More	59.5	54.6
STD III	STD I Level Text or More	51.0	46.6	Words or More	39.9	28.6	Subtract or do More	50.9	39.0
STD IV	STD I Level Text or More	75.5	67.4	Words or more	58.0	44.1	Subtract or do More	73.3	58.8
STD V	STD II Level Text or More	64.3	52.8	Sentences	34.5	25.7	Do Division	48.9	38.0

Source: Planning Commission, 2014: 237

Table 18: Results of School Examination Board (PSEB, Mohali), 2005

Category	High School (X)		Senior Secondary (XII)	
	All Students	SC-Students	All Students	SC-Students
Boys	66.20	57.20	69.30	57.90
Girls	72.50	59.80	79.90	69.20
Total	69.00	58.40	74.40	62.90

Source: MHRD (2004-05) Table 22

7. Summing Up with Extended Observations

Educational progress though fundamental to economic growth and general prosperity has received comparatively subdued priority in larger part of developing world. The educational systems remained preoccupied with plethora of structural constraints which essentially emanates from perpetual state apathy. The educational requirements of masses remained unfulfilled even by the existence of vast network of educational institutions. The public education systems gradually lost momentum in the situation of long drawn neglect. The state of Punjab though occupying higher levels of per capita incomes among the various states in the country has made comparatively moderate progress so far educating the masses is concerned (Brar, 2002). The foregone analysis firmly establish the fact that the state has to do much more in order to mark its presence felt as a case of society with high quality of human resources. The state has to act both on the quality and quantity front to improve its position among other sates of the union as well as to reap benefits of quality education in the form of externality. From the overall and interstate analysis, it can also be described that the number of those without any worthwhile schooling was quite substantial posing formidable

challenge for the growth process and development policy of the state and a pointer to the constrained reach of various schooling systems operating in the state.

The progress of literacy in the state has not only been tardy but is highly iniquitous in many respects such as locations, sexes, regions, districts, weaker versus other sections, etc. The rank of the state on literacy front among the states actually slipped over the period instead of improving as was expected because of higher level of per capita state income. The state ranked at lower level in terms of indexing involving infrastructure, access, teachers and educational outcomes. The literacy progress of the state has essentially moved in close relation to national average. The general gaps over the period though narrowed in case of males and females but were found to be on higher side when literacy achievements were compared over the large spectrum comprising urban males of educationally advanced districts with rural females of educationally under achieved districts. The lower educational levels of general population and labor force were another area of concern. The low level of formal education among the farming households has become a big constraint in the transformation of rural as well as family economies of farmers possessing small, marginal and semi-medium size of holdings. The state lagged behind in imparting technical skills to labour force which is very much required in the present period of skill-intensive economic growth.

The school sector of the state shows certain very disquieting features and tendencies which points towards serious shortcomings such as prevalence of out-of-school children, high drop-out-rates, enrollment of under-age and over-age children, less than satisfactory examination results and lower level of net enrollment rates, etc. The lower level educational outcomes in the form of depressed level of reading and arithmetic ability reduce the actual worth of education. The enhancement of actual learning skills is basic to attain any sort of demographic dividend for the economy in transition. All these things firmly prove the fact that the extent of wastage and inefficiency of the school sector of the state has acquired alarming levels with serious repercussions for human capital formation of the state. The promotion of students into higher grades without sufficiently equipping them with the learning level prescribed for lower grades has been a major fault and formidable challenge for the education policy and system of the state.

The education sector has been got divided into parallel streams with emergence of completely unregulated huge sized private sector. The state withdrawal has crippled the functioning of government institutions which ultimately turned out to be the institutions of those who cannot afford the high quality private institutions. The private sector is quite heterogeneous with large component of highly commercialized substandard institutions thriving without any worthwhile educational standards in the situation of extremely lower level of public confidence in the education provided by public sector institutions. The withdrawal of wards by the influential sections from public institutions in favor of private institutions has ended all sort of pressure on the state system to improve the public institutions. The situation became quite deplorable with the lack of collective pressure by those who depend upon public institutions for the study of their wards. The political process in the state has been embroiled in issues with weal connection with larger issues of public interest. This has led to the decline in public expenditure on education in the state as proportion to state income and budgetary spending considerably during about last two decades. The education budget of the state shows serious imbalances in terms of high share of revenue account and non-plan account and extremely lowers levels of capital and plan account spending. The state budget has recorded lower growth in real prices during the last

about two decades. Moreover, the education budget recorded lower growth than that of state income and budgetary spending. The compressed education budget ultimately turned out to salary budget leaving less for undertaking other activities. The state has been reported to spending less on education in the country on per student and per capita basis also (Mittar et al. 2002; Brar, 2008). The exclusion of students from rural areas has also been the matter of great concern (Ghuman et al., 2009). The period of liberalization has not been found to be conducive for the development of the education sector of the state in terms of resources and other infrastructure (Gill et al., 2007). The education sector of the state has been attracting bad press on daily basis related to shortage of teachers, headmasters, untimely releasing of salaries and recruitment of large variety of teachers on contractual basis under varied and novel designations. The state policy of bringing of large number of government schools under rural local bodies has not yielded any worthwhile results. The education sector has become a field for undertaking novel experiments in terms of ownership, financing, recruitment practices, admission norms, teaching of languages, promotion of students to higher classes, conduct of examinations, establishment of new schools, up gradation of existing schools, etc. The aided school sector in the state is actually on the verge of closure with non-filling of posts for the considerable period of time. The interventions in the form of central schemes during the recent past have solved to some extent the basic infrastructural problems only. But, the basic issues which jeopardized the governance of education sector of the state remained as it is. The growing clout of private players with active connivance of political class of the state has made the government schools totally dysfunctional. These developments strongly points towards the growing structural crisis of education sector of the state which could be corrected only by qualitative shift in the public policy of the state.

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