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# Educational Development in Telangana

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Progress, Issues, Challenges and Policy Concerns

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## ***Research Cell on Education***

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# Educational Development in Telangana: Progress, Issues, Challenges and Policy Concerns

*Venkatanarayana Motkuri and E. Revathi<sup>‡</sup>*

## I Context

The formation of separate state of Telangana raised certain expectations on different dimensions of development including social, economical and educational ones in the state. After prolonged struggles and sacrifices for almost six decades, people of Telangana realised a separate state. The state policy of social and inclusive development in realising the developmental goals in general and expectations its people in particular is something that the state has to strive for. Complacency on the achievements whatsoever so far would be a roadblock in going forward. There is a great need in the state of Telangana addressing many issues and challenges in many aspects of development in the state. Education development that would eventually advances the other dimensions of development is one among them.

Although social and economic development in a country or state influence its educational development to a certain extent, a determined state policy and resource allocations for educational development can make transform the both the other dimensions of development. Recognising the crucial role of education in economic development, social scientists, beginning with classical economist like Adam Smith and J. S. Mill, have been advocating the state policy and role as a prime mover in this respect. Research studies have been observing private and social returns for education along with its positive externalities in terms of increases in labour productivity, income earnings, and diffusion of technologies and skills (see Psacharopoulos, 1985; 2006; Psacharopoulos and Patrinos, 2004). Human capital and capabilities theories have established instrumental role and intrinsic value of education in economic, social and human development. Human capital encompassing educational levels and skills, found to be an important source of economic growth along with the conventional factors, labour and capital (see Shultz, 1961; 1964; Dennison, 1967; Baro, 1997; Baro and Sala-i-Martin, 2004). Hence, its importance can be seen in the perspectives of human capital and human development along with that of human rights. In this respect the universalising elementary education was one of the eight goals of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and carried forwarded in the post-2015 development agenda. More comprehensively the quality education is one among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Its instrumental role is transforming the future workforce into skilled one and increasing the labour productivity and increasing the earning capacities of individuals. Investment in education can also break the cycle of intergenerational poverty transmission. The structural transformation of economies through different phases of industrial development or revolutions

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in developed countries is achieved with educational development. Educational development has pivotal role in the changing circumstances of economies in the context of globalisation, transformations into technology-intensive, knowledge-based and digitising economies with electronic transfers and transactions. As it is said now the globe on the verge of experiencing fourth industrial revolution. The first one began with use of water and steam power that mechanised the production, the second one had electric power that created the mass production and the third one with electronics and information technology that introduced automation in the industrial production<sup>1</sup>. The fourth one is building on the previous one and characterised by fusion of digital, biological and physical worlds. The new era of knowledge based economies have already begun unfolding and technologies including that of artificial intelligence, quantum computing, robotics and nano-technologies along with concurrent advancements in technologies in the spheres of physical, mechanical, digital and biological sciences are going to determine future of the economies and their systems of production and organisation. Although its unfolding and the transformation that it will bring in systems of production and organisation is yet to be known, one can be sure that educational development would be critical factor in the process, in getting ready to embrace it and benefit from the same. Illiterate workforce and that with poor educational levels may not be able to sustain themselves and support such an economies with educational levels and skills sets that it demands. Education policy and strategies at the national levels as well in the state must concern with the future of workforce and economy and hence the social and economic development.

## II Educational Development in India: Policy Context

In India despite a remarkable progress since independence, its achievements in expected outcomes of educational development in the country has considerable shortages. The century old demand for free and compulsory education, at least for children below 14 years of age that shaped the Gokhale Bill in 1911 (that was passed in 1913) is yet to be realised. The British Government during the pre-independence period despite introducing mass education, they had certain limitations as well as interests of their own in expanding the same. Post-independence, the Government of India has initiated certain important policy initiatives at the national level in respect of educational reconstruction. The University Education Commission (1948-49) and the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) were to review and recommend an educational policy for the independent India. Meanwhile the Constitution of India as a directive policy induced a goal of universalisation of primary education with compulsory schooling for all the children below 14 years of age (Article 45). Such a goal was set to be achieved in a decade period after the Constitution came into force. The failure to achieve any such goals by the end of third Five-Year Plan, led to setting up the Indian Education Commission (1964-66), known as Kothari Commission, to review comprehensively the education system in India and recommend a policy. Therefore, the first National Policy on Education 1968 evolved based on the Commission's recommendations for radical reconstruction of education system with an emphasis on quality.

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<sup>1</sup> See Schwab, Klaus (2016). "The Fourth Industrial Revolution: What it means and how it respond", World Economic Forum, 14<sup>th</sup> January. Accessible at <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/>.

A review at the end of the sixth Five-Year Plan revealed that despite certain progress and implementation of common structure (10 + 2 + 3) of education across many states, the 1968 policy could not get translated into appropriate implantation strategy. As a result the problems of access, quality, expansion, and resource meagreness got accumulated. The shortcomings of the previous policy along with the emerging challenges and social needs made imperative for the Government of India to introduce National System of Education through its new National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986 that was announced in the budget session of the year. For the Programme of Action (PoA), 23 Task Forces (subject-specific) were constituted immediately and they had submitted their report in the same year. The PoA in fact conceived the scheme of Operation Black Board (OBB) which was launched in 1987, to provide minimum essential facilities to all primary schools in the country. Further, the National Literacy Mission for adult education and literacy was initiated in 1988. Now re-casted it as Sakshara Bharat in 2009 while emphasizing the female literacy.

A Committee (Chairman: Acharya Ramamurthi) to review NPE 1986 and to recommend modifications, if any, was setup in May 1990 and that submitted its report in December of the same year. Pending the Parliament discussion on Ramamurthi Committee report, the Government of India initiated in July 1991 another Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) Committee on Policy (Chaired by Dr. B. Janadhan Reddy) that submitted its report in January 1992 recommending small changes in NPE 1986 but considerable modifications to POA 1986. Accordingly, the revised NPE was presented to Parliament in May 1992. Further, a Steering Committee along with 22 Task Forces were setup to revise the POA. The CABE endorsed the revised POA in August 1992. The District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) as a centrally sponsored scheme (CSS) launched in 1994 is part of POA 1992. While adopting the 'area specific approach' with district as a unit of planning DPEP was to revitalise primary education system with a goal of universalisation of the same. Subsequently, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) as a CSS was initiated in 2001 while taking it forward the obligation to achieve the Universalisation of Elementary Education.

Meanwhile certain judicial reviews of the Apex body have also gave further impetus to consolidating the policy concerns and perspectives on education in India. Particularly, the Supreme Court of India in a judgement in July 1992 and in another judgement in February 1993 held that education is a fundamental right<sup>2</sup> which had been a long standing demand. The second judgement in 1993, however, limits the right to basic education and disagrees on the part that of 1992 judgement which applies to all the levels of education. In another instance, the Supreme Court of India in 2001 directed all state governments to implement the Mid-Day

<sup>2</sup> The Supreme Court of India, Bench consisting of Kuldip Singh (J), in *Miss Mohini Jain vs State of Karnataka and Others* on 30 July, 1992: 1992 AIR 1858, 1992 SCR (3) 658. Said judgement says "We hold that every citizen has a 'right to education' under the Constitution. The State is under an obligation to establish educational institutions to enable the citizens to enjoy the said right. The State may discharge its obligation through state-owned or state-recognised educational institutions". See at <https://indiankanoon.org/doc/40715/>. Also in another judgement related to *J.P. Unnikrishnan and others Vs. State of Andhra Pradesh and Others*, on 4th February 1993, 1993 AIR 217, 1993 SCR (1) 594, 1993 SCC (1) 645, JT 1993 (1) 474, 1993 SCALE (1)290. The Constitutional Bench of the Supreme Court in this case held that the right to basic education is implied by the fundamental right to life (Article 21) when read in conjunction with the directive principle on education (Article 41). In a subsequent case *M.C. Mehta v State of Tamil Nadu and Others* (1996), 6 SCC 756; AIR 1997 SC 699, its judgement stated that Article 45 of Indian Constitution had acquired the status of a fundamental right with judgement in *Unni Krishnan* case.

Meal Scheme<sup>3</sup>. It insisted that every child in all the Government and Government assisted Primary School should be provided with a prepared mid-day-meal. The a minimum content of meal specified is 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days.

Post-1992/93 judgements of the Supreme Court, discussions and debates involving various sections of society including civil society bodies, social scientists, educationist and policy makers led to a serious thought to make basic education a fundamental right as the Apex Court held. As a result, Constitution (83rd Amendment) Bill 1997 was initially introduced in Parliament but as it was sent to scrutiny of the Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on Human Resource Development along with Law Commission of India (LCI), any action on it was delayed and it was again re-introduced in Parliament as a Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill 2001. Finally, a decade after the 1992 judgement, the Constitution (86<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Act 2002 was passed in Parliament that inserted Article 21-A saying that the free and compulsory education for children of 6 to 14 years of age is a fundamental right. It is now part of constitutional provision of right to life (Article 21). The provision for compulsory schooling of children was previously made under Article 45 as a part of the directive principles of state policy.

The constitutional provision of education as fundamental right through an amendment however required a legislation for implementing it. But seven years after the amendment only it was realised in the form of the Rights of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (known as Right to Education – RTE) Act 2009, a legislative action with the enactment guaranteeing such right. Recently, the Government of India in 2017 amended Rule 23(2) of Right to Education (RTE) Act making it compulsory for all states to codify expected levels of learning for students in Classes I to VIII, i.e. what should be the learning level they achieve in different subjects.

With the growing needs of the economy and society, and following the reasonable progress made under the SSA, the Government of India initiated in 2008 the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) as a centrally sponsored scheme (CSS) with a mandate universalization of secondary education (secondary and higher secondary). Further, recently Government of India introduced Integrated Scheme for School Education (ISSE) or Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SmSA) 2018 subsuming the SSA and RMSA along with integrating pre-school education. ***The third National Educational Policy 2020 concerned with pre-school education to higher and technical education is just rolled out.***

Further, one of the recent policy initiatives is related to pre-schooling which has been neglected for a long time in the country. Although the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) initiated in 1974 on pilot basis and that scaled up over a period and that is universalised the end of 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan by establishing ICDS centre and/or Anganwadi Centre (AWCs) to provide six-component package of ICDS services. Nutritional aspects have been dominant services in these centres. Pre-school education has not get such priority as it required. But beginning with the National Curriculum Framework 2005, then the National Early Childhood

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<sup>3</sup> In an interim order dated 28 November, 2001.

Care and Education (ECCE) Policy 2013 followed by National ECCE Curriculum Framework 2014, Integrated Scheme for School Education (ISSE) or Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SmSA) 2018 and the third National Education Policy (NPE) 2020, all they have been emphasizing on pre-schooling of 3 to 6 years old children. However, pre-schooling is not yet been brought under RTE. In fact the draft NPE 2019 has recommended but the policy (NPE 2020) rolled out has not consider the recommendation. Despite that the NPE 2020 is emphasising on the pre-school education as an important determinant factor.

Also, the higher education along with technical and vocational education has been on the national policy agenda for a long time, ever since the pre-independence period. With the establishment of three universities (Bombay, Madras and Calcutta) in 1857 in three principal provinces (Presidencies), the British Government in India during the pre-independence period laid certain foundation for higher education. They were to train the native people who were to help construction works of the British in India. Subsequently few more universities and colleges came up. The technical education in India during the British regime had begun during the first half 19<sup>th</sup> Century with industrial schools<sup>4</sup> which were mostly attached to ordinance factories. The first Engineering College was in 1847 at Roorkee and another three such colleges in mid-1850s in three principal Presidencies. Over a period, some of the universities began imparting engineering training or courses. India had a total of 20 universities and around 500 colleges at the time of independence. Post-independence, all such institutions imparting general and technical education have grown multi-fold.

The University Education Commission (1948-49) was appointed to understand the issues/problems and recommend a policy reconstructing the university education in India<sup>5</sup>. The Bhore Committee (1943-46) report accepted in 1952 was also instrumental in reconstruction of medical education<sup>6</sup> in India. The University Grants Commission (UGC) was established in 1953 to oversee higher education institutions and it consists of 15 autonomous bodies<sup>7</sup> to oversee institutions of different subjects (agriculture, medicine, technology etc.,) at higher levels of learning. In the context of the industrialisation plan priorities and growing economic needs of educated, skilled and professional workforce, the review of progress in early 1960s indicated certain lacunas in the education system. In this regard the NPE 1968 based on the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) recommendations was rolled out to reconstruct the education system in India that includes higher and technical education. Subsequently the new NPE 1986 emphasised on quality through consolidation and expansion

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<sup>4</sup> First of such schools were established by 1825 in Calcutta and Bombay and another one at Gundy (Madras) in 1842 and a school training the overseers in 1854 at Poona. <https://mhrd.gov.in/technical-education>

<sup>5</sup> The Commission had emphasised on quality and standard of higher (university) education and human resources for the same along with professional education, higher education facilities for women and establishing rural universities.

<sup>6</sup> The *Bhore Committee* was set up by the British Government in India in 1943 and it submitted its report in 1946. It was to understand the health conditions in India and policy. Sir Joseph William Bhore was the Chairman. The Report was finally accepted by the Government of independent India in 1952. Certain major changes it recommended in medical education was a three months training in preventive and social medicine to prepare "social physicians"; abolition of the Licentiate in Medical Practice qualifications; a single national standard Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MB BS) degree; establishment of a major central institute for post-graduate medical education and research. Although all the recommendation of report were not implemented, it influenced subsequent policy in this regard. The All-India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) was established in 1956.

<sup>7</sup> Like All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Medical Council of India (MCI), Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR).

of facilities and measures to protect the system from degradation. To ensure quality of the educational process in Universities and Colleges in general education, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) was established by the UGC in 1994. Whereas for technical education the AICTE in 1994 had set up the National Board of Accreditation (NBA) and for agricultural education, ICAR had set up Accreditation Board (AB) in 1996. Recently, the Government of India had initiated the Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) as a CSS in 2013 providing strategic funding to state levels institutions. The NEP 2020 just rolled out intended to consolidating and restructuring higher education system in India.

There is a remarkable growth in terms of number of universities and colleges since independence and thereby India has emerged third largest country in the globe in terms of size of the higher education (next to USA and China). India has a higher education system offering almost all the subjects and specialisations. The institutional framework consists of central and state universities, deemed and/or private universities, institutions of national importance, and autonomous and non-autonomous or affiliated colleges. As Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) noted there are 993 universities, 39931 colleges and 10725 standalone institutions in India<sup>8</sup> in 2018-19. More than one-third (38.8%) of the universities and three-fourths (77.1%) of colleges along with standalone institutions<sup>9</sup> (75.5%) in India are privately managed which consist of two-third of enrolment (66.4%). In terms of college density, it is 28 per lakh of eligible population (i.e. 18-23 years of age) in India. With the average enrolment per college at 693, the gross enrolment ratio (GER) in the eligible population is 26 percent. India targeted for 30 percent GER by 2020. The concern remained is quality of education and employability of the educated population.

When examined the progress and achievements in educational development, there is still a considerable shortage in achieving universalisation of primary/elementary and secondary education. As estimated in Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18, around 94 percent of school-age (6-14 years age) children in India are attending schools, leaving the other 6 percent of them out-of-school. The school/college attendance rates among 15-19 years age is 70 percent and among 20-24 years age is 23.5 percent. Around one-fourth of 15 years and above age population in India is literate, leaving the quarter of such being illiterates. Around five per cent of 15+ age population is literate with below primary education or acquired literacy skills through literacy or adult education centres. Completion rates indicates that little above the two-thirds (67.8%) of that 15+age population is literates with education levels primary and above, 56 percent of them have completed elementary (middle level) and above, 36 per cent of them have secondary and above, 22 percent of them have higher secondary and above and 11.5 percent of them have graduation and above. The population 15 years of age above is considered working-age population. Such is the educational levels of working-age population in India. In this regard, the recent Human Capital Report (2019) of the World Bank

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<sup>8</sup> There are around 882 universities (35 Central, 123 Deemed, 613 state, and 101 institutes of national importance) in India in 2017-18, more than one-third (38.7%) of them are under private management.

<sup>9</sup> They are like Polytechnics, Teacher Training institutes, Nursing and/or Paramedical colleges/institutes along with institutes having diploma courses in management in general and hotel management in particular. Also certain training institutes of various central ministries comes under this category



has shown that India is one of those many countries which are able to realise less than 50 per cent of human capital potentials of their children who will be their future workforce.

Along with quantitative expansion of education, quality of education across the levels of education has been the cause of concern policy makers. Along with access to and quality of education, disparities by location, gender and social groups is also compelling feature of Indian education system from bottom to top. In this regard, the draft of new National Education Policy 2019 has emphasized on equitable quality education along with addressing access and disparities in school and college education. The supply constraint plagued with the education system and hence educational development in India are: availability of facilities and essential infrastructure and required human resources (teachers) in the available facility. The overarching constraint is the financial resources allocation for the same. India is still spending less than half of what *Kothari Commission* recommended about 6 per cent of GDP on education. Although all the policy statements including the recent draft policy reiterate the same on the enhancement of resources to educational development but never been in action. Such constraints in the public education system manifesting the access and quality problems have led to growth of private education in the context of growing awareness, perceived value of education and educational aspirations. Unregulated growth of privatisation of education further complicating challenges of educational development while causing variations in quality of education and costing the private households budgets.

Herein what is important is that the progress, achievement or shortages in educational development of the country is a cumulative of the same across states. For federal structure of Indian polity, education was initially enlisted as a state subject in the Indian Constitution. Hence, educational development in the state had to depend on its state education policy and resource allocation for the same. Later, the Constitution (42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment) Act 1976 transferred it to the Concurrent list. Through the national level policy formulation and assisting the states through centrally sponsored scheme in order to implement such policy, the central government has certain leverage to influence the educational development across states. But, still, the state policy priority, commitment and accordingly resource allocation which determines the educational development in respective states in India. Under such circumstances, there are considerable variations across states in respect of educational development depending on the state level aspects as mentioned. Hence, educational development in the state of Telangana as well has to be viewed in this context.

### **III Education Development in Telangana**

The state of Telangana being the youngest and one of the smallest states in India contributing to little less than 3 per cent of total population in the country but more than 4.5 per cent of the country's GDP. The per capita income of the state is 1.7 times higher than national average. The performance of the state in some dimensions of development such as per capita income and economic growth seems to be impressive. But in the dimensions of educational development, there are still certain concerns as it will define and determinant factor of the future workforce.

### Adult Literacy

The literacy rate in general in Telangana is much lower than national average. The gap between the national average and that of state appears to be increasing in the second decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The literacy rate at 71.5 per cent in 2018-19 indicates that still more than one-quarter of population in the state remained illiterate (Table-1).

**Table-1: Literacy Rate (%) among 7 year and above age population in India and Telangana State**

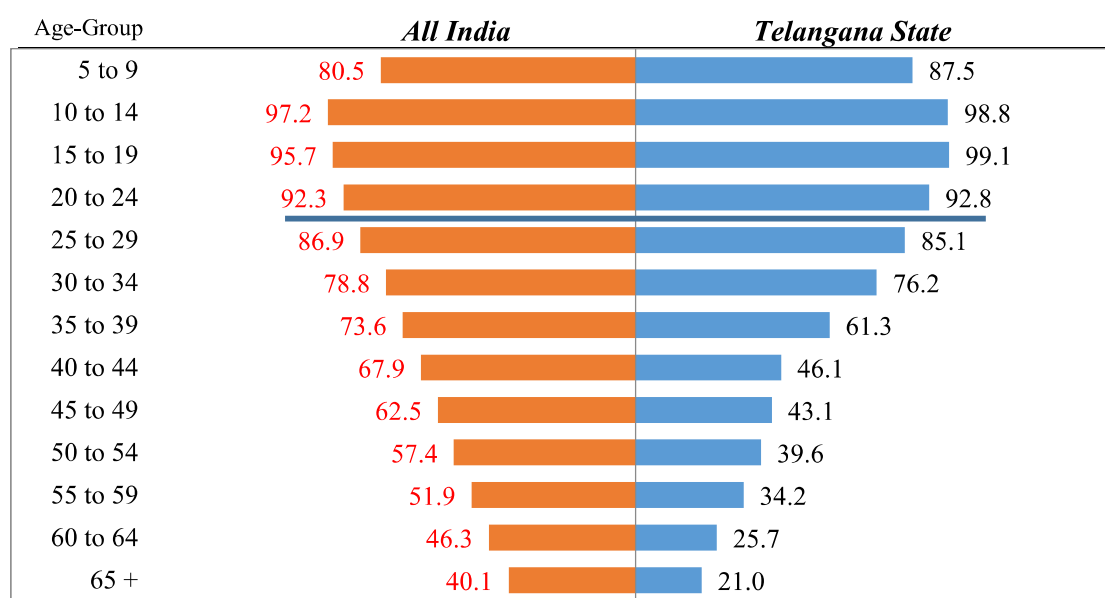
State	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011	2017-18	2018-19
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
All India	28.30	34.45	43.57	52.21	64.84	72.98	76.9	78.1
Telangana	17.34	20.70	26.49	41.30	58.00	66.54	67.9	71.5

*Note: Literacy Rate (%) among 7 years and above population.*

*Source: Census figures 1961-2011 are from Registrar General of India, rest is of PLFS-1&2, 2017-18 and 2018-19.*

The state of Telangana achievement in school attendance rate among the school and college age children (below 25 years of age) is much better during the last two decade when compared to the national average (Figure 1). More than 95 per cent of children in this age group are attending schools in Telangana and hence literacy levels in the younger groups (<25 years age) would be much better in the state. But beyond this age, literacy rate in the state is affected by cumulative effect of historical neglect of primary education in the Nizam's Hyderabad state and in the united Andhra Pradesh till 1990s.

**Figure-1: Literacy Rates (%) by Age-Group in Telangana State and at All India, 2017-18**



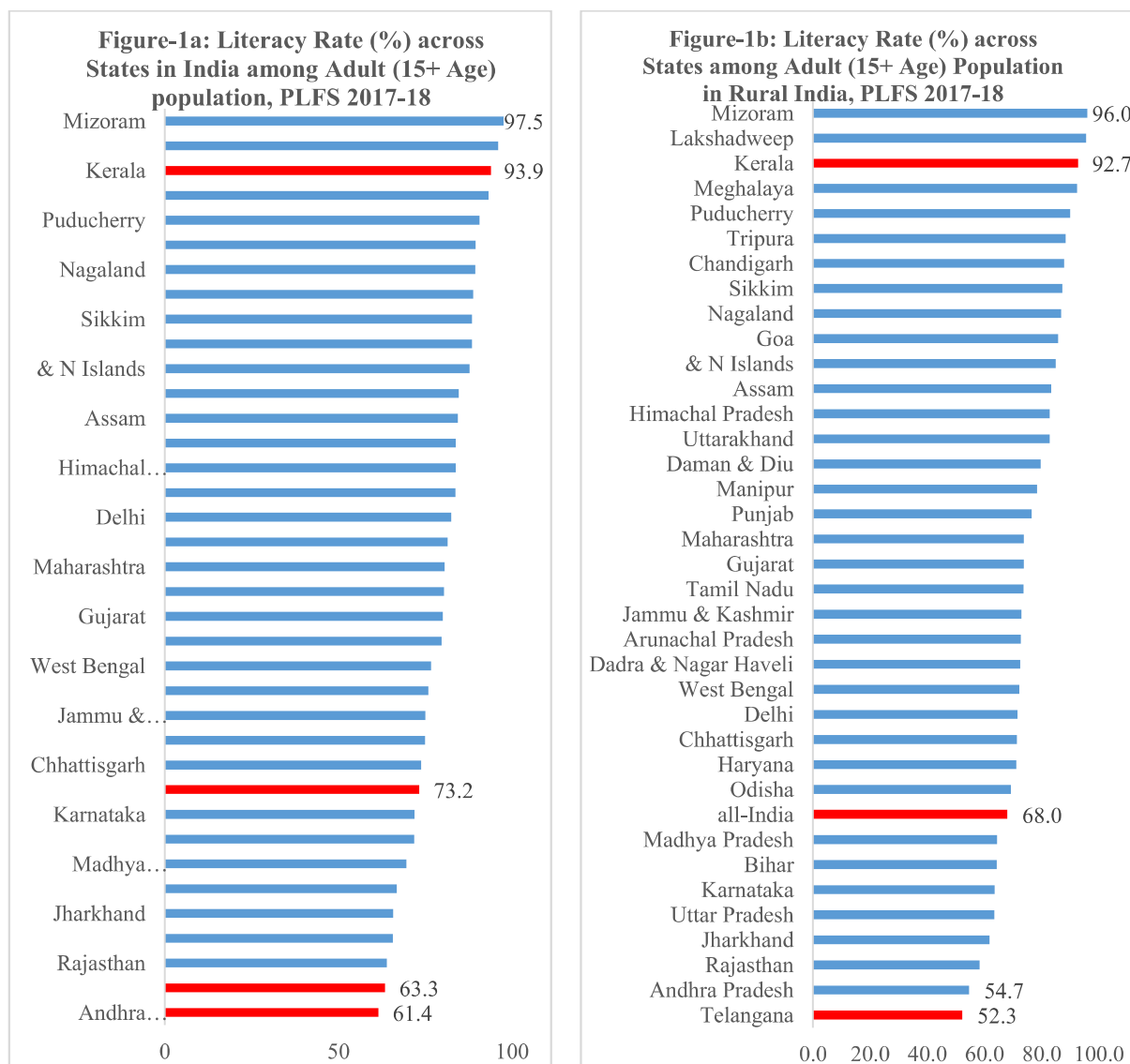
*Note: Age-Group Specific Literacy Rate (%).*

*Source: Authors' estimates using unit record data of PLFS-1, 2017-18.*

Educational development and literacy rate in Nizam's Hyderabad state before integration into Indian union was one of the lowest when compared to other princely states and provinces (Motkuri, 2016). The literacy rate in Nizam's Hyderabad state in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century

(i.e. in 1901) was around 3.0 per cent and it was less than 10 per cent<sup>10</sup> even by 1951. Most of the districts in Telangana region except Hyderabad, had literacy rate less than 8 per cent (Motkuri, 2017). The adult literacy rate (i.e. among 15 years and above age population) in Hyderabad state was 11.6 percent in 1951. Such an historical disadvantage of low literacy levels in Telangana region continued post-merging in the united Andhra Pradesh as well.

**Figure-2: Literacy Rates (%) across States in India among Adult Population (15+ Age), PLFS**



**Source:** PLFS-1, 2017-18.

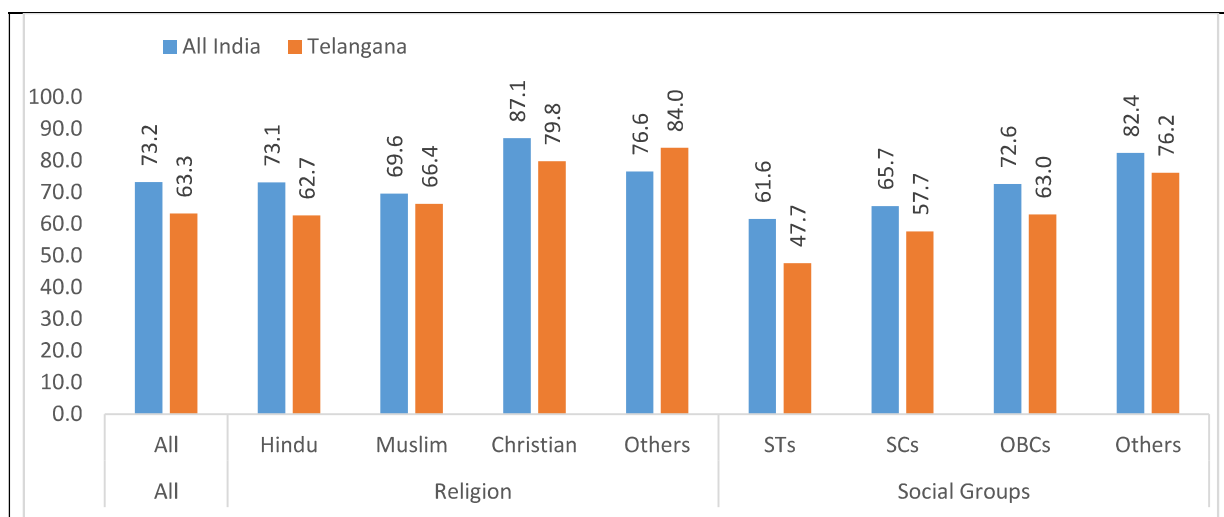
Therefore, the state of Telangana stands bottom in the ranking of the states by the status of literacy rate among the adult (15+ years of age) population. Similar is the case of residual state of Andhra Pradesh. Both the Telugu states' performance is poor and they are lagging behind even when compared to so-called BiMaRU (i.e. Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) states. It is due to historical neglect of primary education in the united Andhra

<sup>10</sup> It is to be noted that this literacy rate was with reference to total population i.e. literates divided by total population. Technically, the denominator should be population of 5 years and above or more correctly that of 7 years and above age. When we consider the 5 years above population as denominator, the literacy rate in Hyderabad state was 10.7 per cent in 1951.

Pradesh for a long-time. Certain initiatives, however, since late 1980s throughout 1990s to recent period like Operation Black Board (OBB), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) have made certain leverage for the Telugu states. But they are not able to compensate the historical backlog of illiterate population in the state. What now really needed is the adult literacy and education programmes in the state. More than one-third of the state adult (15+age) population is illiterate. The situation in rural Telangana is even worse as nearly half of its adult (15+age) population in rural areas still remained as illiterates. Adult literacy is a serious concern in the state and policy makers should pay attention to the same, initiate necessary action plan and interventions to address the illiteracy problem in the state.

The Govt of India's National Literacy Mission (NLM) launched in 1988 aiming at transforming 80 million adult illiterates in the 15-35 year age into literates and the recent recast of NLM as Sakshara Bharat that launched in 2009 appears to have not made much difference among adult illiterate population in the state. Despite the severity of the issues of illiteracy in the state in the context of emerging knowledge based economy and digitalization, serious policy level efforts are still missing in the state.

**Figure-3: Adult Literacy (%) by Religious and Social Groups in India and Telangana, 2017-18**



*Note: Adult population refers to 15 years and above age population.*

*Source: PLFS-1, 2017-18.*

Most important is the disparities across population groups. The adult literacy rate across religious and social groups in India and Telangana shows that it is lower in the state across these groups when compared to the national average. In Telangana, by religion, it appeared to be relatively low among Hindus who consists of SCs and STs, when compared to Muslims and Christians. Social group disparity in adult literacy rate is observed to be very high in the state. It is lowest among STs who have less than half of its adult population is literates. When compared to the social category 'others', adult literacy among STs is 28.5 percentage points lower, for SCs it is 18.5 percentage points lower and for OBCs such difference is 13 percentage points. Therefore, the social group disparity appears to be very severe.

### ***Current Attendance Rates***

However, there is a unique and contrasting situation as regards the performance of Telangana state in respect of current attendance rates of school- and colleges-age population. The state of Telangana is doing better in this respect, as compared to national average and other states as well (see Table 6 and Figure 3).

The current attendance rate indicates the strength and serving capacity of education system along with the performance in achieving the goals of universalisation elementary and secondary education. In this regard when examined the current attendance rate at 94.5 per cent among the 5-9 years age children, 97.8 per cent among 10-14 years age children, 83.1 per cent of 15-19 years age and 29.3 per cent of 20-24 year age population are currently attending educational institutions (school or colleges) in the Telangana state in 2017-18 (Table 6). Current attendance rates of school- and colleges-age population (i.e. 6-17 and 18-23 years age) in the state of Telangana shows that nearly 96 per cent school-age (6-17 years age) population in the state is currently attending educational institutions in 2017-18. These rates in Telangana state are higher than the national average.

However, it indicate gaps in achieving the constitutional mandate of free and compulsory education leading to universalised school attendance of 5-14 years age-group. There is a gap in achieving Universalisation of Primary, Elementary and Secondary schooling. Universalisation primary and elementary schooling is constitutional mandate since independence, and subsequent Right to Education (RTE) 2009 has made education/schooling as a fundamental right of children among 6-14 years age. Universalisation of secondary education is the objective of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) which was initiated in 2009 by Government of India and subsequently subsumed in Integrated Scheme for School Education (ISSE) which is also known Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan (SmSA).

**Table-2: Current Attendance Rates (%) by Age-Group across Religious and Social Groups in India and Telangana State, 2017-18**

Age-Groups	Religious Groups					Social Groups			
	All	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	STs	SCs	OBCs	Others
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
<b><i>All India</i></b>									
5-9	92.3	92.6	89.1	98.7	95.5	91.2	91.0	92.0	94.3
10-14	94.8	95.4	91.0	96.4	96.4	92.4	93.0	95.4	96.3
15-19	70.3	72.0	57.9	81.6	76.4	60.8	64.4	71.7	75.9
20-24	23.5	24.4	15.9	29.2	28.3	15.7	19.3	22.7	30.3
<b><i>Telangana State</i></b>									
5-9	94.5	94.7	92.7	93.0	100	86.6	96.0	96.6	92.6
10-14	97.8	97.9	96.0	96.8	100	97.2	95.1	99.0	97.1
15-19	83.1	82.9	83.7	86.7	100	71.2	82.9	83.1	91.3
20-24	29.3	29.5	30.3	15.4	39.5	15.6	19.7	29.6	48.1

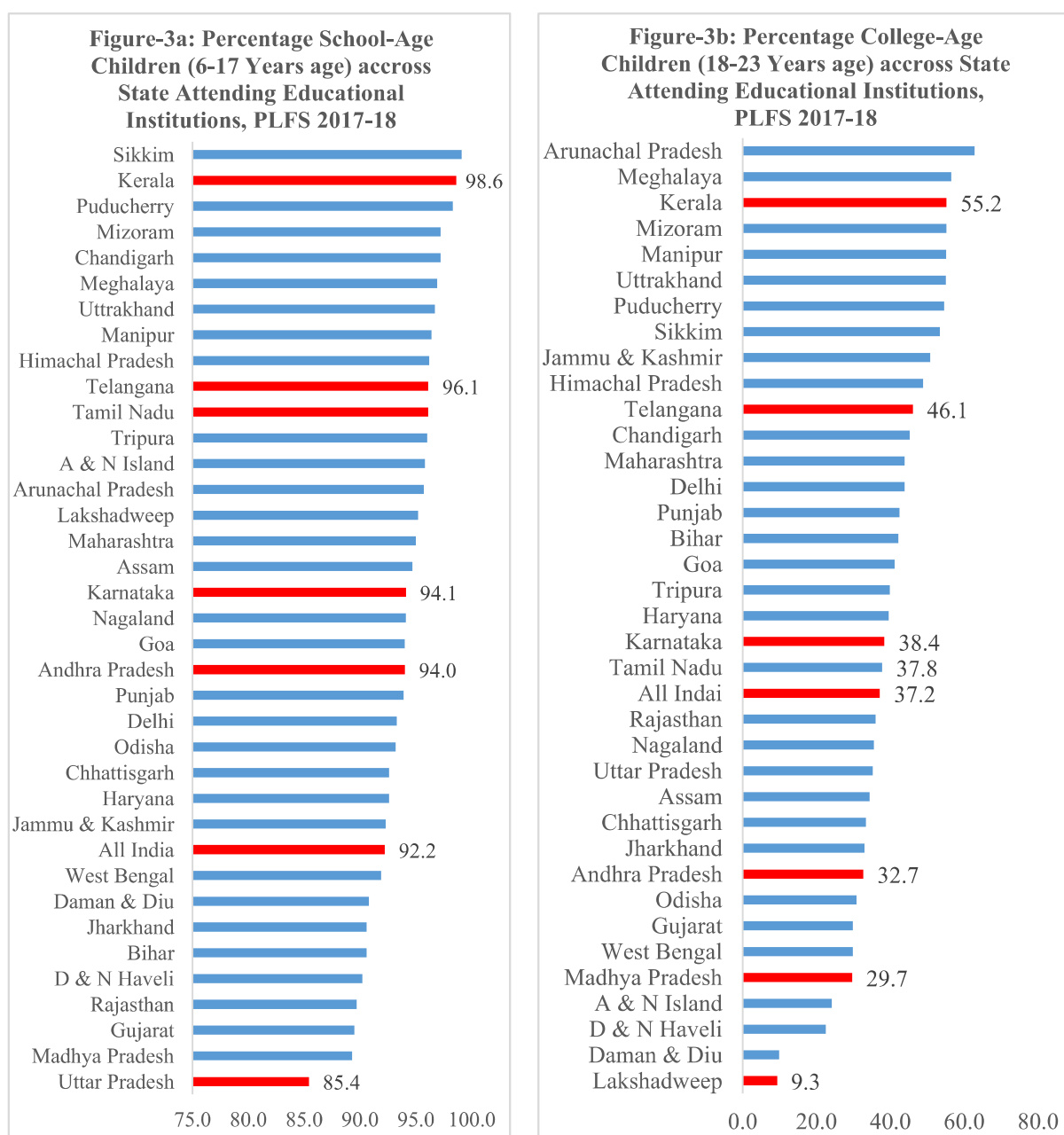
*Note:* Percentage currently attending among the children of each age-group.

*Source:* Unit Record Data of first Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS-1), 2017-18.

The current attendance rates by religious and social groups indicates that there are certain differences across such groups and they increase with age-group. It is lowest among the ST children by social group and highest among the 'other' children. Although, the current

attendance rates (5-9 years age-group) among ST children is significantly lower in Telangana state when compared all-India average for ST children, it is opposite among 10-14 and 15-19 years children.

**Figure-3: Attendance Rates among School and College – Age Population across States in India**



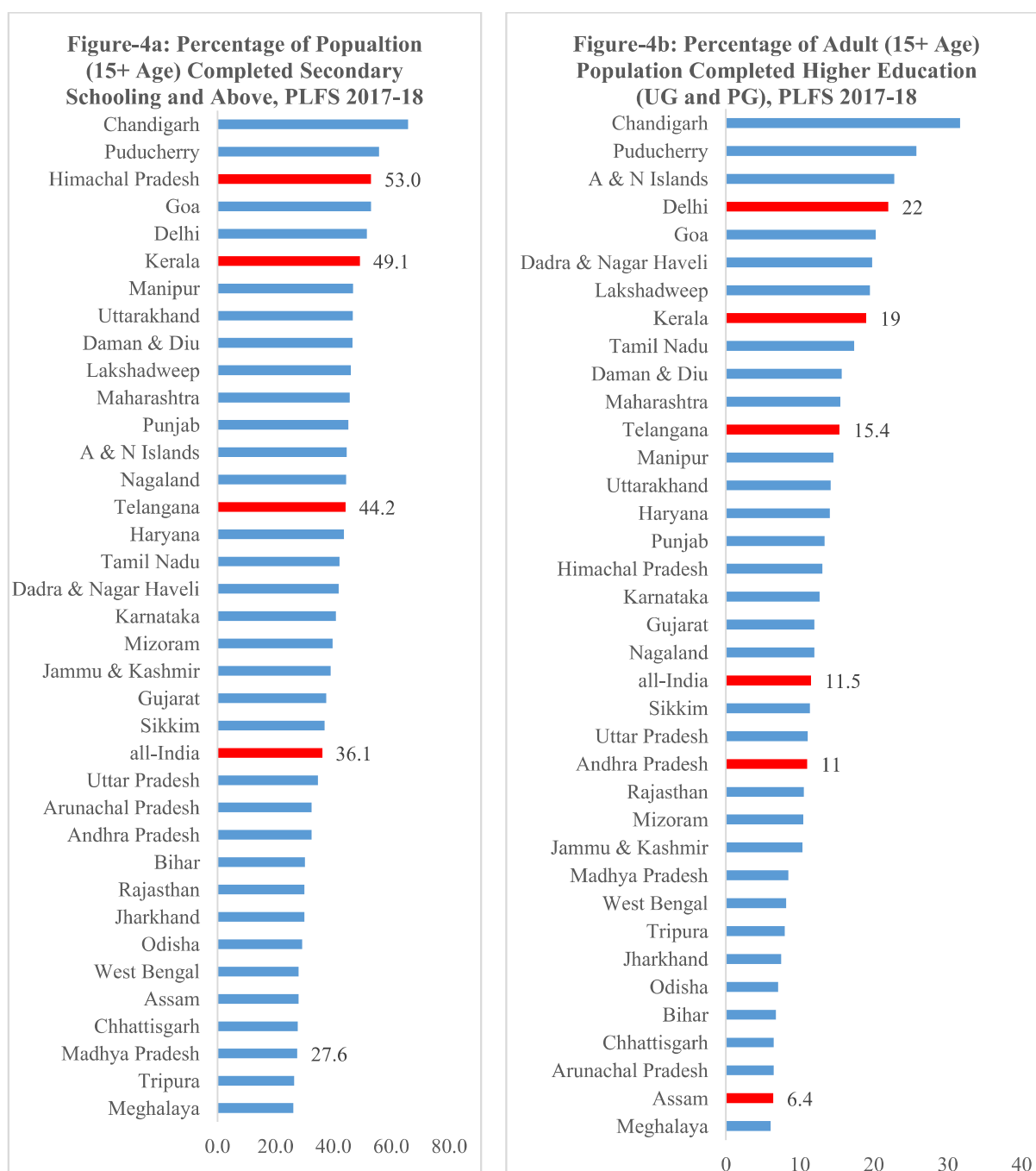
Source: PLFS I, 2017-18.

### Completion Rates by Levels of Education

When examined the secondary and higher education completion rates among the adult (15+ age) population, the state of Telangana is doing better across states in India. Nearly, 44 per cent adult population in the state had completed secondary and above education levels in 2017-18. In respect of higher education, nearly 15 per cent adult population in the state are

graduates (UG or PG). Further, nearly 46 per cent of college-age (18-23 Years age) population in the state is currently attending educational institutions (colleges).

**Figure-4: School and College Completion Rate among Adult (15+ Age) Population across States in India, PLFS 2017-18**



Source: PLFS 2017-18

In terms of completion rates by level of education state of Telangana appears to performing better when compared the national average especially secondary and above levels of education (Table 3). Same pattern can be observed across social and religious groups when the performance in the state of Telangana is compared with national average. The completion rates by levels of education across religious and social groups within the state of Telangana shows that there are certain differences across such groups and they increase level of education (Table 3).

**Table-3: Educational Levels among Adult Population (15 years and above age) across Religious and Social Groups in India and Telangana State, 2017-18**

Indicator	Religious Groups					Social Groups			
	All	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Others	STs	SCs	OBCs	Others
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
<b>1. Illiteracy (%)</b>									
All India	26.8	26.9	30.4	12.9	23.4	38.4	34.3	27.4	17.6
Telangana	36.7	37.3	33.6	20.2	16.0	52.3	42.3	37.0	23.8
<b>2. Percentage Below Primary</b>									
All India	5.3	5.0	7.3	6.0	4.8	7.2	5.5	5.1	4.8
Telangana	3.0	2.9	3.3	6.8	2.4	2.2	3.1	3.0	3.1
<b>3. Percentage Completed Primary</b>									
All India	67.8	68.1	62.5	81.3	71.7	54.4	60.1	67.4	77.6
Telangana	60.5	59.8	63.3	73.0	81.6	45.7	54.7	60.0	73.1
<b>4. Percentage Completed Elementary</b>									
All India	56.4	57.1	47.9	68.4	61.0	43.0	47.5	56.0	66.9
Telangana	56.0	55.3	59.7	65.4	75.5	39.7	50.9	55.4	69.2
<b>5. Percentage Completed Secondary</b>									
All India	36.1	36.9	27.3	44.5	41.4	22.5	27.4	35.3	46.9
Telangana	44.3	43.8	45.7	56.8	60.9	28.9	40.6	43.4	57.0
<b>6. Percentage Completed Higher Secondary</b>									
All India	22.3	23.1	14.7	28.4	26.4	12.1	15.9	21.1	31.3
Telangana	26.7	26.5	25.6	37.6	34.3	11.3	22.1	26.1	39.4
<b>7. Percentage Completed Graduation</b>									
All India	11.5	12.0	6.5	17.5	13.3	4.7	7.4	10.3	18.0
Telangana	15.4	15.3	13.5	24.8	26.7	3.9	12.6	14.3	26.1
<b>8. Mean Years of Schooling</b>									
All India	7.1	7.1	6.0	8.6	7.6	5.3	6.0	6.9	8.5
Telangana	6.8	6.8	6.9	8.7	9.4	4.5	6.1	6.7	8.7

*Source: Unit Record Data of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2017-18.*

What is something contrasting is that the overall mean years of schooling in Telangana is lower than that of all-India average (Table 3). But across social and religious groups except STs, OBCs and Hindus, the mean years of schooling for all the other two social groups (SCs and 'others') along with the minority religious groups (Muslims, Christians and 'others') it is higher in Telangana when compared to that of all-India average.

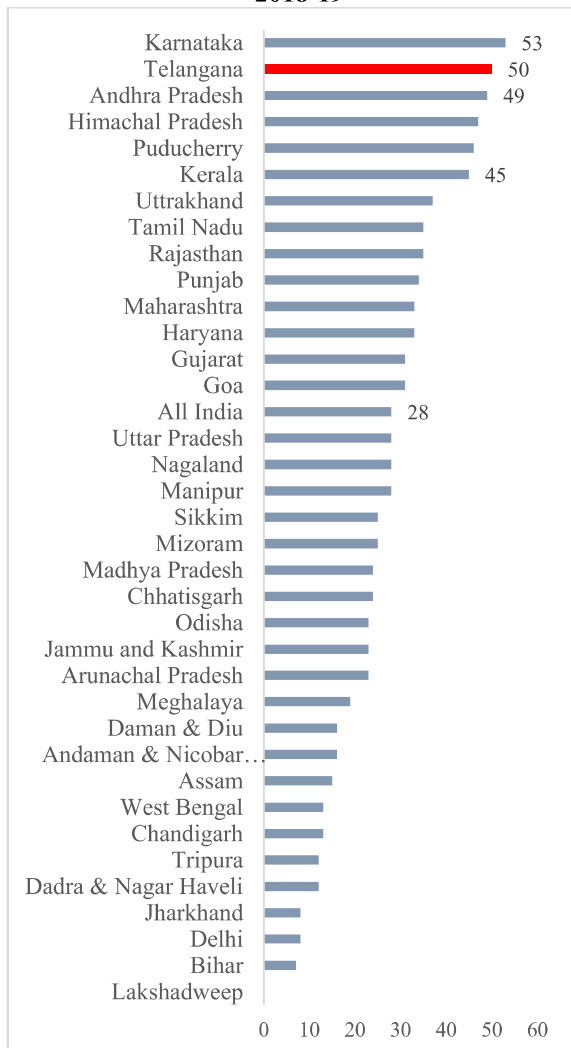
### **Higher and Technical Education**

In terms of availability of colleges, state of Telangana appears to be one of the highest in India given the size of eligible population. As per the All India Status on Higher Education Report (AISHER) 2018-19 there are 24 universities and/or institutes of national importance, 1988 colleges (constituent, affiliated and/or recognised) and 503 standalone institutes in the state. Although Government of Telangana made an order facilitating for the in the state, private universities are yet to be established. But more than 86 percent of the collages located in the state are privately managed, most of them (80% of total) are private un-aided collages. They account for nearly the same percentage in enrolment.

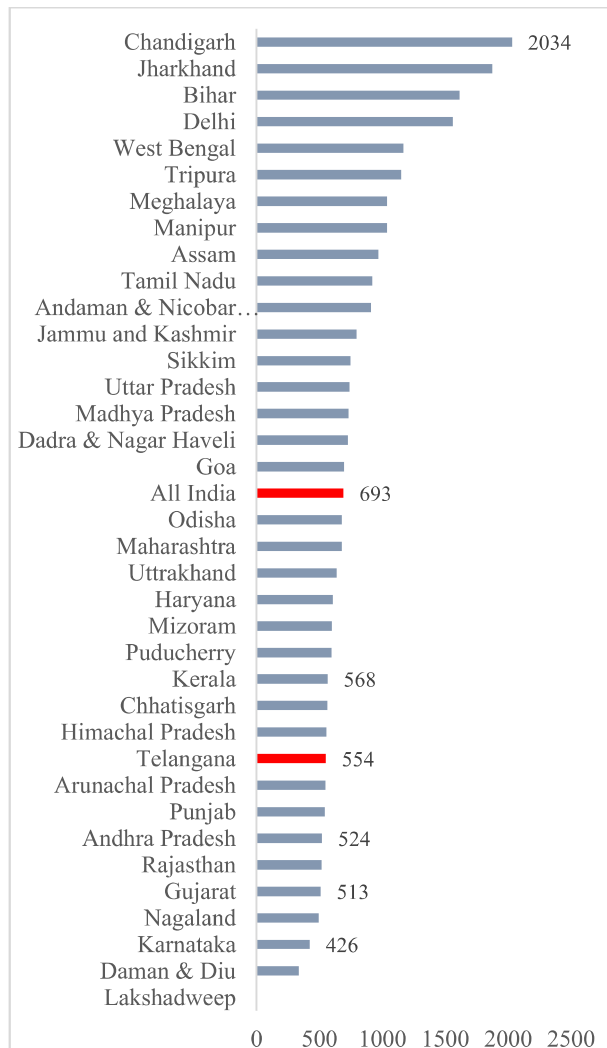


**Figure-5: Number of Colleges per lakh Population and Enrolment per College across States, AIHER 2018-19**

**Figure-5a: Number of Colleges per lakh Population (18-23 Years age) across Indian States, 2018-19**



**Figure-5b: Enrolment per College across States in India, 2018-19**



*Source: All India Status of Higher Education (AISHE) Annual Report 2018-19.*

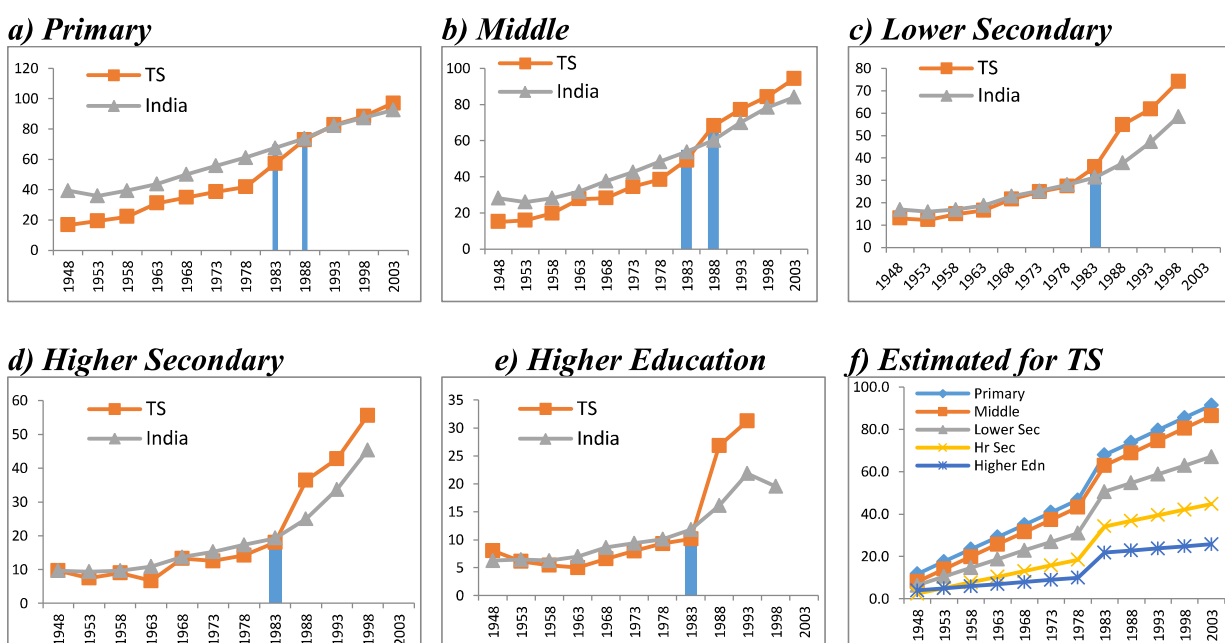
A majority of the colleges are for general education (1468 colleges accounting for 73.5 per cent of the total in the state) but for professional and technical education, there 32 colleges imparting medical education in various systems of medicine, 77 related to pharmacy, 40 nursing colleges, 150 colleges of engineering and technology in the state of Telangana. What is noticeable in Telangana is that the declining number of colleges imparting engineering and technology, 182 in 2015-16 to 150 in 2018-19.

The number of colleges per lakh eligible population (18 to 23 years age old) in the state is 50 and it is the second highest in India, next to Karnataka (53). The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in the state at 36 per cent is far higher than national average (26%) and little less than Kerala (37%). It is, however, one of the highest across states and UTs in India. But in terms of utilisation of the available colleges, the state of Telangana appears to be little lower than modest across states in India. The measure of enrolment per college in the state is 554 which is far below the national average and one of the lowest in India. Such a lower average enrolment per college must be due to large number of colleges available in the state.

**Golden 1980 Birth-Cohort of Telangana: Shift in Educational Attainment**

The performance of different birth cohorts (5-year cohort) of Telangana state in terms of their educational attainment or completion rate, indicate that the birth cohort of 1980s in the state have witnessed a dramatic change and shift in educational attainment (completion rate). The performance this birth cohort is shift change in all the levels of education (Figure 6). This birth cohort of Telangana state has outperformed their counterpart (same cohort) at the national level. Figures 6a to 6e are based on estimates of the survey. Figure 6f is linear estimations for the state of Telangana, based on estimates of the survey. The figure 6f is clearly exhibiting the shift in completion rates across levels of education for the 1980s birth cohort in the Telangana state.

**Figure-6: Completion Rates by Level of Education across different Birth Cohorts in India and Telangans State**



*Notes:* Year is to indicate the children born during five year interval period ending the year

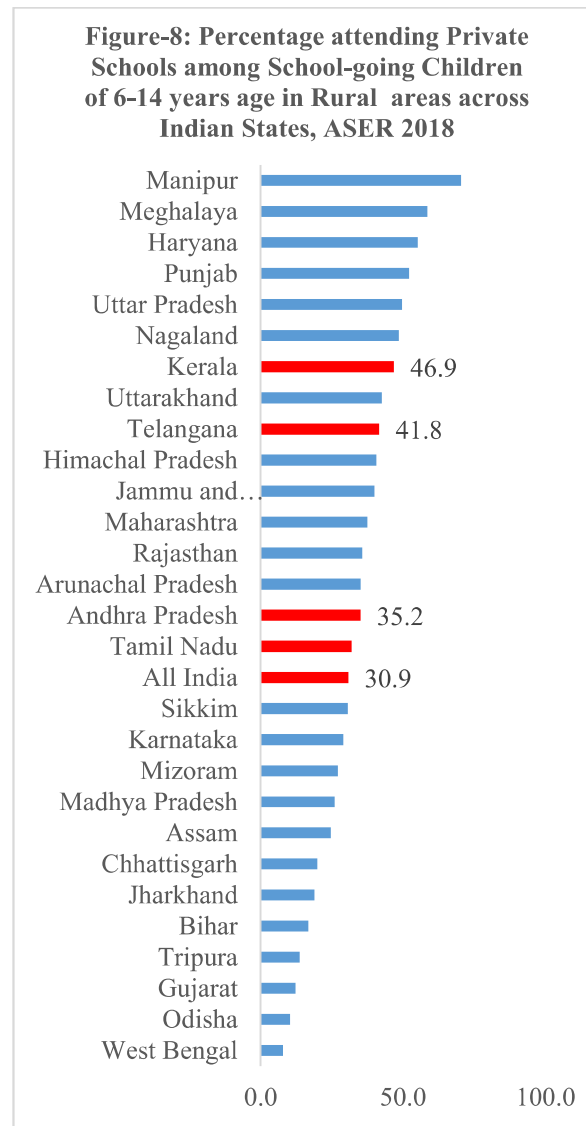
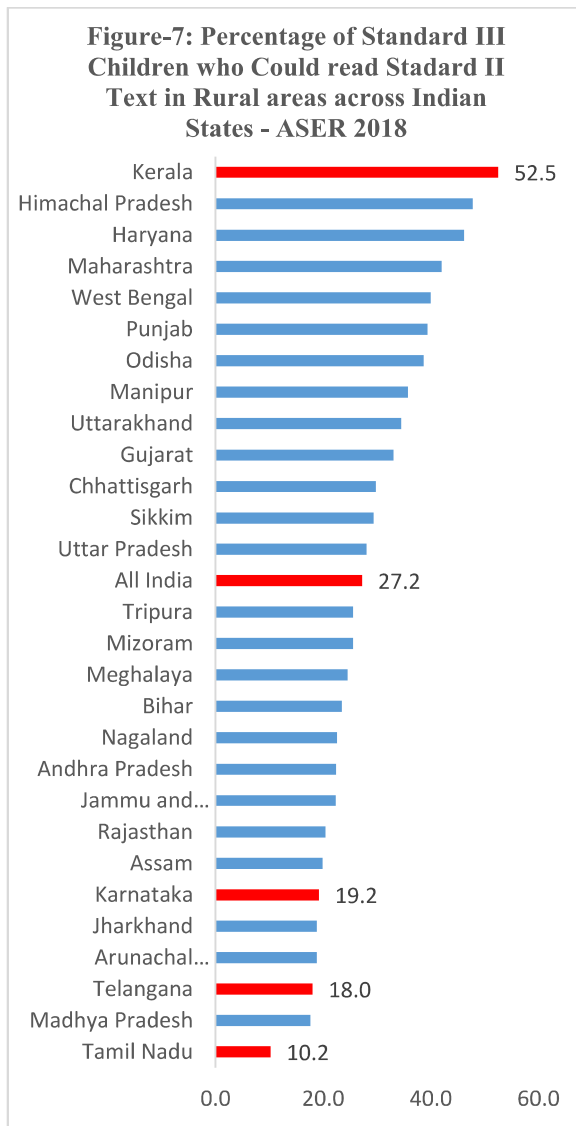
*Source:* Authors' Calculation based on PLFS-1 (2017-18) unit record data.

The above analysis is based on the unit record data of national level first Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS-1) of India in 2017-18. Based on the present age of the population covered in the survey their birth cohort (synthetic cohort) is derived. As the survey captured the educational level of each member of the households that were covered in the survey, estimates of school completion rates of birth-cohorts are derived accordingly. The years specified in Figure 6 indicate that the children born during the five-year interval period ending that year.

**Major Concerns: Quality and Privatisation**

More than all these aspects the most intriguing aspect of education is the quality of education, learning outcomes. National Achievement Survey (NAS) of NCERT and ASER reports on learning levels of children in school education shows that substantially large proportion of

children are not able to perform basic skills they supposed learn till their previous class. Telangana is one among those states which are lagging behind in this respect. ASER 2018 shows that only 27 per cent Standard III children in rural India could read the text of Standard II. The rest of 73 per cent of them could not read. For Telangana, it was only 17 per cent of the Standard III children could read and the rest 83 per cent could not read. Such a low learning level in the state of Telangana is one of the highest in India.



*Source: ASER, 2018.*

The NITI Ayog Report 2019 on School Education Quality Index (SEQI), recently released, indicates that Telangana is lagging behind wherein the performance of the state in this regard is lower than the national average. The SEQI is largely schooling outcomes based indexing and it consists of learning outcomes, access, equity, infrastructure along with governance aspects. Similarly, another report NITI Ayog is on Innovation index indicate that Telangana stands fourth on this index, it so largely because of its performance index. However, when compared score of the top three states', there is a huge gap in the score of the state standing third and the Telangana state which stands fourth. Further, in the dimension of enablers, the performance of the state especially in the sub-dimension of human capital its standing slipped

down to 7<sup>th</sup> among the Indian states. All that indicates that state needs to improve the quality of education. Amended Right to Education (RTE) Act made states to codify expected levels of learning.

In higher secondary and higher education it is even more, above 80 per cent. In the quality of education context, the employability of the educated and acquiring skill set at least appropriate to their level/grade/standard of education has also become a serious concern at the national level and across states including the state of Telangana.

### *Privatisation of Education*

Increasing privatization of education is another concern at the national level as well as across states in India in all the (school or higher) levels of education. As District Information on School Education (DISE) School Report Cards indicate more than half of the enrolment in school education in Telangana is in private schools in the state. Even rural areas it is high. As ASER 2018 shows nearly 41 per cent of school-going rural children of 6-14 years age in Telangana are attending private schools.

**Table-4: Predominantly Private - Higher Education in Telangana**

Year	Private	Total	% Private
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>
<b>Colleges</b>			
2018-19	1700	1976	86.03
2015-16	1814	2032	89.27
<b>Enrolment</b>			
2018-19	928998	1095563	84.80
2015-16	1022049	1166653	87.61

*Source: AISHER (2019).*

As already mentioned above, more than two-thirds of educational institutions and enrolment at higher levels of education in India are privately managed. In Telangana it is further higher, private share is more than 80 percent of institutions providing higher education and enrolment in higher education courses in the state (Table-4). Monitoring the quality education provided or learning facilitated in these private educational institutions is critical for educational development of the state and challenging one in the policy perspective.

### **IV Research and Policy Questions**

As mentioned above, it is not only the quantitative expansion but also quality of education that needs a policy attention in the state. Unregulated privatisation of education and shrinking of public education system needs a serious rethinking and policy attention. More importantly the employability of the educated and acquiring skill set at least appropriate to their level/grade/standard of education. In this respect, for a better policy of educational development in the state, some of the following issues needs to be addressed through research investigation and policy.

What are the poor and marginalised communities still left behind in school education and why they are being so. Illiteracy among Adults long pending and haunting the state, hence the strategies for making the illiterate adult to literates and making the state to achieve universal adult literacy. Public expenditure tracking (PET): Investigations into whether public expenditure reaching the last mile disbursing and spending source on time through Public expenditure tracking (PET). Perspective Framework Plans: Preparing perspective framework plans for school education, higher education, technical education and vocational education. Reviving Public Education: while understanding the parents' perceived values on quality of education, developing a policy prescription reviving the public education system. Monitoring and evaluation: developing monitoring and evaluation indicators assessing the performance across different levels of education and across types of educational institutions. Developing a strategy to address the need for the professional development of teachers by continuous upgradation of their competencies in teaching and research. Assessing the competencies of human resources in the education system and organising training programmes.

\* \* \*

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