

Decoding UDISE+ 2021-22 Enrolment Ratios under Samagra Shiksha

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Net Enrolment Ratio at:

- *Primary Level declined to 88.6% in 2021-22 from 92.7% in the previous year*
- *Upper Primary Level declined to 74.1% in 2021-22 from 71.3% in the last year*
- *Elementary Level declined to 90.5% in 2021-22 from 92.1% in the previous year*
- *Secondary level declined to 47.9% in 2021-22 from 52.5% in the last year*
- *Higher Secondary Level declined to 34.2% in 2021-22 from 34.7% in the previous year*

Brief Introduction

In this brief note, we decode the implications of various enrolment ratios at different levels of school education released on November 3rd, 2022, by the *Ministry of Education* through the UDISE+ 2021-22. The same shall be compared with the 2020-21 ratios wherever required. Table 1 below presents a variety of enrolment ratios at the all-India level, such as Gross & Net, Adjusted-Net, and age-specific enrolment ratios at primary, upper primary, elementary, secondary, and higher secondary levels of education.

Gross Enrolment Ratio

The Gross Enrolment Ratio at the primary level remained stagnant during 2020-21 and 2021-22 and is reported at 103.4 percent in 2021-22; what does it mean? Does it mean that all children aged 6 to 10+ years are enrolled? Or does it mean that the goal of universal primary enrolment is achieved? The answer to none of these questions is YES. Then how to interpret it is the moot question, which must also be correctly understood by the officers engaged in annual plan formulation exercises as it has widespread implications for universal school enrolment.

A GER of 103.4 percent at the primary level of education indicates that 103.4 percent of the total 6 to 10+ aged children, including the overage and underage children, are enrolled. The gross enrolment Ratio is obtained by dividing the enrolment by the relevant age group child

Table 1: Enrolment Ratio: All-India, 2020-21 & 2021-22

Level	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)		Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)		Adjusted NER		Age-specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER)	
	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22
Primary	103.3	103.4	92.7	88.6	98.6	99.1	98.6	99.1 (6-10 years)
Upper Primary	92.2	94.7	74.1	71.3	84.4	87.3	91.6	92.2 (11-13 years)
Elementary	99.1	100.1	92.1	90.5	96.0	96.5	96.0	96.5 (6-13 years)
Secondary	79.8	79.6	52.5	47.9	61.8	64.7	73.4	72.8 (14-15 years)
Higher Secondary	53.8	57.6	34.7	34.2	-	-	46.3	42.4 (16-17 years)

Source: UDISE+ 2020-21 & 2021-22.

population. In the case of GER at the primary level, total enrolment in Grades I to V, irrespective of age, is considered, which is then divided by the corresponding child population (6 to 10+ years) and multiplied by 100 to obtain GER at the primary level. Because of overage and underage children, the GER is considered a crude indicator of children's participation in educational programs. Therefore, it presents a misleading picture and is generally not used in plan formulation.

Net enrolment Ratio

What is the alternative if GER is not considered a good indicator of children's participation? The option is the Net Enrolment Ratio which is regarded as a better indicator of the involvement of children better than GER but still not free from the limitations. Unlike GER, NER only considers enrolment of the relevant age group divided by the corresponding child-age population. For

example, enrolment of Grades 1 to V aged 6 to 10+ years is divided by the 6 to 10+ age population multiplied by 100 to obtain NER at the primary level of education.

NER at the primary level of education reported a decline in 2021-22 from its status in the previous year, i.e., 2020-21, which is valid for all levels of school education even though the relevant child population has declined during the same period (Table 6). What implications has it had on efforts in India towards a universal school enrolment with a GER of 100 percent by the year 2030?

NER at Primary Level

Let us first discuss NER at the primary level of education. At the primary level, NER in 2021-22 is reported at 88.6 percent (Table 1). What does it mean? One can say that 88.6 percent of children aged 6 to 10+ years are enrolled in the corresponding 1 to 5 grades. Does it mean that the remaining 11.4 percent of children in this age group are out of the system? Not necessarily all remaining 11.4 percent of children are termed as out of school, as a few of them may be enrolled in one level above the primary level, but because of the definition of the NER, they are not considered in the NER computation. Therefore, all those aged 6 to 10+ not found in 1 to 5 grades cannot be treated as out of school as a few of them may never be enrolled, out-of-school, or dropped out, and a few may even be registered in the higher levels. Because of these limitations, though NER is considered a better indicator of children's participation but still not free from the constraints.

Therefore, a NER of 88.6 percent at the primary level of education indicates that 88.6 percent of the total 6 to 10+ years old children are enrolled in the corresponding 1 to 5 grades. It does not mean we plan to bring the remaining 11.4 percent of children under the umbrella of education, as a good number of children of this age group may be enrolled elsewhere, and all of them cannot be treated as out of the schools but are not captured in NER. Therefore, NER has treated an improvement over GER. However, since it does not consider overage and underage children who are very much in the system, it is also not free from the limitations.

Adjusted-NER

Then should we use GER or NER? Both specified above are not free from the limitations, but NER is considered a better indicator than the GER to view children's participation in an educational program. However, it depends on the objective to decide whether to use GER or NER. NER in the previous year 2020-21 at primary level was 92.7 percent which, as described above, has declined to 88.6 percent in 2021-22. Alternate to NER, we discuss Adjusted NER below, which is considered a better indicator than NER to judge children's participation in educational programs.

Unlike NER, which considers net enrolment of children of an age group (by eliminating the overage and underage children), the Adjusted-NER not only considers enrolment of the relevant

age group but children of that age group enrolled in one level higher than the prescribed grades/level. For example, the Adjusted-NER at the primary level of education considers the total enrolment of aged 6 to 10+ children both in the primary as well as upper primary grades, which is then divided by the corresponding child population, i.e., 6 to 10+ years and then multiplied by 100 to obtain Adjusted-NER at the primary level of education.

Compared to a NER of 88.6 percent, the Adjusted NER at the primary level of education is 99.1 percent which suggests that a good number of children of age 6 to 10+ years are enrolled in upper primary grades. Almost 11 percent of 6 to 10+ years of children are enrolled in upper primary classes, which indicates that only 0.9 percent of 6 to 10+ children were not enrolled in 2021-22, which can be termed as out of school. As we move towards universalization, children will enter the system at the prescribed age (6 years); eventually, GER will become NER, and Adjusted-NER will not be required to be computed.

Which to use, NER or Adjusted-NER?

As of now, we have discussed GER, NER, and Adjusted-NER, all of which have some limitations. On the one hand, GER is considered a crude indicator; on the other hand, NER is regarded as a better indicator, and Adjusted-NER is a better indicator than NER. So which enrolment ratio is to be considered? One can use an indicator or a set of indicators/ratios depending on the objective. Still, there is one more type of indicator, namely the Age-specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER), which presents the participation of single-age or age-group children in the education program and considers the total enrolment of that age or age group irrespective of the grade or level of education in which he or she is enrolled.

Age-specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER)

The Table below presents the age-specific enrolment ratio for age groups 6 to 10, 11 to 13, 14 to 15, and 16 to 17 years, corresponding age groups of primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels of education. An ASER of 99.1 percent indicates that 99.1 percent of children of 6 to 10 years are enrolled irrespective of a grade or level of education. Only 0.9 percent of children in this age group are unenrolled in any grade/level.

Level-specific Enrolment Ratios

Having discussed all types of enrolment ratios, let us now view the same at different levels of education. Compared to the enrolment ratio at the primary level of education, the participation of children at the other levels of education indicates that universal school education is still a far distant goal. As against 96.5 percent of 6 to 13-year children enrolled in the corresponding 1 to 8 grades, the same in the case of 14 to 15 years (corresponding secondary level) and 16 to 17 years (higher secondary) is low at 72.8 and 42.4 percent; thus indicating that 27.2 percent and 57.6 percent children respectively of these age groups were unenrolled in any grade/level in 2021-22; all which indicate that concerted efforts are required to move towards universal school education

by 2030. The low participation of children of these age groups is also indicated in the corresponding GER and NER. A low NER of 34.2 percent at the Higher Secondary level suggests that 65.8 percent of children of 16 to 17 years were unenrolled in 11 to 12 grades. The corresponding NER at the secondary level is 52.5 percent indicating that 47.5 percent of 14 to 15 years children were un-enrolled in the corresponding 9 and 10 grades in 2021-22.

Meaning of Universalisation

From the above discussion, it is clear that to move towards universal enrolment, enrolling all children is a necessary condition without which one can not move towards universalization. The sufficient requirement, however, would be to ensure that all those who enter the education system must move from one grade to another, transit from one level to another, and then complete an education level/cycle. The enrolment ratio discussed in this note indicates that the retaining capacity of the system is questioned. As we move from one level of education to another, there is a significant decline in the enrolment ratio, which is valid for all enrollment ratios that have been discussed.

Another vital point that must be cautioned when discussing the enrolment ratio is that it must thoroughly examine trends in enrolment as well as clientele population. The overall objective of discussing the enrolment ratio is to improve the situation, which without undertaking disaggregating analysis, is not possible. Therefore, not only the all-India level but enrolment statistics must be analysed at the state and district levels and, if possible, at the block level and within that separately for boys and girls. Further, the analysis undertaken must not confine only to one level of education, but all the levels of education must be examined. Additionally, analysis of flow rates, including dropout, retention, and transition rates, is non-negotiable.

State-specific Enrolment Ratio

Primary Level

The state-specific enrolment ratios presented in Tables 1 to 5 reveal that the states are at different stages of educational development, which is visible in the enrolment ratios presented for the year 2021-22 and is valid for all levels of school education.

Even though the GER includes overage and underage children, a few states are far from attaining universal primary education status. However, for a few others, especially the smaller states who moved towards universalization, the difference between the GER and NER is only marginal. Since students in these states started to enter the system at the age prescribed, the difference between the NER and the adjusted NER is also negligible.

As many as sixteen states have reported a hundred percent age-specific enrolment ratio in the age group of 6 to 10+ years, thus indicating that all the children of this age group in these states are enrolled, but that doesn't itself guarantee that the children are enrolled in the corresponding Grades 1 to 5 which is visible in the NER at this level of education.

Table 2: Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level, 2021-22

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 6 to 10 Years
A & N Islands	67.8	61.4	68.1	68.1
Andhra Pradesh	101.6	83.8	97.4	97.4
Arunachal Pradesh	129.2	99.3	100.0	100.0
Assam	119.6	100.0	100.0	100.0
Bihar	102.5	93.0	100.0	100.0
Chandigarh	85.4	74.1	80.5	80.5
Chhattisgarh	96.6	85.9	92.0	92.0
Dadra and Nagar*	89.1	79.8	83.6	83.6
Delhi	116.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Goa	92.8	79.7	87.5	87.5
Gujarat	93.1	77.1	90.3	90.3
Haryana	104.0	82.0	95.7	95.7
Himachal Pradesh	108.3	87.0	100.0	100.0
Jammu and Kashmir	112.0	86.2	100.0	100.0
Jharkhand	102.3	90.1	98.9	98.9
Karnataka	108.1	95.9	100.0	100.0
Kerala	102.1	86.7	100.0	100.0
Ladakh	79.5	59.8	70.4	70.4
Lakshadweep	79.6	74.8	77.1	77.1
Madhya Pradesh	86.9	70.3	80.6	80.6
Maharashtra	106.9	96.6	100.0	100.0
Manipur	143.4	100.0	100.0	100.0
Meghalaya	187.7	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mizoram	158.9	100.0	100.0	100.0
Nagaland	102.1	82.2	90.8	90.8
Odisha	97.9	82.5	97.5	97.5
Puducherry	76.6	62.1	76.7	76.7
Punjab	111.4	89.7	96.9	96.9
Rajasthan	105.1	84.1	95.2	95.2
Sikkim	106.2	84.8	94.9	94.9
Tamil Nadu	99.0	85.0	99.8	99.8
Telangana	112.5	93.1	100.0	100.0
Tripura	126.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	101.9	84.9	97.5	97.5
Uttarakhand	120.5	97.1	100.0	100.0
West Bengal	115.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
India	103.4	88.6	99.1	99.1

Source: UDISE+ 2021-22 * Including Daman & Diu

Further, it is observed that in all the States & UTs, both the adjusted NER and Age-specific enrolment ratio at the primary level of education/6 to 10 years is precisely the same, which indicates that children of this age group are either enrolled in Grades 1 to 5 or in one level above, i.e., upper primary level.

Further, it is observed that states like Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal all reported a hundred percent adjusted NER at the primary level of education; indicating that all the children of 6 to 10+ years in these states are enrolled; most of these states also have a hundred percent NER which is encouraging.

Table 3: Enrolment Ratio at Upper Primary Level, 2021-22

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 11 to 13 Years
A & N Islands	71.5	55.5	65.7	69.7
Andhra Pradesh	97.6	70.6	91.8	96.2
Arunachal Pradesh	85.2	57.6	72.9	81.9
Assam	95.0	73.9	87.1	90.0
Bihar	86.0	71.7	89.0	90.4
Chandigarh	93.7	72.8	83.3	91.4
Chhattisgarh	94.6	76.5	84.9	88.5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	90.8	74.3	82.0	93.6
Delhi	130.0	98.9	100.0	100.0
Goa	88.4	69.0	80.6	85.9
Gujarat	91.1	65.9	83.7	86.8
Haryana	102.0	70.9	92.7	100.0
Himachal Pradesh	102.6	71.7	96.4	98.7
Jammu and Kashmir	65.6	43.4	59.8	62.7
Jharkhand	88.9	70.7	83.7	87.6
Karnataka	105.5	85.4	100.0	100.0
Kerala	99.3	75.3	99.6	100.0
Ladakh	66.1	42.8	57.0	63.7
Lakshadweep	63.5	56.2	58.5	62.0
Madhya Pradesh	92.0	65.5	77.1	83.2
Maharashtra	100.4	80.1	91.1	98.5
Manipur	85.8	70.4	79.1	86.3
Meghalaya	113.5	75.7	83.2	100.0
Mizoram	109.5	76.7	86.3	100.0
Nagaland	68.9	48.5	57.4	67.3
Odisha	91.3	65.9	85.0	86.0
Puducherry	77.7	53.7	76.7	77.2
Punjab	106.8	72.9	83.0	100.0
Rajasthan	96.0	67.0	82.5	91.1
Sikkim	77.7	52.8	64.3	74.1
Tamil Nadu	98.3	73.4	98.4	99.0
Telangana	106.5	79.9	96.6	100.0
Tripura	88.4	79.8	84.4	86.6
Uttar Pradesh	91.0	62.7	82.9	87.5
Uttarakhand	102.2	71.3	92.7	99.4
West Bengal	98.0	83.3	86.0	93.7
India	94.7	71.3	87.3	92.2

Source: UDISE+ 2021-22 * Including Daman & Diu

The most populous state, namely Uttar Pradesh, reported 97.5 percent adjusted NER indicating that only 2.5 percent of the total 6 to 10 years children are yet to be enrolled compared to which one of the other major states, Bihar, reported a hundred percent adjusted NER at the primary

level of education (Table 2). On the other hand, the state of Madhya Pradesh still has to enroll 19.4 percent of the total 6 to 10+ year students. The quantum of the unfinished task is challenging, especially in states with a large child population.

Upper Primary Level

Further, a drastic decline in NER is observed as we move from the primary to the upper primary level of education. Not a single state out of the 37 States & UTs reported 100 percent GER at the upper primary level of education (Table 3). The Highest NER of 98.9 percent at this level of education is observed in the case of Delhi, and the lowest, 43.4 percent, in the case of Jammu & Kashmir. On the other hand, Karnataka reported a hundred percent adjusted NER at the upper primary level of education, indicating that all the children of 11 to 13 years in the state were enrolled in 2021-22; Karnataka, too, reported 100 percent adjusted NER at the primary level of education.

On the other hand, quite a good number of states reported a 100 percent age-specific enrolment ratio in the age group of 11 to 13 years in 2020-21. Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, MP, Mizoram, Punjab, and Telangana are a few such states, all of which now need to focus more on the retaining capacity of the system. Needless to mention that unless all the states attain a high NER, India cannot move toward achieving the status of universal elementary education.

Elementary Level

UDISE+ 2021-22, like previous years, also presents enrolment ratios for the combined elementary level of education (Table 4). The age-specific enrolment ratio in the age group 6 to 13+ years in the case of at least 14 states is hundred percent, which means that not a single child of this age group was found unenrolled in these states as of September 30th, 2020, for which the UDISE+ data is the latest available. However, only five states, namely Assam, Delhi, Mizoram, Manipur, and Meghalaya, reported a hundred percent NER at the elementary level of education. However, none of the major states barring a few like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Telangana, and Uttarakhand, are near achieving universalization shortly.

Though small in size, the lowest NER in 2021-22 is observed in the case of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (64.8 percent), Ladakh (62.3 percent), and Lakshadweep (70.3 percent), all of which suggest that a good number of children aged between 6 to 13+ years are yet to be enrolled in elementary classes. The adjusted NER, as well as the age-specific enrolment rates in these states, are also found to be low, which suggests that concerted efforts are required to bring all remaining children under the umbrella of education for which they need to locate them and provide special training to make them sit in the age-appropriate grades.

Below we also look at the enrolment ratios at the secondary and higher secondary levels of education.

Table 4: Enrolment Ratio at Elementary Level, 2021-22

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 6 to 13 Years
A & N Islands	69.2	64.8	68.7	68.8
Andhra Pradesh	100.1	88.9	96.9	96.9
Arunachal Pradesh	109.9	93.3	100.0	100.0
Assam	109.8	100.0	100.0	100.0
Bihar	96.2	90.4	97.0	97.0
Chandigarh	88.5	80.7	84.6	84.6
Chhattisgarh	95.9	87.7	90.7	90.8
Dadra and Nagar Haveli*	89.8	84.4	87.3	87.3
Delhi	121.3	100.0	100.0	100.0
Goa	91.1	82.4	86.9	86.9
Gujarat	92.4	82.4	89.0	89.0
Haryana	103.2	89.7	97.7	97.7
Himachal Pradesh	106.0	92.7	100.0	100.0
Jammu and Kashmir	90.1	76.6	84.3	84.3
Jharkhand	97.0	89.3	94.4	94.4
Karnataka	107.1	99.5	100.0	100.0
Kerala	101.0	91.8	100.0	100.0
Ladakh	74.3	62.3	67.8	67.8
Lakshadweep	73.2	70.3	71.2	71.2
Madhya Pradesh	88.7	77.5	81.5	81.5
Maharashtra	104.3	97.3	100.0	100.0
Manipur	117.6	100.0	100.0	100.0
Meghalaya	155.7	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mizoram	137.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
Nagaland	87.3	76.4	80.3	80.3
Odisha	95.4	85.6	93.0	93.1
Puducherry	77.0	68.0	76.9	76.9
Punjab	109.6	95.3	99.2	99.2
Rajasthan	101.8	88.1	93.7	93.7
Sikkim	92.9	79.8	85.2	85.2
Tamil Nadu	98.8	90.0	99.5	99.5
Telangana	110.2	98.4	100.0	100.0
Tripura	109.1	100.0	100.0	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	98.1	87.0	94.0	94.0
Uttarakhand	113.2	98.9	100.0	100.0
West Bengal	108.5	100.0	100.0	100.0
India	100.1	90.5	96.5	96.5

Source: UDISE+ 2021-22 * Including Daman & Diu

Secondary Level

Irrespective of the types of enrolment ratio, the same in the case of secondary and higher secondary levels of education indicates that a good number of children corresponding to age groups 15 to 16 and 16 to 17 years are yet to enrol in the corresponding classes (Table 5 & 6). However, few children of these age groups might be enrolled in the below or even higher levels of education.

Not only the NER but also the GER, both at the secondary and higher secondary levels of education, is still very low to attain the status of universal school education by 2030, as specified in the NEP 2020 and reaffirmed in SDG 4 on education all of which shows India's commitment towards achieving the goal of universal school enrolment.

To move towards universalization, not only are the remaining children required to be enrolled, but the transition rate, especially from elementary to secondary and further from secondary to higher secondary levels of education, must be further improved, which are respectively 88.81 and 78.41 percent in 2021-22.

The necessary condition to move towards universalization is to ensure that all aged-6-year children are enrolled. How do we know the percentage of children of this age who are currently enrolled? What indicator is used to know the participation of age-6 children? Do children enter the system at the prescribed age, i.e., six years? Unfortunately, in India, currently, we do not analyze the participation of age-6 children even though the data to compute relevant indicators available in the ready-to-use form. The gross or net entry/admission/intake rate is rarely presented in the state or district annual plans currently being formulated across the country. Off late, the UDISE+ now has information not only on enrolment in Grade I but also on new entrants and repeaters in Grade I with or without pre-school experience. It is hoped that the 2022-23 UDISE+ data will also present indicators concerning entry rate and other indicators necessitated because of the recent structural changes in school education.

Higher Secondary Level

The enrolment ratio at the higher secondary level of education, presented in Table 6, reveals that the age-specific enrolment ratio in the age group 16 to 17 years is 42.4 percent indicating that 57.6 percent of the total children of this age group are currently unenrolled. It is quite possible that a few of these children were previously registered but dropped out of the system before completing the education cycle. Those who could meet a few of them could not be able to transit from one level to another, which is also visible in the corresponding dropout and transition from secondary to higher secondary level of education. On the other hand, it is heartening to observe that the age-specific enrolment ratio at this level in the case of many states is higher in the case of girls than their counterpart boys.

Table 5: Enrolment Ratio at Secondary Level, 2021-22

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment: Ratio: 15 to 16 Years
A & N Islands	68.6	46.2	60.4	67.8
Andhra Pradesh	85.4	50.4	68.7	74.8
Arunachal Pradesh	66.5	37.3	51.8	62.9
Assam	74.5	48.6	57.7	64.3
Bihar	64.9	34.6	50.6	52.4
Chandigarh	90.1	61.4	76.4	90.5
Chhattisgarh	78.3	55.1	66.8	77.1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	75.0	48.4	62.2	77.1
Delhi	111.2	71.6	90.9	100.0
Goa	83.0	56.8	66.9	76.4
Gujarat	75.2	45.4	63.0	66.7
Haryana	94.7	52.4	78.2	88.8
Himachal Pradesh	94.1	53.6	88.4	92.9
Jammu and Kashmir	60.5	31.	45.9	49.9
Jharkhand	68.4	41.3	53.6	60.1
Karnataka	94.7	66.8	75.8	79.1
Kerala	97.9	59.5	86.8	89.8
Ladakh	58.8	29.9	43.2	52.1
Lakshadweep	63.3	51.7	59.9	65.5
Madhya Pradesh	70.0	41.8	54.5	64.5
Maharashtra	93.7	63.1	74.1	87.7
Manipur	76.0	60.	68.5	74.1
Meghalaya	85.1	47.2	52.5	85.7
Mizoram	93.4	51.7	63.9	89.9
Nagaland	62.2	36.4	41.6	55.1
Odisha	80.3	49.4	64.6	66.8
Puducherry	76.1	40.8	66.6	67.8
Punjab	95.1	52.5	64.6	93.6
Rajasthan	79.2	44.2	66.4	79.6
Sikkim	89.1	44.4	57.6	75.6
Tamil Nadu	95.6	58.1	90.4	91.3
Telangana	94.1	59.8	77.2	88.5
Tripura	81.3	68.1	72.2	77.5
Uttar Pradesh	69.3	33.8	56.0	62.2
Uttarakhand	89.6	49.1	77.5	87.4
West Bengal	88.2	69.4	72.7	89.9
India	79.6	47.9	64.7	72.8

Source: UDISE+ 2021-22 * Including Daman & Diu

Table 6: Enrolment Ratio at Higher Secondary Level: 2021-22

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	ASER: Age 16 to 17 Years		
			Boys	Girls	Total
A & N Islands	65.8	40.8	45.4	51.5	48.2
Andhra Pradesh	56.7	35.9	40.7	40.9	40.8
Arunachal Pradesh	53.7	31.2	38.3	41.3	39.8
Assam	40.1	26.7	30.6	34.9	32.7
Bihar	35.9	16.7	20.3	20.9	20.6
Chandigarh	81.7	56.9	66.3	74.7	69.8
Chhattisgarh	68.1	46.8	53.3	61.9	57.5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	54.9	33.9	40.7	57.8	47.4
Delhi	94.9	59.2	72.6	83.4	77.5
Goa	73.7	51.1	58.4	62.7	60.4
Gujarat	48.2	28.6	32.8	32.1	32.4
Haryana	75.5	41.3	53.00	50.0	51.7
Himachal Pradesh	94.1	54.5	58.3	60.0	59.1
Jammu and Kashmir	53.2	30.2	34.8	34.2	34.5
Jharkhand	46.4	26.9	32.5	36.5	34.4
Karnataka	56.6	42.0	44.3	46.4	45.3
Kerala	85.0	54.8	55.2	59.4	57.2
Ladakh	49.4	30.3	40.6	37.5	39.0
Lakshadweep	62.4	47.9	59.1	52.6	55.7
Madhya Pradesh	51.3	30.4	42.4	40.9	41.7
Maharashtra	71.5	48.1	62.6	61.3	62.0
Manipur	69.9	56.5	59.9	60.5	60.2
Meghalaya	46.0	24.8	46.7	57.8	52.1
Mizoram	61.3	35.6	58.2	65.7	61.9
Nagaland	35.8	21.0	31.2	37.0	34.0
Odisha	43.6	25.4	27.1	29.5	28.3
Puducherry	68.7	40.0	39.4	44.8	42.0
Punjab	82.1	44.9	71.6	72.1	71.9
Rajasthan	70.4	38.4	52.9	48.2	50.7
Sikkim	64.2	32.2	54.4	58.6	56.5
Tamil Nadu	81.5	48.9	48.4	51.5	49.9
Telangana	64.8	41.0	52.4	50.3	51.3
Tripura	56.3	47.1	49.4	56.7	52.9
Uttar Pradesh	50.7	24.8	32.1	30.0	31.1
Uttarakhand	78.8	42.7	51.3	53.6	52.4
West Bengal	62.0	46.0	53.2	67.8	60.4
India	57.6	34.2	41.9	42.9	42.4

Source: UDISE+ 2021-22 * Including Daman & Diu

Further, the GER at higher secondary level in the case of eight states is below 50 percent, and another eleven states below 70 percent in 2020-21. Except Delhi (94.9 percent), none of the other states could touch 90 percent; even in one of the most educationally advanced states, namely Kerala, only 85 percent, including the overage and underage students, were found to be enrolled in higher secondary grades all which suggest that the quantum of the unfinished task is challenging for which not only the remaining children are required to be registered, but at the same time the efficiency of the school education sector need to improve significantly. In this regard, it may be noticed that the NER at this level of education in the case of the two most populous states, namely Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, is below 25 percent, which further indicates the quantum of the unfinished task. The net enrolment ratio is also highest in Delhi (59.2 percent) and the lowest, 16.7 percent, in Bihar. Maybe the state governments are aware of this dismal status of school education in the state and are initiating corrective measures through the annual work plan under the aegis of the ongoing flagship, the *Samagra Shiksha* program.

Concluding Observations

The variety of enrolment ratios analysed in the present note for the year 2021-22 beyond doubt indicates that India is far from attaining the status of universal school education; however, with a little push, it can quickly move towards universal primary enrolment. Despite the decline in the child population (Table 7), the net enrolment ratio, irrespective of the level of school education, declined in 2021-22, which is a cause for concern. Enrolment, in absolute terms, further reveals an erratic pattern full of ups and downs, which raises the serious question of the reliability and consistency of data (Table 8).

Despite improved participation, most children still do not enter the system at the prescribed age, which is visible in the adjusted NER and the age-specific enrolment ratios. As we move towards universalization, children will enter the system at the specified age, i.e., six years. Currently, the net entry rate is only 45 percent; this means that only 45 percent of the total enrolment in Grade I enters the system at the prescribed age of 6. Attaining a 100 percent net entry rate is necessary; however, the same is conspicuously absent in most of the annual work plans, in the absence of which the quantum of the unfinished task is not possible to judge.

Enrolling all the children is a necessary condition but the sufficient condition to gain universalization is to ensure that all those who enter into the system must retain and move from one level to another; the transition and retention rates further reveal that at the current level, significant improvement is needed without losing time. The need of the hour is to identify the out-of-school, dropped-out, and never enrolled children on an annual basis and make them sit in the age-appropriate grade. A mechanism must be developed for regularly collecting information on out-of-school children; we cannot continue with the ad-hoc arrangement.

Because of changes in school structure as specified in the NEP 2020, new indicators are required to develop for the preparatory and foundation stages; a few of the existing indicators also need to be re-looked at.

Table 7: Age-specific Projected Child Population

Year	6 to 10 Years			11 to 13 years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019-20	62093000	56354000	118446400	37587800	34760400	72346800
2020-21	62147000	55998000	118144200	37063400	34386200	71448400
2021-22	62201000	55642000	117842000	36539000	34012000	70550000
Change over the Previous Year			-302200	-898400		
	14 to 15 Years		Total	16 to 17 Years		Total
2020-21			48900200			50056400
2021-22			48425000			49647000
Change over the Previous Year			-475200	-409400		

Source: UDISE+ 2019-20, 2020-21 & 2021-22, DoSE&L, Ministry of Education

The focus of plan formulation must shift from the state to the district level, for which the district planning teams must be re-constituted and thoroughly trained in plan formulation. Like, the DPEP, the *Samagra Shiksha* must also have a planning module of its own; we cannot afford to continue the formulation of annual plans based on the EXCEL Tables missing the academic flavour and participation of all concerned.

Still, we do not have school-specific plans, which, as envisaged at the time of the launch of SSA in 2001, were supposed to provide essential input towards formulating block plans. The block education plan needs to see the light of day in the real sense. The apex education planning institutes, such as NIEPA, must look into the current planning methodology and process of plan formulation and suggest mid-course corrections.

Table 8: Enrolment, All-India Level, 2017-18 to 2021-22

Management	2017-18	%age to Total Enrolment	2019-20	%age to Total Enrolment	2020-21	%age to Total Enrolment	2021-22	Change Over Previous Year	%age to Total Enrolment
Government	131771929	52.5	128142596	51.06	132425644	52.18	140498718	8073074	54.94
Aided Management	27988493	11.15	27014238	10.76	26446332	10.42	26647860	201528	10.42
Private Unaided	83311659	33.19	88913012	35.43	88089385	34.71	82450325	-5639060	32.24
Others	7917112	3.15	6901837	2.75	6843100	2.7	6143720	-699380	2.40
Total I to XII	250989193	100	250971683	100	253804461	100	255740623	1936162	100

Source: UDISE+ It may be recalled that the highest ever total enrolment was 26,05,96,960 reported in 2015-16.