

# **Status of School Education in India: An Analysis Based on NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round**

*(Household Social Consumption: Education, July 2017 to June 2018)*

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## **Background**

Different agencies used to collect information on school education in India either on regular basis through the administrative survey or occasionally through the household survey apart from which Census & Registrar General of India also collect information on educational variables through its decennial Census. In addition, information on a few educational variables is also being collected through the National Family Health Survey, the latest of which NFHS-5 is available for the year 2019-20. Over a period of time, administrative surveys in education in India have improved significantly and most of the limitations of the 1980s are addressed and data on most of the requisite variables are now available at disaggregated levels with a reduced time-lag more comprehensive information is now available than in the past. Despite significant improvement in educational statistics in India still, information on all the requisite variables needed to assess the status of participation of children in educational programmes is not available. Information on such variables is either not required annually but the same, even if made available once in 4 to 5 years will serve the purpose. Because of the requirements, educational surveys have been conducting both on the census and also on a sample basis. On the one hand, the All India School Education Survey was being conducted by the NCERT, New Delhi on a quinquennial basis the lasted of which is the Eight Survey with 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008 as its date of reference, on the other hand, NSSO used to collect information on a few educational variables through its different rounds which are considered the most reliable source of information in India. It may be recalled that the unit of data collection in case of the administrative survey is school and that of the household surveys, it is the head of the household. It has been a practice to conduct surveys on social (including education sector) consumption the first of which through the 35<sup>th</sup> Round was conducted between July 1980 to June 1981. The subsequent NSSO rounds and period of each survey conducted are as follows:

- 35<sup>th</sup> Round: July 1980 to June 1981
- 42<sup>nd</sup> Round: July 1986 to June 1987
- 52<sup>nd</sup> Round: July 1995 to June 1996
- 64<sup>th</sup> Round: July 2007 to June 2008
- 71<sup>st</sup> Round: January 2014 to June 2014; and
- 75<sup>th</sup> Round: July 2017 to June 2018.

The latest social consumption survey with a focus on education was conducted during the period July 2017 to June 2018 incidentally the administrative survey through the U-DISE is also latest available for the year 2017-18 & 2018-19. The main purpose of the 75<sup>th</sup> Round survey was to collect information on the educational attainment of a person of age 3 to 35 years, expenditure incurred & population currently not attending apart their ability to use computers and internet and access to the same. Like other rounds of NSSO, the sample of the 75<sup>th</sup> round was also comprehensive as it is based on 1,13,757 households enumerating 5,13,366 persons of age 3 to 35 years.

In the present note, the following indicators have been analyzed both at the state as well as at the all-India level at different levels of school education and also for the corresponding age groups in the rural and urban areas.

- Gross Attendance Ratio
- Net Attendance Ratio
- Age-specific Attendance Ratio
- Percentage of Dropouts
- Reasons of Dropouts
- Computers & Internet Connectivity

### **Gross Attendance Ratio**

Like Gross Enrolment Ratio, NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round disseminates Gross Attendance Ratio at different levels of education separately for rural, urban and all areas together in case of the male, female and both together. While the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) considers total enrolled children at an educational level, Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR) considers the number of the person currently attending at an educational level which is then divided by the corresponding estimated official age-group population which may be considered a better indicator of children participating in educational programmes. Table 1 presents the Gross Attendance Ratio at different levels of education disseminated through the NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round along with the corresponding Gross Enrolment Ratio generated through the administrative survey i.e. UDISE. Like GER, GAR may also exceed 100 in some cases. Even though the date of reference of UDISE 2017-18 (30<sup>th</sup> September 2017) and NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017 to June 2018) are different, they still both gives an idea about children participating in educational programmes. It may also be observed that GER based on UDISE 2017-18 is computed based on projected child population which, if slightly off the mark may influence GER to a great extent.

A glance at Table 1 reveals that 101.2 percent including that of over and underage children of age 6 to 11 years were attending corresponding Primary Grades I to V which is also true separately for boys and girls for this level of education and also in the rural as well as urban areas. It may also be observed that GAR is almost equal to the GER; however the same is not true for the Upper Primary level of education. As against 88.27 percent GER at the Upper Primary level, the corresponding GAR at this level of education is 94.4 percent which means that 94.4 percent of 11 to 13 years age children were found attending schools during the period

**Table 1: Gross Attendance Ratio at Different Levels of Education  
All India, July 2017 to June 2018**

Education Level	GAR, Rural			Gross Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	101.7	99.9	100.9	Not Available		
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	94.8	94.2	94.5			
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	99.2	97.8	98.6			
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	85.2	82.3	83.9			
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	66.4	61.1	64			
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	20.7	15.6	18.3			
Education Level	GAR, Urban			Gross Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	102.4	102	102.2	Not Available		
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	94.3	93.8	94.0			
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	99.4	98.8	99.1			
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	93.8	93.7	93.7			
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	80.2	79.2	79.7			
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	34.1	32.5	33.4			
Education Level	GAR, All Areas			Gross Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	101.9	100.4	101.2	102.58	103.03	102.79
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	94.7	94.1	94.4	87.29	89.34	88.27
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	99.3	98.0	98.7	96.71	97.78	97.22
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	87.4	85.1	86.4	76.67	76.23	76.47
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	70.3	65.9	68.3	47.95	48.32	48.13
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	24.7	20.7	22.8	26.3	25.4	25.8

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India & UDISE 2017-18

July 2017 to June 2018 which is also true for the same in the rural and urban areas. Both Primary and Upper Primary level of education together reveals that 98.7 percent children including the overage and underage children were said to be attending schools as against 97.22 percent GER at Elementary level. The remaining 2.78 percent of children may either be out of the system or may even still be attending Primary classes. A similar situation is observed in the case of rural and urban areas and within separately for boys and girls which is quite similar to based on GER at this level of education. However, children attending Secondary grades is found to be (86.4 percent) much higher than the same based on GER at this level which is also quite true separately for boys and girls and Higher Secondary level of education. What should be the possible reason for the discrepancy between the two estimates? Is it because of the different

periods on which information was collected or because of the different estimated population used in computation or is it because of the administrative survey which is based on

**Table 2: Gross Attendance Ratio at Different Levels of Education: State-specific July 2017 to June 2018**

State	Level of education					
	Primary	Upper Primary/	Elementary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Post Higher Secondary
Andhra Pradesh	99.3	81.9	92.2	114.1	73.0	26.1
Assam	103.6	104.7	104.0	86.6	56.0	16.5
Bihar	97.2	98.4	97.6	82.0	65.7	16.2
Chhattisgarh	102.4	100.4	101.6	90.3	66.9	16.2
Delhi	100.2	90.6	96.8	93.6	86.2	29.6
Gujarat	106.0	89.1	99.1	88.3	59.2	15.3
Haryana	106.3	93.8	101.3	96.7	70.3	25.2
Himachal Pradesh	99.3	92.1	96.1	100.9	110.0	34.1
Jammu & Kashmir	101.9	96.9	100.2	115.7	77.0	33.1
Jharkhand	112.4	91.4	105.3	90.0	51.3	16.8
Karnataka	104.4	90.1	99.3	92.3	73.4	21.7
Kerala	103.6	97.2	100.9	97.3	99.9	37.6
Madhya Pradesh	95.3	97.5	96.1	83.9	59.9	17.3
Maharashtra	101.1	96.5	99.5	104.0	74.3	29.3
Odisha	103.4	91.3	98.8	87.2	53.4	14.5
Punjab	101.5	94.9	99.1	95.4	79.4	22.8
Rajasthan	110.5	87.0	101.6	82.4	70.1	28.9
Tamil Nadu	103.2	96.4	100.4	89.8	91.9	35.4
Telangana	92.8	106.1	97.7	109.0	96.8	28.9
Uttarakhand	99.8	111.6	104.0	80.7	98.7	32.8
Uttar Pradesh	98.9	88.8	95.4	64.0	60.4	20.8
West Bengal	101.6	105.2	103.0	92.4	59.3	18.7
<b>All India</b>	<b>101.2</b>	<b>94.4</b>	<b>98.7</b>	<b>86.4</b>	<b>68.3</b>	<b>22.8</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

incomplete coverage of schools? Contrary to levels of school education, a significant difference is observed between GAR and GER in the case of Post Higher Secondary: Higher Education which is also true separately for male and female enrolment. GAR this level is reported to be 22.8 percent compared to GER of 25.8 percent which reveals that only 22.8 percent of 18-23 years age population were attending higher education which shows miles to go if a 50 percent target of GER at Higher Education level is to be achieved by 2035 as envisaged in NEP 2020.

**Table 3: Net Attendance Ratio at Different Levels of Education:  
All India, July 2017 to June 2018**

Education Level	NAR, Rural			Net Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	86.6	84.8	85.8	Not Available		
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	72.1	70.7	71.5			
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	89.8	87.6	88.8			
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	56.6	55.2	56.0			
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	40.3	39.2	39.8			
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	17.7	13.2	15.6			
Education Level	NAR, Urban			Net Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	87.7	86.2	87.0	Not Available		
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	73.5	75.0	74.2			
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	90.2	88.7	89.6			
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	61.5	63.7	62.5			
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	53.1	52.3	52.8			
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	29.1	27.6	28.3			
Education Level	NAR, All Areas			Net Enrolment Ratio, 2017-18		
	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person
Primary, Grades I-V/6-10 Years	86.8	85.1	86.1	89.73	90.41	90.05
Upper Primary, Grades VI-VIII/11-13 years	72.5	71.8	72.2	69.67	71.44	70.52
Elementary, Grades I-VIII/6-13 Years	89.9	87.9	89.0	88.47	89.61	89.02
Secondary, IX-X/14-15 Years	57.9	57.3	57.6	50.15	50.31	50.23
Higher Secondary, XI-XII/16-17 Years	43.9	42.7	43.4	27.53	28.03	27.77
Post-Higher Secondary, 18-23 Years (Higher Education)	21.1	17.6	19.4	Not Available		

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India & UDISE 2017-18

The state-specific GAR presented in Table 2 indicates that most of the states including Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, etc. have high to the very high percentage of children attending primary level but as we move from elementary to secondary and higher secondary level, the same indicate that lower percentage attending these levels of education which is the lowest post higher secondary level. For example, in Bihar, about 98 percent of children of 6 to 13 years are reported to have attending elementary level of education as compared to 82 percent attending secondary and 66 percent higher secondary level compared to only 16 percent attending post higher secondary level. Barring a few like Himachal Pradesh the attendance ratio consistently decline from one level of school education to another and declined significantly post higher secondary level.

## Net Attendance Ratio

A high to very high GAR need not necessarily indicate that children of a specific age group attend the corresponding level of education as it is considered a crude indicator in knowing children's participation in educational programmes and at times present a misleading picture of the same. Therefore, as an alternative, the next indicator which we discuss below is the Net Attendance Rate presented in Table 3. What is the difference between GAR and NAR, first let us briefly discuss which is the same as the difference between GER and NER. While Gross Attendance Ratio considers the total number of persons attending a particular level of education irrespective of age, in the Net Attendance Ratio children of a particular age group attending the corresponding official level are considered which looks more logical than the

GAR which by definition may not exceed a hundred. For example, NAR at the primary level is the ratio of the number of persons in the official age group attending primary level to the total number of persons in that age group i.e. 6-10 years, and similarly for other levels and their corresponding age groups i.e. age groups 11-13 (Grades VI-VIII), 6-13 (Grades I-VIII), 14-15 (Grades IX-X), 16-17 (Grades XI-XII) and 18-23 (post-Grades XI-XII) years.

The Net Attendance Ratio at the all-India level presented in the Table 3 reveals that about 86 percent of persons of age 6-10 years were said to be attending corresponding primary level during the period July 2017 to June 2018 which means that about 14 percent remaining persons of this age-group were not attending primary level. Does it mean that all the remaining 14 percent of 6-10 years not attending primary level be treated as out-of-school, certainly not like a few of them may be attending upper primary level of education in addition to a few dropped out and never been enrolled? To capture the participation of persons of an age group one level above the corresponding level, administrative survey compute adjusted-Net Enrolment Ratio but the same is not made available through the 75<sup>th</sup> Round of NSSO in the absence of which it is not possible to know the participation of age group in the corresponding level of education because of this the Net Attendance Ratio may be treated as presenting a bit low percentage of participation.

Further Table 3 reveals a bit lower (86.1 percent) NAR at the primary level compared to GER (90.05 percent) from the administrative survey which is also true separately for boys and girls enrolment at this level of education. The difference between the GAR (85.1 percent) & GER (90.41 percent) for girls at the primary level is significant as the difference between the two estimates is around 5.40 percent. Further, more boys (86.8 percent) have been reported attending primary level of education than their girls (85.1 percent) counterparts but the same in the case of the administrative survey is just reversed. Further, it has also been observed that NAR in the rural areas (85.8 percent) is lower than the same in the urban areas (87 percent); however, the difference between the two is not significant at the primary level. At the upper primary level, only 74.2 percent of persons aged between 11-13 years were attending Grades VI-VIII and no significant deviation is noticed between the same in the rural (71.5 percent) and urban (74.2 percent) areas; however more persons of this age group were attending upper primary classes in the urban areas. On the other hand, about 89 percent of persons of age group 6-13 years were attending elementary Grades I-VIII with a high percentage of males in both the rural and urban areas which mean that about 11 percent of persons of this age group were not attending corresponding grades a few of which may be attending secondary level and the remaining may

be termed as out-of-school and never been enrolled. Roughly the size of the 6-13 year child population is around 190 million of which about 20.9 million children were found not attending elementary grades which are considered huge and have far-reaching implications towards achieving a 100 percent enrolment ratio in 2030 as envisaged in NEP 2020. Almost the same percentage of persons of age 6-13 years (NER 89 percent) is reported to be enrolled based on the administrative survey all of which suggest that the unfinished task is challenging and without bringing all of them under the umbrella of education, the goal of universal school education is not likely to be cherished shortly. It may be recalled that under the Right to Education Act 2009, the local authorities are supposed to annually identify out-of-school children and provide them

**Table 4: State-specific Net Attendance Ratio at Different Levels of Education  
July 2017 to June 2018**

State	Level of Education					
	Primary	Upper Primary/	Elementary	Secondary	Higher Secondary	Post Higher Secondary
Andhra Pradesh	86.5	64.6	84.5	70.7	51.8	22.4
Assam	88.8	77.0	93.0	57.3	36.8	15.2
Bihar	81.9	70.3	87.8	54.2	35.7	13.2
Chhattisgarh	91.6	82.1	93.5	64.9	46.6	13.1
Delhi	89.8	73.1	87.3	62.4	54.0	23.4
Gujarat	93.7	77.6	91.0	62.9	40.6	13.7
Haryana	89.9	77.2	90.6	63.2	47.5	20.9
Himachal Pradesh	90.1	80.6	90.7	68.2	67.5	28.1
Jammu & Kashmir	88.1	78.4	91.3	69.6	46.1	29.5
Jharkhand	87.7	61.3	91.2	50.0	29.0	13.8
Karnataka	95.3	80.7	94.5	75.8	56.5	20.2
Kerala	94.4	86.3	93.6	76.9	78.5	33.2
Madhya Pradesh	81.6	72.9	86.6	54.1	36.3	13.5
Maharashtra	90.8	79.9	91.6	71.9	54.1	25.9
Odisha	91.2	77.0	91.5	67.6	37.4	12.0
Punjab	88.8	78.1	90.9	65.3	49.7	19.8
Rajasthan	89.5	69.1	88.2	48.2	37.8	24.2
Tamil Nadu	89.5	81.3	92.3	66.7	61.8	30.4
Telangana	82.2	75.8	91.0	76.8	75.2	25.2
Uttarakhand	87.1	80.8	94.0	54.3	56.5	29.2
Uttar Pradesh	79.2	59.7	84.0	38.7	33.1	17.2
West Bengal	88.4	77.8	91.9	60.2	36.3	15.8
<b>All India</b>	<b>86.1</b>	<b>72.2</b>	<b>89.0</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>19.4</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

special training of 3 months to two years and made them sit in the age-appropriate class which as it seems from the available data that the same is not being rigorously followed. In addition, the recent decline in enrolment at the elementary level of education is another cause of concern

that must be studied thoroughly to know the causes of the sudden decline in enrolment which is mostly confined to Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Further, the Net Attendance Ratio at the secondary and higher secondary level of education reveals that only 57.6 and 43.4 percent of persons of age group 14-15 and 16-17 years were attending and the same was slightly lower in case of women than their counterparts men which is true for both of these levels. The corresponding figures through the administrative survey are observed to be even lower than the NAR. The 43.4 percent NAR at the higher secondary level indicate that about 57 percent of 16-17 years age persons were found not attending which has got serious implication for higher education level to grow. Like GAR, NAR also indicates the decline of persons attending a level as we move from one level to the next higher level; thus roughly indicating that all those attending a level may not transit to the next level of education. Further, the significant difference between the persons of age group 16-17 years attending higher secondary level is alarmingly low in the rural areas (39.8 percent) compared to the same in the urban areas (52.8 percent); however, no difference is observed in persons of age 6-13 years attending elementary level respectively in the rural (88.8 percent) and urban (89.6 percent) areas which are also true for the participation of male and female persons of this age group. Further, it is observed that only 19.3 percent of persons of age group 18-23 years were reported to have attending corresponding higher education level; thus indicating that more than 80 percent of persons of this age group were not attending the corresponding level.

A glance at the state-specific NAR suggests that the same is much lower than the GAR in most of the states which by definition is bound to be lower but the difference between the two estimates is significant. For example, Bihar which is said to be attended by 97.2 percent (GAR) is reported to have a low NAR of 81.9 percent; a difference of more than 15 percentage points which indicates a large number of overage and underage children at the primary level of education. A similar pattern is also observed in other states and for other levels of school education. The lowest NAR of 79.2 percent has been observed in one of the most populous states of the country and the highest of 95.3 percent in Karnataka. A NAR of 79.2 percent in Bihar indicates that about 21 percent of children of age group 6-11 years were not attending the corresponding primary level, however, a few of them might have admitted and attending the upper primary level. So instead of bringing the remaining 21 percent of children to the primary level, we must first know how many of 6-11 years are attending upper primary classes but because of the limitation of the NSSO data, the same is not possible to know contrary to which administrative survey used to provide adjusted-NER which is considered a better indicator of children participating in educational programmes. The balance of children(100- adjusted NER) may be termed as out-of-school and one should plan to bring all of them under the umbrella of education fold. Bihar too has a low NAR of 70.3 percent at upper primary levels compared to 54.2 percent at secondary, 35.7 percent at higher secondary, and only 13.2 percent at post higher secondary level all of which indicate miles to go before the country attain a 100 percent GER at school education. On the other hand, Kerala is comfortable and is placed amongst the top states concerning NAR both at the secondary and higher secondary levels. Kerala too has high NAR both at the primary (94.4 percent) and upper primary (86.3 percent) levels of education. Children attending elementary level further reveals that a good number of states are comfortable concerning NAR as 16 out of 22 states have reported NAR above the national average (89 percent) and with a little push the remaining students may also be enrolled and attend this level



of education but the situation concerning remaining levels of school education is not encouraging.

### Age-specific Attendance Ratio

As of now, we have discussed Gross as well as Net Attendance Ratio both of which have limitations. On the one hand, overage and underage children are considered in GAR attending a level, on the other hand, children outside the official age group are not considered in calculating NAR even though they are very much part of the system. From both of these ratios, it is not possible to know the participation of a particular age or age group at an educational level for which indicator, like Age-Specific Attendance Ratio (ASAR), may be considered as an alternative indicator which is also available through the NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round for age groups, 6-10, 11-13, 14-17 and 18-23 years. In simple terms, for each age group, ASAR is the percentage of persons in that age group currently attending educational institutions, irrespective of the level or grade in which they are studying. Unlike the administrative survey, the age-specific attendance

**Table 5: Age Specific Attendance Ratio (ASAR), All India**

Age Group	Age-Specific Attendance Ratio (ASAR)		
	Male	Female	Person
	<b>Rural Areas</b>		
3-5 years	29.2	27.2	28.2
6-10 years	95.2	93.5	94.4
11-13 years	94.6	92.8	93.8
14-17 years	76.9	74.4	75.8
18-23 years	28.7	19.9	24.5
	<b>Urban Areas</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Person</b>
3-5 years	48.4	48.4	48.4
6-10 years	97.5	96.0	96.9
11-13 years	96.6	96.0	96.3
14-17 years	86.1	86.6	86.3
18-23 years	41.9	35.4	38.8
	<b>All Areas</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Person</b>
3-5 years	33.9	32.1	33.1
6-10 years	95.8	94.1	95.0
11-13 years	95.2	93.6	94.5
14-17 years	79.4	77.5	78.5
18-23 years	32.6	24.6	28.8

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

rate of NSSO covers both formal and non-formal education which may include a non-formal education centre, total literacy campaigns, adult education centres, and other such non-formal education learning centres.

Apart from age groups 6-10, 11-13, 14-17, and 18-23 years, ASAR is also available for age group 3-5 years and is presented in Table 5 at the all-India level which reveals that 95 percent of 6-10 years old children were attending irrespective of a grade or level of education which also indicate that only 5 percent of the remaining population is yet to be brought to the system which in absolute terms comes to be about 6 million. Further, it has also been observed that more boys are attending/enrolled than their counterparts girls which is true for other school-age groups. It is also observed that as we move from one age group to another, the percentage of children attending irrespective of the level/grade of education decline from one age group to another and is the lowest in the case of age group 18-23 years (28.8 percent). NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round data also reveals that 33.1 percent of 3-5 years children are reported attending most of which may be enrolled in pre-school level. It may be recalled that NEP 2020 has also recommended pre-school education as part of the foundational stage and available data indicate that miles to go to ensure that all 3-5 years children are enrolled in pre-school or equivalent centres. The ASAR further indicates that about 97 percent of 6-10 years old children were reported attending educational institutions in the urban areas compared to more than 94 percent attending in the rural areas. The ASAR of 6-10 years old (95 percent) at the national level is observed to be much higher than the NAR (86.1 percent) reported above because it considers total children attending irrespective of an educational level compared to corresponding level of age 6-10 years considered in calculating NAR. On the other hand, 94.5 percent of 11-13 years old children were attending educational institutions thus meaning that only about 5 percent of children of this age group are yet to be enrolled. It may be recalled that NAR of this age group presented above indicate that only 72 percent of children of age group 11-13 years were reported attending upper primary level which indicates that all the remaining 28 percent of children cannot be termed as out-of-school which is also reflected in the ASAR presented above. While formulating an annual work plan at the sub-national level, not only the NAR/NER be analyzed but the other enrollment-based indicators, such as ASAR/ASER should also be analyzed at all disaggregated levels separately for boys and girls. The ASAR for 14-17 years further indicates that only 78.5 percent population of this age group were found attending secondary education compared to only 28.8 percent attending at the post higher secondary level; however the same is significantly high in the urban areas (86.3 and 38.8 percent) compared to the same in rural areas (75.8 percent and 24.5 percent) all which suggest that a significant portion of population irrespective of age groups were found not attending any level of education which is also reflected in the corresponding level of education.

The state-specific Age-Specific Attendance Ratio presented in Table 6 reveals that the same in case of most of the states for the age group of 6-10 years is very high with a little push the remaining children can also be enrolled or made to attend but all these children may not necessarily be attending the corresponding educational level. In Delhi, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana have attained an almost 100 percent attendance rate for this group which indicates that all children of 6-10 years attend an educational level. The same in the remaining states, including Bihar (91 percent) 9 out of 10 students of age group 6-10 were found attending educational institutions. Kerala even reported a 100 percent attendance ratio in the age group 11-13 years all of which indicates that the state has almost attained universal elementary enrolment but all may not necessarily be attending institutions of the corresponding level of education. Apart from Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu to have an almost universal attendance ratio in this age group. However, the lowest 89.4 percent attendance ratio is observed in one of the most populous states of the country, namely Uttar

Pradesh. Further, it is observed that as we move from age group 11-13 years to age groups 14-17 and 18-23 years, the same irrespective of a state declined in most of the states. Again Kerala emerges on the top of the list with an age-specific attendance ratio of 98.3 percent followed by Himachal Pradesh with 94.7 percent amongst the age group 14-17 years compared to the lowest, 74.7 percent in Assam all of which indicate the wide variation between the states which is unless bridged, the goal of universal school education is not likely to be realized shortly. Kerala too had the highest attendance of 47.4 percent and Odisha, 18 percent within the age group 18-23 years all of which indicate intensive interventions first to ensure that irrespective

**Table 6: State-specific Age-Specific Attendance Ratio at Different Levels of Education July 2017 to June 2018**

State	Level of Education					
	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-13 Years	14-17 Years	18-23 Years	3-35 Years
Andhra Pradesh	37.9	97.5	96.7	83.0	27.2	41.8
Assam	35.2	97.5	96.9	74.7	21.9	40.8
Bihar	22.0	91.0	95.4	79.5	24.5	46.4
Chhattisgarh	25.3	96.6	95.5	81.9	22.7	44.9
Delhi	48.1	99.0	89.6	90.4	31.6	40.7
Gujarat	31.4	97.5	93.7	74.8	20.5	40.2
Haryana	46.7	98.3	94.7	83.8	31.5	45.0
Himachal Pradesh	54.8	99.9	99.3	94.7	42.2	52.6
Jammu & Kashmir	28.2	97.9	97.2	87.6	46.4	48.2
Jharkhand	35.0	97.1	95.7	79.2	22.8	46.1
Karnataka	18.3	97.4	98.1	83.6	30.3	39.9
Kerala	58.3	100.0	100.0	98.3	47.4	53.3
Madhya Pradesh	24.7	92.9	93.6	69.4	23.5	40.8
Maharashtra	39.1	98.0	97.0	86.2	36.2	43.6
Odisha	20.5	98.2	94.2	68.6	18.0	38.5
Punjab	61.6	96.9	98.6	86.3	31.8	43.4
Rajasthan	35.8	93.1	93.0	75.9	34.8	46.3
Tamil Nadu	53.9	99.6	99.5	89.8	35.0	45.1
Telangana	56.1	99.5	98.4	94.0	30.9	46.5
Uttarakhand	28.7	99.1	97.8	92.5	43.9	48.0
Uttar Pradesh	26.4	90.6	89.4	68.0	27.6	44.3
West Bengal	40.0	97.8	92.9	79.6	24.9	42.5
<b>All India</b>	33.1	95.0	94.5	78.5	28.8	43.9

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

of a school-age group, all are enrolled and attend an educational level and then transit to the first level of higher education level to help India move towards attaining a GER of 50 percent at the higher education level in 2030 as envisaged in the NPE 2020.

## Dropout and Reasons of Dropout

Administrative surveys present the average annual dropout rate which is based on two years grade-wise enrolment and current years repeaters data but the same is not possible to compute based on household data, such as NSSO because of which the percentage of dropouts among ever enrolled persons of age 3 to 35 years by the level of the last enrolment has been made available through the 75<sup>th</sup> Round. There is a difference between an ever-enrolled and never-enrolled person and the percentage of dropouts is computed amongst ever-enrolled persons which presented in Table 7 reveals the incidence of high dropouts which is found to be higher for all the levels of school education. It is observed that as many as 10 percent persons of aged 3 to 35 dropped out at primary levels of education which is as high as 11.6 percent in the case of female enrolment. Further, even a higher percentage of dropouts is observed at upper primary (17.5 percent) and 19.8 percent at the higher secondary level of education. Overall, a high percentage of 12.6 amongst persons of aged 3 to 35 is noticed which indicate more females dropped out (13.2 percent) compared to their counterparts males (12.1 percent) all of which suggest that lot of efforts being made towards achieving the target of universal enrolment goes waste which is also indicated in average annual dropout rate computed based on the administrative survey.

**Table 7: Percentage of Persons Dropped-out Among Ever-enrolled Persons of Aged 3 to 35 Years: All India**

Level of the Last Enrolment	Percentage		
	Male	Female	Person
Pre-primary	4.5	7.9	6.0
Primary	8.5	11.6	10.0
Upper Primary	16.9	18.3	17.5
Secondary	20.4	19.2	19.8
Higher Secondary	10.1	9.0	9.6
<b>All</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>12.6</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

Ever-enrolled State-specific percentage of persons dropped out amongst ever-enrolled presented in Table 8 further reveals that the same was noticed the highest in the state of West Bengal (23.5 percent) and the lowest, 4 percent in Punjab followed by 5 percent in Himachal Pradesh. Eleven states have a higher percentage of dropouts than the national average of 12.6 percent all of which indicate that a good percentage of persons enrolled drop out from the system before the completion of an educational level thus severely affecting efforts being made towards universal enrolment which needs to be checked for that it is important to know reasons of dropout which is presented in Table 9.

**Table 8: Percentage of Persons Dropped out Amongst Ever-enrolled Aged 3 to 35 years**

State	All Areas		
	Male	Female	Person
Andhra Pradesh	13.1	13.5	13.3
Assam	18.0	23.0	20.3
Bihar	8.6	12.4	10.2
Chhattisgarh	10.7	12.4	11.5
Delhi	6.5	6.0	6.3
Gujarat	18.2	17.3	17.8
Haryana	9.1	8.7	8.9
Himachal Pradesh	5.2	4.7	5.0
Jammu & Kashmir	9.8	13.1	11.3
Jharkhand	12.5	14.7	13.5
Karnataka	12.3	14.7	13.3
Kerala	13.9	13.3	13.6
Madhya Pradesh	13.1	13.3	13.2
Maharashtra	14.7	16.1	15.3
Odisha	20.6	21.9	21.2
Punjab	5.0	2.8	4.0
Rajasthan	11.7	14.9	13.1
Tamil Nadu	9.0	8.1	8.5
Telangana	8.9	10.3	9.5
Uttarakhand	3.7	3.0	3.4
Uttar Pradesh	6.7	6.3	6.5
West Bengal	23.5	23.5	23.5
<b>All India</b>	<b>12.1</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>12.6</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

Table 9 reveals that 42.7 percent of ever-enrolled males and 42.2 percent females of age group 3 to 35 years were found currently not attending educational institutions between July 2017 to June 2018 which suggest that a huge 57.3 and 57.8 of males and females left the system in between before or after completion of an educational level of which 18.8 percent males and 14.8 percent females left because they were not interested in education itself as against 3.8 percent males and 3.4 percent females left because of the repetitive failures which are quite similar to the NSSO 42<sup>nd</sup> Round conducted during July 1986 to June 1987. Even though the annual dropout rate over time has shown a slight decline but still the major reasons for their not attending are by and large are still the same which are unless addressed, the dropout rate continues to be high. About 41 percent of males and 36 percent of females were not attending because they were engaged in domestic or economic activities. Financial constraints were the other main reason for not attending in the case of 24.3 percent males and 17.7 percent females. Even 0.1 percent each have said non-availability of a female teacher and girls toilet as other

reasons of not attending. Another 13.2 percent of females discontinued because of marriage and 2.7 percent discontinued because the educational institute was located at a far distance which is termed crucial because of the availability of a large number of schools across the country which are in the process of merging. The reasons for dropout or discontinue as revealed by the 75<sup>th</sup> Round have far-reaching implications on universal school education which must be addressed without any further delay.

**Table 9: Percentage of Ever-enrolled Persons aged 3 to 35 Years Currently Not Attending & Reasons for Not Attending**

Reason	Male	Female
Percentage of Ever-enrolled Currently not Attending	42.7	42.2
<b>Not Interested in Education</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>14.8</b>
Financial Constraints	24.3	17.7
<b>Engaged in Domestic Activities</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>30.2</b>
<b>Engaged in Economic Activities</b>	<b>36.9</b>	<b>5.3</b>
School is Far-off	0.5	2.7
Timings of Educational Institution Not Suitable	0.0	0.1
Language/Medium of Instruction used Unfamiliar	0.1	0.1
Quality of Teachers Not Satisfactory	0.1	0.1
Route to the Educational Institution Not Safe	0.0	0.2
<b>Unable to Cope-up with Studies/Failure in Studies</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>
Un-friendly Atmosphere at School	0.2	0.1
Completed Desired Level/Class	5.8	6.4
Preparation for Competitive Examination	2.2	1.0
Non-availability of Female Teacher		0.1
Non-availability of Girls' Toilet		0.1
<b>Marriage</b>		<b>13.2</b>
Others	3.3	4.5
<b>All Persons</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

### Computer & Internet Facility

Because of the COVID 19 and ongoing pandemic, schools are closed across the country and the learning is taking place in the digital form through online classes. Therefore, it is important to know how our households, especially those located in the rural areas are equipped to face the challenges. To know more about the availability of digital mode in the household, the NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round of data also presents information on ICT in general and (i) whether the household had a computer and (ii) internet facility while for each person age 5 years and above, in particular, was collected. Also, households' ability to operate (i) a computer, (ii) use the internet, and (iii) whether the household used the internet during the last 30 days was also collected. However, information on the availability of all devices such as, desktop computer, laptop computer, notebook, notebook, palmtop, tablet, etc was collected but one of the most easily accessible devices these days, namely Smart Phone, no information was collected because of which the NSSO 2017-18 data may be considered as revealing incomplete information about the

availability of devices in households. Still, it provides useful information about the availability and use of ICT devices in both rural as well as urban areas which is briefly analyzed below:

**Table 10: Percentage of Households with Computer & Internet Facility, All India**

Indicator	Percentage of Households		
	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	All Areas
Households having Computer	4.4	23.4	10.7
Households having Internet Facility	14.9	42	23.8

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

Table 10 presented above reveals that only 10.7 percent of the total households in India have got a computer and another 23.8 percent have got access to internet facilities. But the same in the rural areas is as low as 4.4 and 14.9 percent respectively as against 23.4 and 42 percent in the urban areas; thus showing a wide gap in the availability of computers and access to internet facilities between rural and urban areas.

State-specific availability of computers and access to internet facilities (Table 11) further reveals a wide gap between states. On the one hand, Delhi reported having the computer in 34.7 percent of the total households and another 55.7 percent has got access to the internet as against only 4.6 and 15.4 percent households respectively in one of the largest states, namely Bihar. However, the same in the case of Odisha concerning the availability of computers is as low as 4.2 percent which has also got the lowest percentage (10 percent) of households have got access to internet facility. One can easily understand, how households in India in general and located in the rural areas, in particular, would have got access to online content offered to their children during COVID19. In the rural areas, Jharkhand has got the lowest percentage of households having a computer (1.3 percent) as against 5.8 percent of households in Odisha having got access to internet facility.

### **Ability to use Computer & Internet Facility: India, Population 5 year & Above**

The percentage use of Computer and Internet Facilities for the population 5 years and above presented in Table 12 reveals that only 16.5 percent of people in this age group can use the computer as against 20.1 percent use internet out of which 17.6 percent used the internet during the last 30 days from the day of the survey. The percentage is as low as 9.9, 13.0 and 10.8 percent respectively in the rural areas compared to which percentage in the urban areas is much higher at 32.4, 37.1 and 33.8 percent respectively but still a majority of population both in the rural and urban areas do not know how to operate both computer and internet. Further, a wide gap has also been observed between males and females using the computer and internet which is

true for both the rural and urban areas. In rural areas, only 7 percent of females reported having the ability to operate computers as against 12.6 percent internet facility. The corresponding percentages for the ability to use the internet are 17.1 (male) and 8.5 percent (female) in the rural

**Table 11: Percentage of Households with Computer & Internet Facility, State-wise**

State	Rural Areas		Urban Areas		All Areas	
	Computer	Internet Facility	Computer	Internet Facility	Computer	Internet Facility
Andhra Pradesh	1.5	10.4	11.6	29.5	4.8	16.6
Assam	3.7	12.1	30.8	46.9	7.5	17.0
Bihar	2.7	12.5	20.0	38.6	4.6	15.4
Chhattisgarh	3.2	10.6	22.0	34.6	6.9	15.2
Delhi	-	-	34.7	55.8	34.9	55.7
Gujarat	4.4	21.1	20.1	49.1	11.2	33.2
Haryana	5.9	37.1	29.5	55.4	14.7	43.9
Himachal Pradesh	10.5	48.6	28.3	70.6	12.9	51.5
Jammu & Kashmir	3.5	28.7	16.0	57.7	6.6	35.8
Jharkhand	1.3	11.9	15.6	40.2	4.4	18.0
Karnataka	2.0	8.3	22.9	33.5	10.7	18.8
Kerala	20.1	46.9	27.5	56.4	23.5	51.3
Madhya Pradesh	2.3	9.7	17.2	35.4	6.1	16.3
Maharashtra	3.3	18.5	27.4	52.0	14.3	33.7
Odisha	1.8	5.8	17.2	31.2	4.3	10.0
Punjab	9.4	39.4	26.7	57.1	16.2	46.4
Rajasthan	6.4	18.5	26.6	49.9	11.7	26.7
Tamil Nadu	11.6	14.4	24.7	24.8	18.1	19.6
Telangana	1.6	9.9	17.6	41.9	9.1	24.9
Uttarakhand	7.0	35.2	32.5	64.3	14.3	43.5
Uttar Pradesh	4.0	11.6	22.3	41.0	8.2	18.4
West Bengal	3.3	7.9	23.0	36.0	9.4	16.5
<b>All India</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>14.9</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>23.8</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

areas against 37.5 (male) and 26.9 (female) percentage population know computer operation and 43.5 (male) and 30.1 (female) percent know internet operation in the urban areas (Table 13).



**Table 12: Percentage of Persons of Age 5 Years & Above with Ability to Operate Computer, Ability to use Internet & Used Internet**

Indicator	Percentage of Households		
	Rural Areas	Urban Areas	All Areas
Households having Computer	9.9	32.4	16.5
Households having Internet Facility	13.0	37.1	20.1
Used Internet during last 30 days	10.8	33.8	17.6

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

**Table 13: Percentage of Age 5 Years & Above to Operate Computer, State-wise**

State	Rural Areas		Urban Areas		All Areas	
	Females	Persons	Females	Persons	Females	Persons
Andhra Pradesh	6.3	9.5	20.0	25.1	10.6	14.4
Assam	4.7	7.2	25.3	32.8	7.0	10.0
Bihar	3.5	6.3	17.7	23.5	5.0	8.0
Chhattisgarh	4.2	7.4	20.7	25.6	7.2	10.8
Delhi	-	-	37.8	43.3	37.2	42.8
Gujarat	10.3	14.4	28.4	34.6	17.0	22.2
Haryana	12.8	17.9	31.5	37.6	19.0	24.3
Himachal Pradesh	18.3	21.9	42.2	48.0	20.6	24.6
Jammu & Kashmir	5.7	9.3	21.0	24.4	9.0	12.6
Jharkhand	2.1	4.1	19.4	25.0	5.4	8.2
Karnataka	7.4	10.1	29.2	35.5	15.3	19.3
Kerala	34.8	38.2	42.0	45.7	38.0	41.5
Madhya Pradesh	2.8	4.9	19.6	24.0	6.8	9.6
Maharashtra	9.1	13.4	31.9	38.6	19.0	24.4
Odisha	3.4	5.2	19.8	25.5	6.0	8.5
Punjab	17.2	20.8	32.4	37.1	22.5	26.6
Rajasthan	5.7	9.0	22.9	31.1	9.5	14.2
Tamil Nadu	15.8	20.8	30.8	34.9	22.8	27.4
Telangana	5.9	8.5	26.9	33.0	15.4	19.8
Uttarakhand	14.6	19.1	36.3	42.7	20.1	25.3
Uttar Pradesh	3.5	6.0	17.9	23.5	6.5	9.7
West Bengal	5.4	7.2	21.8	27.1	10.2	13.0
<b>All India</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>32.4</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>16.5</b>

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

A state-wise percentage of the 5+ population having the ability to operate a computer and use internet facilities separately in the rural and urban areas (Table 13) also reveals wide variation across states. Bihar with 8 percent, Jharkhand with 8.2 percent, and Odisha with 8.5 percent have the lowest percentage of the population who can operate computer against 42.8 percent population in Delhi and 41.5 percent in Kerala know computer operation incidentally which is the highest amongst major states. In the rural areas, the percentage is even further low as only 6.3 percent of the 5+ population know computer operation in Bihar against 39.2 percent in Kerala. Further, significant variation is observed in the case of males and females operating computers and internet facilities (Table 14). It may also be of interest to observe that male-female variation both in the case of a population of 5+ who can operation both computers and the internet is more in urban areas than the same in the rural areas.

**Table 14: Percentage of Persons of Age 5 Years & Above with Ability to Use the Internet, State-wise**

State	Rural Areas		Urban Areas		All Areas	
	Females	Persons	Females	Persons	Females	Persons
Andhra Pradesh	8.0	12.0	22.3	28.5	12.5	17.1
Assam	9.3	13.8	28.7	39.1	11.5	16.6
Bihar	6.0	10.2	20.9	28.3	7.5	12.1
Chhattisgarh	4.6	9.0	23.7	30.3	8.1	12.9
Delhi	-	-	45.0	51.1	44.2	50.5
Gujarat	9.6	15.6	32.2	40.1	18.0	25.1
Haryana	16.2	24.2	36.0	44.5	22.7	30.9
Himachal Pradesh & Jammu Kashmir	24.9	30.8	47.5	57.3	27.1	33.5
Jharkhand	11.0	17.3	30.5	37.8	15.2	21.8
Karnataka	4.0	8.1	22.0	30.2	7.4	12.4
Kerala	8.5	12.1	30.4	37.6	16.4	21.4
Kerala	35.1	41.0	41.7	47.5	38.1	43.9
Madhya Pradesh	4.0	8.0	24.4	30.6	9.0	13.5
Maharashtra	10.9	16.9	36.3	44.1	21.9	28.8
Odisha	4.3	7.4	23.0	29.3	7.3	10.9
Punjab	22.1	28.5	40.0	46.8	28.4	35.0
Rajasthan	6.6	11.6	26.2	35.1	11.0	17.1
Tamil Nadu	14.3	20.2	29.9	34.9	21.6	27.1
Telangana	8.5	12.1	31.6	40.0	19.0	25.0
Uttarakhand	21.8	29.4	44.7	53.0	27.5	35.6
Uttar Pradesh	4.9	8.8	21.9	28.9	8.4	13.0
West Bengal	5.9	8.6	24.3	30.3	11.3	14.9
<b>All India</b>	8.5	13.0	30.1	37.1	14.9	20.1

Source: NSSO 75<sup>th</sup> Round (July 2017-June 2018), MoSPI, National Statistical Office, Government of India.

The above analysis of NSSO 75 Round data (July 2017-June 18) reveals that all households are not yet fully equipped to receive online content. Even if they receive, most of them are not able to use it which is reflected in the NSSO 5+ population able to use the computer as well as the

internet all which raises serious issues about the reach and use of on-line contents made available in different forms across the country. The above analysis is presented from the user's point of view but are our teachers equipped to handle the task efficiently concerning the development of contents and conduct online classes? or they are supposed to use the contents developed and made available by other agencies? How teachers are equipped about imparting online classes is indirectly reflected in schools having got access to computer and internet connectivity (2017-18) which is briefly analyzed below. It may also be of interest to know that of the total 9.24 million teachers who impart school education, about 20 percent of teachers are not professionally trained. Incidentally, more than 85 percent of teachers in government schools are professionally qualified but the percentage of untrained teachers in the case of private and aided schools is as high as 27.43 percent. On the other hand, the qualification of a few teachers is below secondary (0.49 percent) and 5.83 percent higher secondary level but it good to know that majority of teachers are graduates and postgraduates (76.16 percent). Even 1.08 percent of teachers are having M.Phil degree holders as against 0.46 percent of teachers having acquired a Ph.D. degree. Besides, the percentage of contractual teachers is high which has increased during the recent past as many states have discontinued the recruitment of regular teachers. In addition to about 20 percent of teachers not having adequate professional qualification, about 6.74 percent of schools are single-teacher and 2.51 percent government schools, single-classroom school; how they manage schools even on normal days is a moot question forget about online learning during COVID days all which raises serious issues about the real implementation and impact of online learning. It is disappointed to further know that only 59.18 percent of the total 1.5 million schools (all) have regular Head Masters posted in school compared to which the same in case of primary-only school is only 45.54 percent indicating no leadership available in case of about 54 percent primary schools in the country in 2017-18

### **Concluding Observations**

Like analysis based on the administrative data, analysis based on 75<sup>th</sup> Round NSSO data inter,s of Gross, as well as Net Attendance Ratio, suggested that India is miles away in achieving the goal of school education in the real sense even though there are methodological differences in calculating indicators from both the sources. However; GAR & NAR considered presenting a better indicator of presenting children's participation in the educational programme at corresponding educational level as it considers children attending compared to children enrolled. Another measure difference is that the administrative survey record enrolment on 30<sup>th</sup> September of a year on the other side NSSO records children attending during the period July 2017 to June 2018. Out of Gross, Net, and Age-specific attendance Ratio, ASAR presents the percentage of children of an age group that is yet to be enrolled or in the other words were not attending educational institutes during the period of the survey. A higher ASAR ensures that children of an age group were found attending but don't necessarily be attending the corresponding level. Unlike the average annual dropout rate being disseminated as a part of the administrative survey, NSSO disseminates the percentage of persons dropped out among ever enrolled persons of aged 3 to 35 years both at the state as well as at the all-India level but the same is not made available for a specific age group of school education level. However, the same presents a level at which a person of 3 to 35 years discontinued attending an educational institution along with reasons for discontinuation among which not interested in education, engaged in domestic and economic activities are the prominent ones. Unless alternatives to education are available children will

continue to discontinue education; thus severely affecting efforts being made towards universal school education. Poverty/financial constraints is another important reason for discontinuance which is unless addressed, persons of an age group are likely to discontinue reasons of such nature must be addressed at the government level as the same cannot be addressed by the states educational departments. Unfortunately, reasons for discontinuation are known for the last so many years but the same has not been adequately addressed in the absence of which children in a good number continue to drop out from the system. At the time of the pandemic, NSSO data on households having got access to computers/devices and internet connectivity comes in handy all which suggests that persons/households across the country both in the rural and the urban areas do not have got access to computer/device with internet in the absence of which one can easily think of children how difficult it is for them to receive the online contents in the real sense. In the next round, NSSO must also collect information on children in a household who have got exclusive access to mobile/laptop with data/internet connectivity. A household may be reported to have the same but the same may not be available to children in the household for accessing online content?

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