

**WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE PRIMARY EDUCATION: A
COMPARISON BETWEEN DELHI AND WEST BENGAL**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose behind the study is to highlight the primary schooling conditions, where the study focuses on both quality and quantity factors. Comparison is done between one of the most developed city, Delhi with West Bengal, which stands on lower spectrum of development. The study is entirely based on secondary data which is analysed with simple excel tools. The study has shown that overall Delhi has done much better when it comes to the quality primary schooling then West Bengal but there exist a wider scope for improvement.

KEYWORDS: Primary School, Child, Development.

INTRODUCTION

In a country which is home to one of the largest number of child labor and where more than 10 million Children are in the age group less than 14 years, never gets enrolled, the essence of primary education is of immense importance. This paper has analyzed primary education where a comparison of the primary education status of West Bengal and Delhi is made. On one hand West Bengal, which stands at the lower end of Human Development is compared with a well developed capital city Delhi. Primary Education which is the official first step of a child in this society is the most crucial step in the schooling life of the child. And it remains an unfortunate fact that in India there are many children who are denied of this very right. In this paper qualitative aspect of schooling is stressed upon.

India's HDI (Human Development Index) value for 2011 stands out at 0.547 in the medium Human Development Category, ranked at 134 out of 187 countries. This position clearly reveals that lot more needs to be done in the domain of education, health and standard of living. If one looks at the public expenditure of the central government in India it's not even 5 per cent of the GDP. This percentage share of expenditure on education depicts the low priority of the Indian government towards education. While if one looks at the state expenditure on education then state accounts for around 16 per cent of the spending on education as proportion of total budget. In India the per capita expenditure done on education by the state reveals that Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, MP, Orissa, Rajasthan, UP and West Bengal spends lowest amount of per capita spending on education, what went worse of all was that instead of increasing the funding for school education the UPA-2 in its tenure had reduced its commitment on SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) from 75 per cent to 50 per cent (Ghosh, 2011).

Since 1991 with Neo liberal reforms in India there is view that the role of government should be to give more space to the private institutions which in a sense means lesser role of the state but this in turn will lead to under provision of education and the poor and the disadvantaged will be the worse sufferers. With the growing privatization, Education is also being treated as commodity although by law in India it is that even private institution will not work on 'profit making' basis but like all other law in India this too stands in a grey shadow. Under our current education system the elite class have the choice of sending their children to a good private school which they can chose because they have the 'money power' on the other hand the under privileged, poor, lower middle income groups have no such choice available, these groups have no voice of their own, if teachers are absent, don't teach, the poor parents can't raise their voice even when they do, nobody listens, if there exist no basic facilities like drinking water and sanitary needs then too they can't do anything about it. It is an old saying that "good began is half done" the primary education from class 1st to 5th standard is the initial step towards the enlightenment, in India there are various social, economic and political barriers which hinders this schooling enlightenment process of a child.

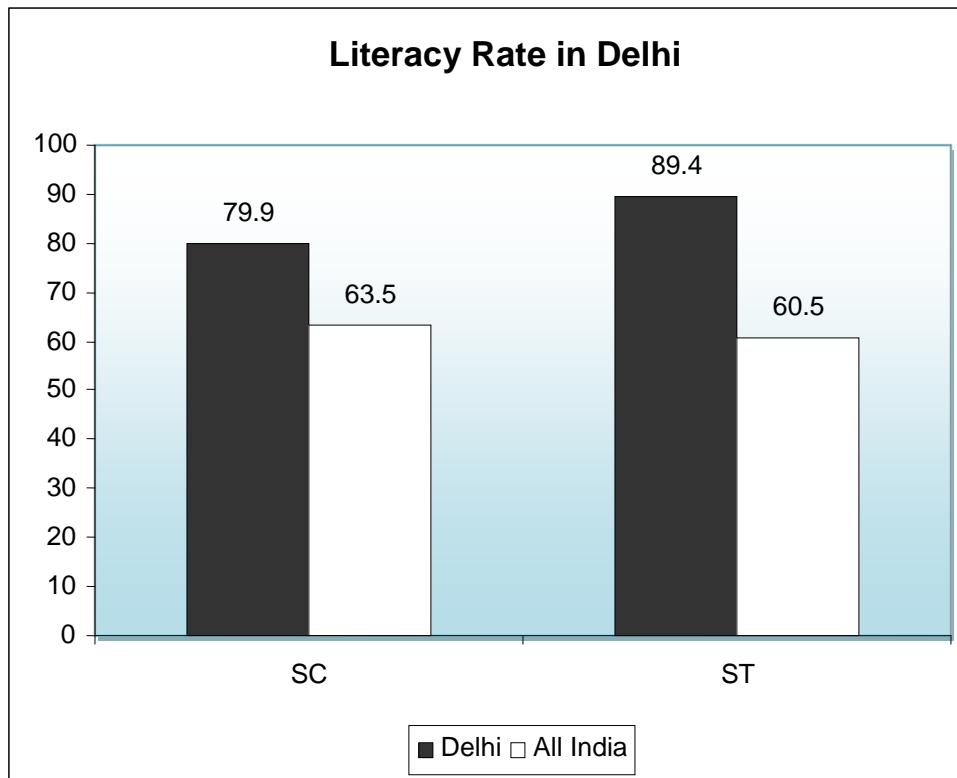
The government introduced many schemes to universalize elementary education but still after 68 years of independence we are not able to achieve this education for all children .There are many programs & schemes Implemented by the government of India like SSA in 2001 to universalize elementary education (6 to 14 years). The SSA intervention includes opening new schools, construction of additional classrooms, toilets and drinking water, provision of teacher, periodic teacher training, and support for learning achievement. But even after 11 years we have not achieved universal education for all (SSA, GOI).

Then there is Mid day meal (MDM) scheme launched by the Central Government in 1995 to increase the enrollment in primary education, the success of this MDM scheme varies

across different states in India and there are many reports about its inefficiency, bad quality of food, unhygienic conditions, discrimination while serving food and many more issues. This paper has compared Delhi the capital city with West-Bengal. Delhi is much developed city as compared to other states its rank in HDI by India's human development report published by UNDP is 2nd only next to Kerala whereas West Bengal stands at 13th rank (Indian Human Development Report, 2011).

Delhi is predominantly urban with 76.2 per cent urban population. Delhi's National State Domestic Product and per capita income is among the top most state in India. Delhi's population density is 9,340 person /km² which is one of the lowest in India. The literacy rate stands out to be 85 per cent which is higher than the national average of 75 per cent as revealed by NSS 2007-08 and as per the census 2011 literacy rate in Delhi is 86.3 per cent. But the painful fact is that the female literacy rate in Delhi is much lower compared to that of the males. The total share of the underprivileged group in Delhi accounts as SC 27.8%, ST less than 1% Muslims at 12% of the total population. The sex-ratio stands at 866 females per 1000 males. According to the Tendulkar Methodology (2009-10) the per cent of population below poverty line in Delhi is around 14.2 per cent of the total population of Delhi. Whereas for India it stands out at 29.9 per cent of the population is below poverty line (planning commission, 2011)

Figure 1: Literacy Rates in Delhi



Source: Delhi Development Report, Planning Commission, GoI

The literacy rate of SC and ST population in Delhi as contrasted with the All India Level is revealed by the above figure 1. On the other hand West Bengal is one of the most populous State and majority of its population is rural around 61 per cent. West Bengal has one of the largest Proportion of SC's 9.2 per cent of the total SC's in India and 14.8 per cent of the total Muslims are part of West Bengal's population. The sex-ratio of West Bengal is better than that of Delhi and national average it stands at 947 females per 1000 males. The literacy rate stands out to be 77 per cent which is lower than that of Delhi but higher than that of national all India average of 74 per cent (Census, 2011).

PRIMARY EDUCATION: COMPARISION BETWEEN DELHI AND WEST BENGAL

For comparison between the two states concerned, variables used for the study are taken as defined by District Information System for Education (DISE). As Follow;

$$\text{Pupil Teacher Ratio} = \frac{\text{Total enrolment in primary education}}{\text{Total teacher in Primary education}}$$

g = current grade in which a student studies

t = current time period

g+1 = next grade

t+1 = next time period

$$\text{Promotion rate} = \frac{\text{no. of students promoted to grade } g+1 \text{ in period } t+1}{\text{Total no. of students in grade } g \text{ in year } t} \times 100$$

$$\text{Repetition rate} = \frac{\text{no. of repeaters in gradating Period } t+1}{\text{Total no. of students in grade } g \text{ In year } t} \times 100$$

$$\text{Gender parity index} = \frac{\text{Girls enrolment in primary grade in year t}}{\text{Boys enrolment in primary grade in year t}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Gross enrolment rate} = \frac{\text{Total enrolment in grade 1 to 5}}{\text{Population age 6 to 11 years}} \times 100$$

Table 1: Gross enrolment ratio

State	Girls	Boys	Total
Delhi	129.6	126.0	127.7
West Bengal	93.9	91.5	92.7

(Source: School Statistics 2010-11 MHRD)

Table 2: Gross enrolment ratio (Scheduled Caste)

State	Girls	Boys	Total
Delhi	69.7	69.3	69.5
West Bengal	110.8	115.7	113.3

(Source: School Statistics 2010-11 MHRD)

Table 3: Gross enrolment ratio (Scheduled Tribe)

State	Girls	Boys	Total
Delhi	-	-	-
West Bengal	122.4	122.3	122.3

(Source: School Statistics 2010-11 MHRD)

Table 4: Drop rate

State	All category	SC	ST
Delhi	3.7	25.9	31.4
West Bengal	29.8	23.5	24.6

(DISE State report card 2011)

Table 5: Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator	Delhi	West Bengal
% of schools having single-class room	0.08%	14.38%
% of schools having single teacher	0.55%	3.16%
% of schools having drinking water facilities	100%	95.87%
% of schools having girls toilets	77%	43.69%
% of school having electricity connections	98.13%	21.34%
% of schools having computers	79.15%	3.58%
% of schools having ramps	57.20%	49.98%
% of schools having playground	74.46%	30.45%
% of schools having kitchen sheds	8.40%	51.44%
% of residential schools	1.02%	1.26%

(Source: DISE 2011)

Table 6: Gender Parity Index (Primary school)

State	General	SC	ST
Delhi	0.88	1.10	--
West Bengal	0.98	0.96	1.00

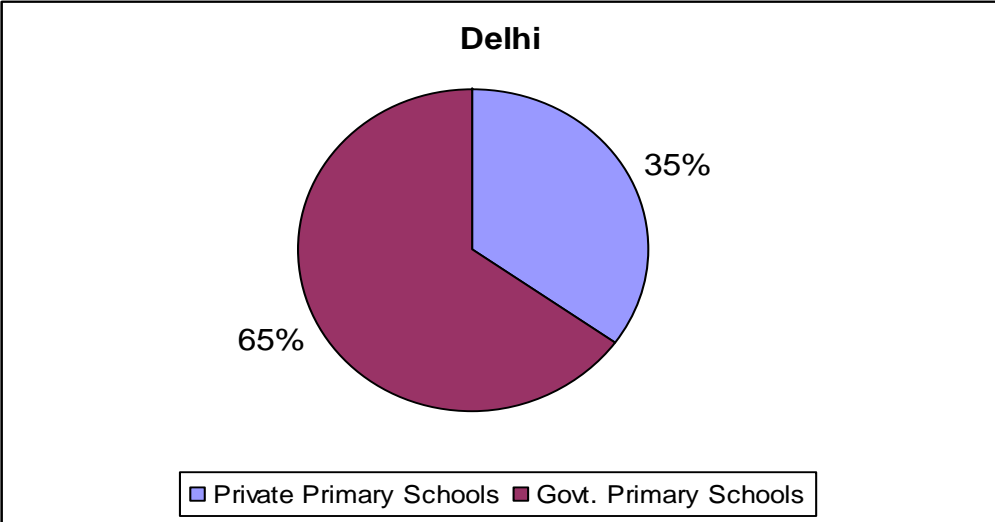
(Source: DISE, 2011)

Table 7: Pupil Teacher Ratio in Primary Schools

States	Pupil Teacher Ratio in Primary Schools
Delhi	39.40
West Bengal	29.06

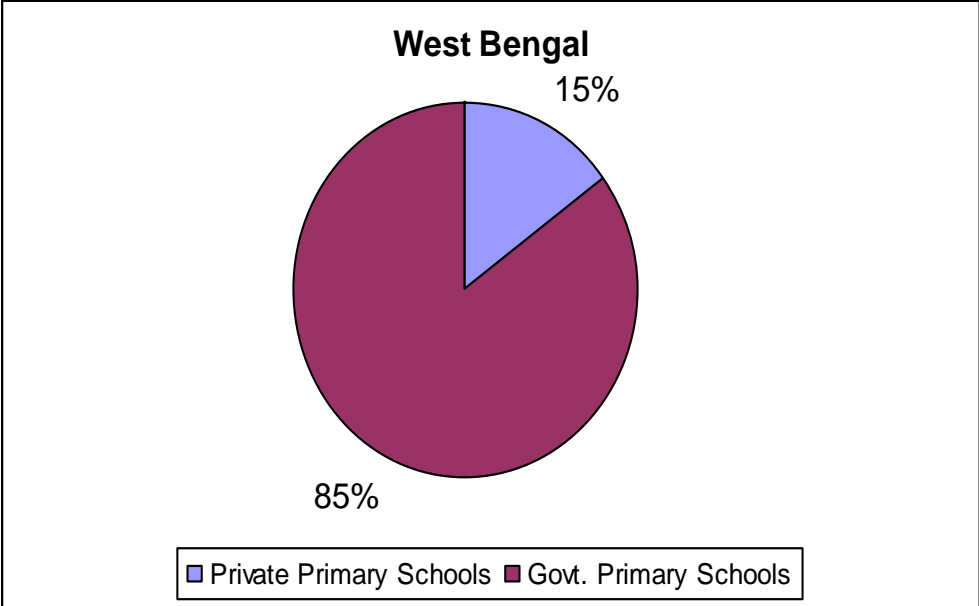
(Source DISE Flash Statistics 2011)

Figure 2: Percentage of Private and Govt. Primary schools in Delhi



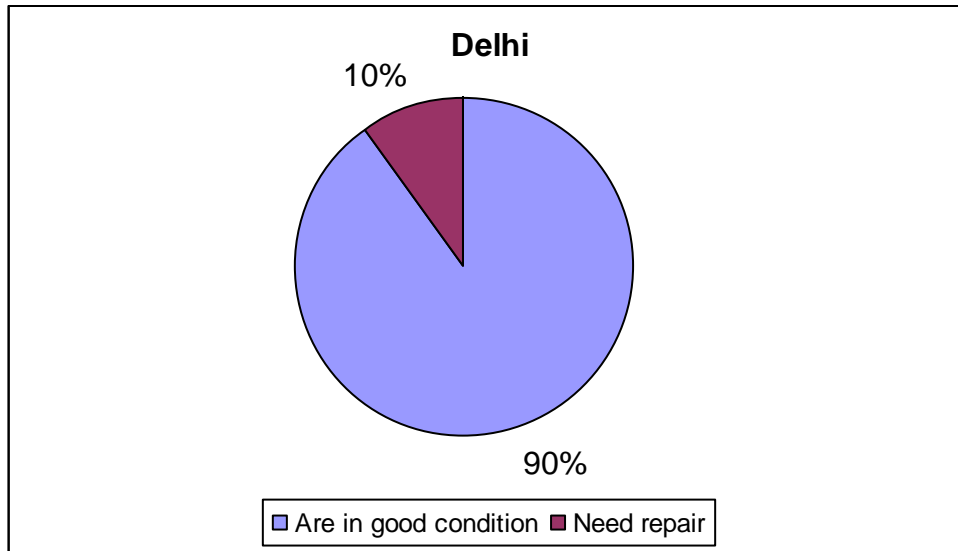
(Source: DISE)

Figure 3: Percentage of Private and Govt. Primary schools in West Bengal



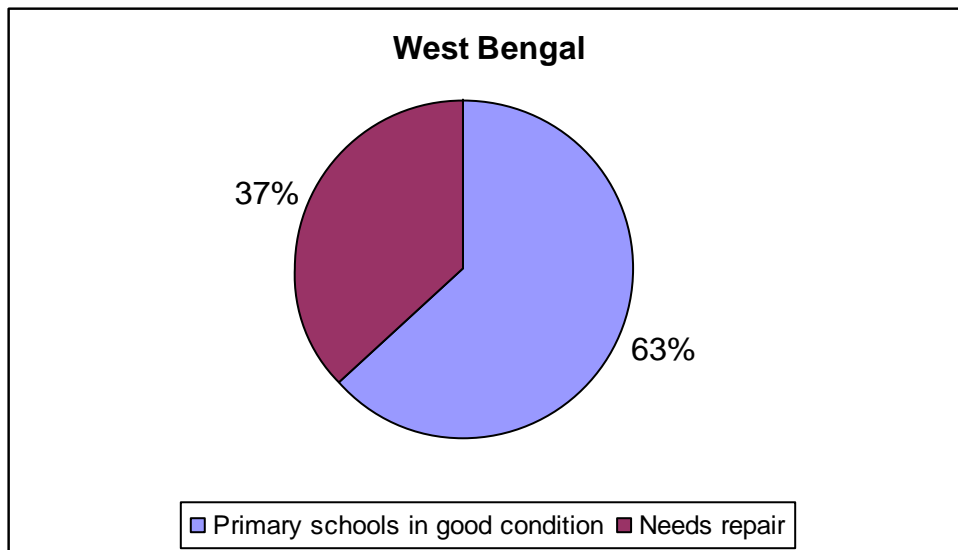
(Source: DISE)

Figure 4: percentage of Primary schools in Delhi that needs Repair



(Source: DISE)

Figure 5: percentage of Primary schools in West Bengal that needs Repair



(Source: DISE)

Table 1 depicts Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) which is the total proportion of enrolment of student in grade 1st to 5th class divided by the total population in the age group 6 to 11 years. This table clearly reveals that the GER of Delhi is much better than that of West Bengal. Although between both the states there is not much difference between girls and boys GER which for Delhi's Girls is 129.6 where as for boys GER is 126.0

Table 2 depicts GER of schedule caste in primary schools this has great significance for the development of the underprivileged. One of most crucial way by which underprivileged group can move out from their deprived life and take their new generation out of the social discrimination is by sending their children to school. If the children who belong to the under privilege group are not sent to schools, they face double discrimination where on one hand they face internal discrimination within family as they are asked to work at such a tender age on the other hand the discrimination is by the society. The figures in table 2 reveals that the GER of total SC in primary education of West Bengal has done much better by being at 113.3 where as for Delhi it stands at 69.5. Clearly the condition of the SC regarding the GER is much better in West Bengal but one of the reasons for this could be high proportion of SC population of West Bengal. Table 3 Shows the GER for ST in primary education which is 122.3 in West Bengal but in Delhi as the per cent of ST population is not even 1% no data was available.

Table 4 shows the dropout ratio in primary school in Delhi and West Bengal, for Delhi the drop out rate which is the ratio of the students who drop before completing their class 5th is 3.7 per cent for all categories however matter of concern is that this drop out rate is much higher for SC and ST in Delhi which is 25.9 and 35.4 per cent for these groups. If we look at the drop out rates for primary schools in West Bengal then its more than 10 times of that of

Delhi for all categories for West Bengal the drop out rate stands at a very high 29.8 per cent (all category) and for SC at 23.5 and ST at 24.6 per cent.

Table 5 deals with the qualitative analysis of all the primary schools in both Delhi and West Bengal. The per cent of primary schools having only single class-room is only 0.08 per cent in Delhi but for West Bengal its 14.38 per cent which means that if one looks at the infrastructure then lot more needs to be done in West Bengal schools and it's a fact that where only single class rooms are available to teach all children of different classes and different subjects, it acts as a kind of barrier in overall development of the children. Having single class room also means that lesser amount of importance is given to each subject and child and the student waste their time in order to get the other class over. As far as drinking water facility is concerned almost every primary schools in Delhi has drinking water facility whereas for West Bengal it's around 95 per cent in primary schools. The per cent of girl's toilets at primary level for both Delhi and West Bengal is 77 per cent and 43 per cent respectively. It's a clear depiction that Delhi has done much better than West Bengal but still only 77 per cent schools of primary level have girls toilets in Delhi which in itself a matter of great concern. What is even more shocking is that only 21.34 per cent of primary schools in West Bengal have electricity connection whereas in Delhi it stands out at 98.13 per cent.

If one go on by comparing the per cent of computer for primary school children then now as we are in 21st century anyone who is not computer-literate is actually not considered to be literate in this competitive world the result are not too favorable for West Bengal as the per cent of computer at primary school level stand at a dismal low 3.5 per cent for West Bengal as against Delhi's 79.15 per cent primary schools having computer .The other indicator which is shown in Table 5 is the per cent of schools having ramps this indicator shows how friendly are school towards the children with disability and in this both Delhi and West

Bengal haven't done up to the level, only 57 per cent in Delhi and 49 per cent in West Bengal have ramps. The other quality indicator which is the per cent of playgrounds in primary school in Delhi and West Bengal shows that only 30 per cent primary level school in West Bengal has playgrounds as against 74 per cent of primary schools in Delhi having playgrounds for children. This is an open fact that for overall development of a child, the child must take part in physical activities thus it's high time that West Bengal state government should take this into their notice.

As GPI (Gender Parity Index) Table 6 is concerned both states stand equal, if suppose GPI = 1 it means there is complete equality between girls and boys, with it closer to 1 as for West Bengal at 0.98 means there is equality between both boys and girls enrolment as Primary education is concerned whereas for Delhi it stands at .88 this clearly shows that there is more equality between boys and girls enrolment at primary level in West Bengal.

Table 7 shows the pupil teacher ratio for year 2010-11 for primary school it stands out at 39 students per teacher for Delhi and 29 students to a teacher in West Bengal. The lesser it's the better it's for students as if a single teacher teaches a small number of students then individual attention can be paid to the individual student.

Figure 2 & 3 shows the distribution of primary school by management (government or private) the graph clearly shows that in Delhi the per cent of primary private school is 35 per cent whereas this per cent is very low in West Bengal, only 15 per cent schools at primary level is private. In Delhi where the most of the population belong to the elite class, they prefer to send their children to the private school whereas for West Bengal where around 27 per cent of the population is below poverty line tends to be dependent on the government schools which is around 85 per cent of all total schools.

The non-government organization (NGO's) these days have wider role to play when it comes to child education in Delhi there are around 3000 learning centre in Delhi which are being run by 200 NGO's. These NGO's have been successful in bringing the out of school children back to these learning centre although these learning centre cannot replace school but still they are like a "light in the dark" for these children. In year 2004 of the total 1,87,000 out of school children were identified and from those 1,34,000 we put up in these learning centre by the NGO's (Delhi Human Development Report, 2009). On the other hand when it comes to Mid-Day Meal Scheme then the evidence suggests that in Delhi there is irregular supply of food to schools also poor community participation in the implementation of MDM plus the food quality served is of poor quality with poor hygiene exists. On the other hand in West Bengal schools the mid day meals were served to less than 75 per cent schools (Mid day meal report, 2013)

Table 8 shows the infrastructural condition of the buildings of West Bengal and Delhi's primary schools, West Bengal has 1249 number of kuccha primary schools in contrast with 125 kuccha primary schools in Delhi.

Table 8: Number of school building by type (Primary schools)

State	Pucca	Partially Pucca	Kuccha	Tent
Delhi	1597	165	125	5
West Bengal	36878	4784	1249	54

Source: DISE state Report card 2011

Figure 4 & 5 clearly shows that in Delhi there are 90 per cent primary schools which are in good condition and don't need any kind of repair whereas for West Bengal only 63 per cent of the total primary schools are in good condition and remaining 37 per cent needs minor or major repair.

Conclusion

This paper has compared the primary school conditions with respect to Delhi and West Bengal. For most of the discussion above we find that if we compare Delhi with West Bengal then no doubt that Delhi has done better than West Bengal for most of the variables which we have considered, qualitative indicators like computer education, electricity connection, drinking water facilities, sanitary needs and other infrastructural facilities. West Bengal has shown much friendly results as far as enrolment of SC & ST is concerned and equality between girls boys enrolment. But over all we can conclude that both Delhi and West Bengal needs to take measure in order to improve the overall experience of primary education.

Although it's a fact that literacy rose, total enrolment in school has risen over the past years but the number of drop out fell from what it was few year ago. But what still what remains is the poor quality of education which is revealed by the ASER report. Where the child of 3rd standard does not has skills of 1st standard and a 5th standard has not skills of 3rd standard child also there remains a huge amount of difference between the quality of education imparted to urban class and rural class children.

It's high time that government or state take the responsibility and increase its expenditure on the education as per cent of GDP which is very low by international standard and the quality needs to be checked by training more teachers, providing teachers with the aids to teach children such that learning becomes much interesting for children.

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