

A Study of the Development of Education Sector in Uttarakhand and Its Challenges

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Abstract: *The development of a country or state depends upon the quality education provided to the young minds. Education is the most important component for the growth of a country and a state. It is important to facilitate knowledge, to develop reasoning, judgment, and preparing an individual for a better life. Since the establishment of state on 9th November, 2000 there has been tremendous and significant growth in all the important sectors including education sector. The paper discusses the growth of education sector since the inception of state. This study shows the current situation in the education sector at both school level (with special references to government schools) and higher education level.*

At school level the study shows that the number of schools have been increasing but at a slower pace. There has been a tremendous decline in enrolment level of students in government schools from 209834 in 2013-14 to 180132 in 2017-18. The paper reviews the factors and possible steps that can be adopted to improve the situation at school level in the region.

The paper also discusses about the higher education status where there is a very low level of enrolments in hilly regions as compared to urban areas. The data suggests that only 1.59% students are enrolled in higher education in the state. It observes the problems faced by the higher education and solutions to the prevailing problems in the education sector in Uttarakhand. The paper provides insight to the National Skill Development Corporation skill gap study of Uttarakhand and discusses measures that can be adopted to further improve higher education in the state.

Key Words: *school education, enrolments, higher education, human resource, skill gap.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Uttarakhand is the 27th state of the Republic of INDIA. It officially came into existence on 9th November 2000, after the long and strong protest by people of Uttarakhand called “Uttarakhand Andolan”. The movement was the result of belief among people that the demands and needs of the Uttarakhand were ignored and cannot be fulfilled being a part of the largest state of India. After coming into existence as the 27th state various sectors experienced a rush in the growth rate including education sector.

Education is the most important component for the growth of a country and a state. It is important to facilitate knowledge, reasoning, judgment, and preparing an individual for a better life. In India from the early ages’ education has taken a central role in a person upbringing. However, in ancient India the education was not available to different people from different caste, women and religious minority. Such unequal educational status creates an unequal society. However, after the independence there has been sufficient improvement in the literacy level which now stands at 74.04%.

One of the most important steps in regard to education came by the introduction of RTE (right of children to free and compulsory education Act, 2009). With this act free and compulsory education of children was inserted in Article 21-A in the constitution of India (86th Amendment) to ensure the fundamental right of children (6 to 14 years) for satisfactory and equitable quality education. The basic purpose of the act was to provide education to the children from weaker section, girl child, and from minority section who have been not able to get education due to different reasons (1).

Uttarakhand had come a long way especially in regard to educational development of its citizens. The total population of Uttarakhand as per the Census of India, 2011 is 10116755 crores, in this rural population consists of 70, 25583 lakh and urban population consists of 30, 91169 lakh respectively. According to the Census 2011 Sex ratio was found to be 963 females per 1000 males in Uttarakhand. It was found that 894 female children per 1000 male child in rural area whereas it was 864 females per 1000 male child in urban areas in Uttarakhand. Overall Child sex ratio (0-6) years was 886 in the state where 894 female children were found per 1000 male child in rural areas and 864 per 1000 male child were in urban areas in Uttarakhand. Population in the age group 0-6 was found to be 13, 28844 lakhs. Rural population was found to be 9, 68474 lakhs whereas urban population was 3, 60370 lakhs respectively. 88.33% males

whereas 70.70% women were found to be literate in 2011. Literacy rate was 79.63% in Uttarakhand in 2011. 77.11% was found to be in rural areas and 85.20% in urban areas (2).

In the primary education the situation was found very alarming as the Enrolment in Government Primary schools has consistently been declining. In an article published in Dainik Jagran by Mr. Ravindra Barhtwal expresses deep concern about the government primary schools in Uttarakhand. In Uttarakhand there are 2044 primary schools where enrolment is below 10 and thus are going to close. This is 13 percent of total primary schools in Uttarakhand. More than 60 government primary schools having zero enrolment. A study of the development of primary education in Dehradun district (Uttarakhand) from 2000 to 2011 showed that the enrolment in the government school were on declining trend, whereas enrolments in private school were witnessing an uprising trend(3). Data from DISE shows that in 2002-2003 the growth of the enrolment was -0.01%. Which rose up to 0.64% in 2003-2004. But again, the growth of enrolment decreased up to -3.93% in 2004-2005 session. During the session 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 the growth was found 5.52% and 6.38% respectively. From the session 2007-2008 to 2010-2011 the growth of enrolment declined by consistently as -3.45%, -11.25, 4.92% and -5.45% respectively (4).

In the higher education as per the AISHE report (2016-2017) there are 33815947 students enrolled in Higher Education in India, out of those 380654 students belongs to state of Uttarakhand. Out of the Total number of students enrolled in Higher Education as according to the report of AISHE (2016-2017) 1,98,127 are male students and 1,82,527 are female students. At present, there are 28 Universities, 7 Institutions of National importance, 1 Central University, 11 State Universities, 3 Deemed Universities and 14 Private Universities The data shows that the enrolment ratio in hilly regions are concerning as it shows low level of enrolment. However, the female student's enrolment surpasses the male's students in hilly regions (5).

District wise skill gap study of Uttarakhand by National Skill Development Corporation states that the following sectors will have the most requirement of human resource in the region- Agriculture and allied services, Manufacturing, Tourism hospitality, and retail, Construction, Education, and Transportation and Logistics sector. However the demand for semi-skilled and skilled manpower in 2012, 2017 and 2022 is approximately 1.6, 2.06 and 2.75 million respectively; corresponding values for labour supply will be however 1.05, 1.39 and 1.85 million respectively indicating a skill gap of 0.64, 0.67 and 0.9 million in years 2012, 2017 and 2022(6). Thus, the educational institutes should focus on these sectors to create a supply force that can help in overcoming unemployment problems

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

In the paper titled "Prospects, challenges and achievements of right to education in Uttarakhand, India" by Anamika Chauhan and Anita Sati states that the RTE at present is not at satisfactory level even after the long period of implementation. The paper stresses on the alarming situation of quality of education in primary level in Uttarakhand and stresses on creation of a serious monitoring system for implementation and progress of any program.

Ranjana Rhuela in her paper titled "Study of the dropout level of primary students in Uttarakhand region" states that much have to be done despite of the various programs by government for retention of students in the school. The paper states that although various schemes and program such as mass community mobilization for implementation and execution of various components of SSA in terms of opening of Primary Schools, alternative schooling facilities, construction of school buildings, appointment of additional teachers, enrolment, retention divers teachers training distribution of text books, up gradation of teaching learning equipment's and community participation has been very successful yet a lot more has to be done .

A study of the development of primary education in Dehradun district Uttarakhand by Anup Kumar and Dr. Anoj Raj indicates that although the population is on the rising trend in Dehradun yet the enrolments are on decline in government school and at the same time the enrolment in private school are on an upward trend. The paper shows that although the population has been increasing in Dehradun yet the enrolments in government school are declining.

In the paper titled "Higher education and sustainable development in Uttarakhand" by Thakur Dev Pandey and Jyoti Pathak indicates the situation of higher education in Uttarakhand. the paper states that merely 1.59% of the total population is enrolled in Higher Education, the lack of availability of quality Higher Education is also major problem in the state as most of the colleges are located in the remote areas and due to poor connectivity the usage of advanced techniques in teaching is not popular, the lack of Quality Research output is one of the many problem which is a result of poor Higher Education infrastructure in the state.

District wise skill gap study of Uttarakhand by National Skill Development Corporation forecasts that the most human resource requirement in 2022 will be in Agriculture and allied services, Manufacturing, Tourism hospitality, and retail, Construction, Education, and Transportation and Logistics sector. The study forecasts that in 2022 the above said sectors would require most manpower in all the three categories of minimally skilled, semi-skilled and skilled thus the educational institutes should focus more on these sectors. This can help in overcoming unemployment problem in the region.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research methodology used in the paper is applied and quantitative in nature. Applied research is an investigation for ways of using scientific knowledge to solve practical problems. This research aims at discussing the development and present stage of the education in the state of Uttarakhand. And finding solutions to the prevailing problems in the education sector. Keeping in view the nature of present study secondary data was used for data analysis.

4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of this study is:

- To study the growth of education sector in Uttarakhand.
- To study the enrolment of students in the government schools in Uttarakhand.
- To study the enrolment of students in the higher institutions in Uttarakhand.
- To study the human resource status quo in Uttarakhand

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

The data from UDISE reports shows that the number of schools in Uttarakhand during 2013-14 were 3260 which increased to 3439 in 2014-15. In 2015-16 the number of schools stood at 3512 and were 3593 and 3746 in 2016-17 and 2017-18 respectively. Thus, denoting that number of schools have been increasing but at a slower pace.

| Year | Number of schools |
|---------|-------------------|
| 2013-14 | 3260 |
| 2014-15 | 3439 |
| 2015-16 | 3512 |
| 2016-17 | 3593 |
| 2017-18 | 3746 |

Table 1

Source – UDISE reports.

The reports however also show that the enrolment of students in secondary level has been continually decreasing since the reports was first published in the year 2013-14. The following figure 1 shows that the enrolment of students has been on a declining trend. in the year 2013-14 total number of students enrolled at secondary level was 209834 which then decreases to 205766 in 2014-15. In the year 2015-16 the enrolment of students continues to decline and stood at 198188, which then decreases to 185292 in the year 2016-17. In 2017-18 the enrolment continuing with the declining trend stood at 180132.

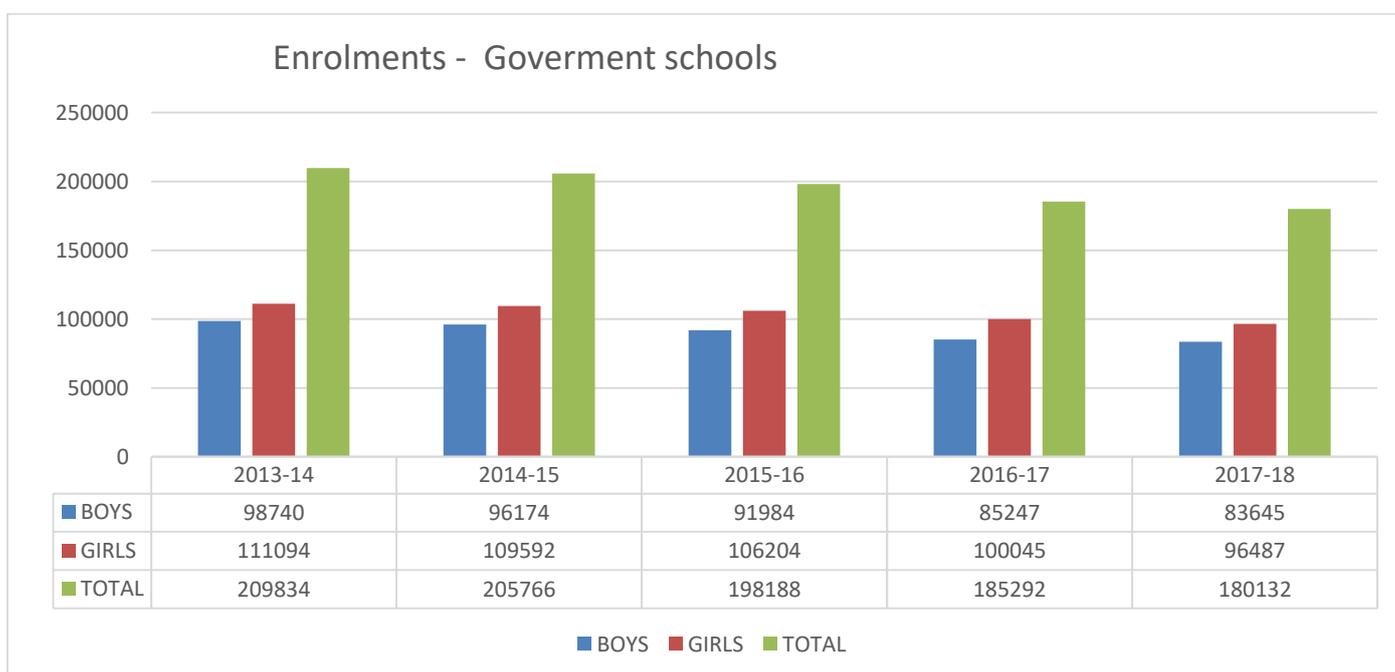


Figure 1

(Source- U-DISE)

Another data from the published reports from UDISE shows that there are still hundreds of schools without proper infrastructure. 826 schools did not have girl's toilet whereas 849 schools didn't have boy's toilet. 810 schools didn't have proper drinking facilities and 8615 schools did not have a playground for students which are necessary for overall development of a child. More than 6000 school didn't have ramps and 1597 schools were functioning without proper library.

Decline in enrolments in school in some regions are at alarming position. An article published in Danik Jagran by Mr Ravindra Barthwal shows that there are 2044 schools in Uttarakhand where enrolment of students is less than 10 and thus will be closed by government. This is 13 percent of total schools in Uttarakhand. There are more than 60 government schools which have zero enrolment. There are 380 primary schools in Pauri, 330 in Pithoragarh, 280 in Almora, 170 in Tehri, 165 in Chamoli, 122 in Dehradun, 105 in Uttarkashi, 90 in Rudraprayag, 75 in Bageshwar, 60 in Champwat, 45 in Nainital and 04 primary schools in Udamsingh Nagar where number of students are less than 10. One of the important factors for this level of enrolment is migration in large number by people in hilly regions. Some other factor constituted are lack of proper infrastructure, availability of teachers, competition from private schools, etc.

In the higher institutions the enrolment rate is also not satisfactory. Total number of students enrolled in higher education stands at 380654 as per AISHE reports (2016-17). Hilly regions have a poor enrolment of both female and male students. Only 1.59% of the total population is enrolled in higher education. The following table 2 shows the number of Institutions as well as enrolment of student's in various district of Uttarakhand.

| District | Number of institutions | Total number of students enrolled in higher institutions |
|-----------------|------------------------|--|
| Bageshwar | 6 | 4613 |
| Uttarkashi | 6 | 8394 |
| Rudrpryag | 8 | 3599 |
| Chamoli | 9 | 9911 |
| Pithoragarh | 10 | 13336 |
| Champwat | 12 | 4464 |
| Almora | 10 | 11800 |
| Tehri Garwhal | 27 | 6955 |
| Nanital | 32 | 52657 |
| Udamsingh Nagar | 59 | 40588 |
| Haridwar | 108 | 60195 |
| Dehradun | 172 | 128663 |

Table 2

(Source- AISHE reports 2016-17)

Least number of higher education institutions are in Bageshwar and Uttarkashi which have just 6 institutions each. Whereas Dehradun and Haridwar have the greatest number of higher Institutions standing at 172 and 108 respectively. Enrolment of students is lowest in Rudrpryag where just 3599 students were enrolled in higher education. The greatest number of student's enrolment is in urban areas such as Dehradun, Haridwar which have enrolment of 128663 and 60195 student respectively.

Various number of factors can be contributed for the low enrolment of students in higher education such as lack of quality education, lack of infrastructure, poor connectivity in the region, inadequate faculty availability. The total number of teaching faculty is 12826 whereas the total number of students enrolled are 380654. Thus, implying that the teacher student ratio stands at 1:30 where there is 1 teacher for 30 students. Moreover, various reports suggest that more than 1500 seats are vacant in both government as well as private institutions.

Another important study done by National Skill Development Corporation shows that there is a demand supply mismatch in Uttarakhand. The following figure 2 and 3 shows that in year 2012 there was demand of 811832 and 797896 for semi-skilled and skilled workforce. However, the supply during the same period was 510921 and 543349 for semi-skilled and skilled workforce. Thus, showing an acute gap between demand and supply of workforce in the region. Similarly, the report shows that in the year 2017 the demand for semi-skilled and skilled workforce was 975372 and 1088200 respectively. Whereas supply for the same year was 645677 and 749585 for semi-skilled and skilled human resource.

The study forecast that in the year 2022 the demand for semi-skilled and skilled human resource in the region will be 1243844 and 1504751 respectively. Whereas the supply has been forecasted at 822715 and 1024337 for semi-skilled and skilled human resource.

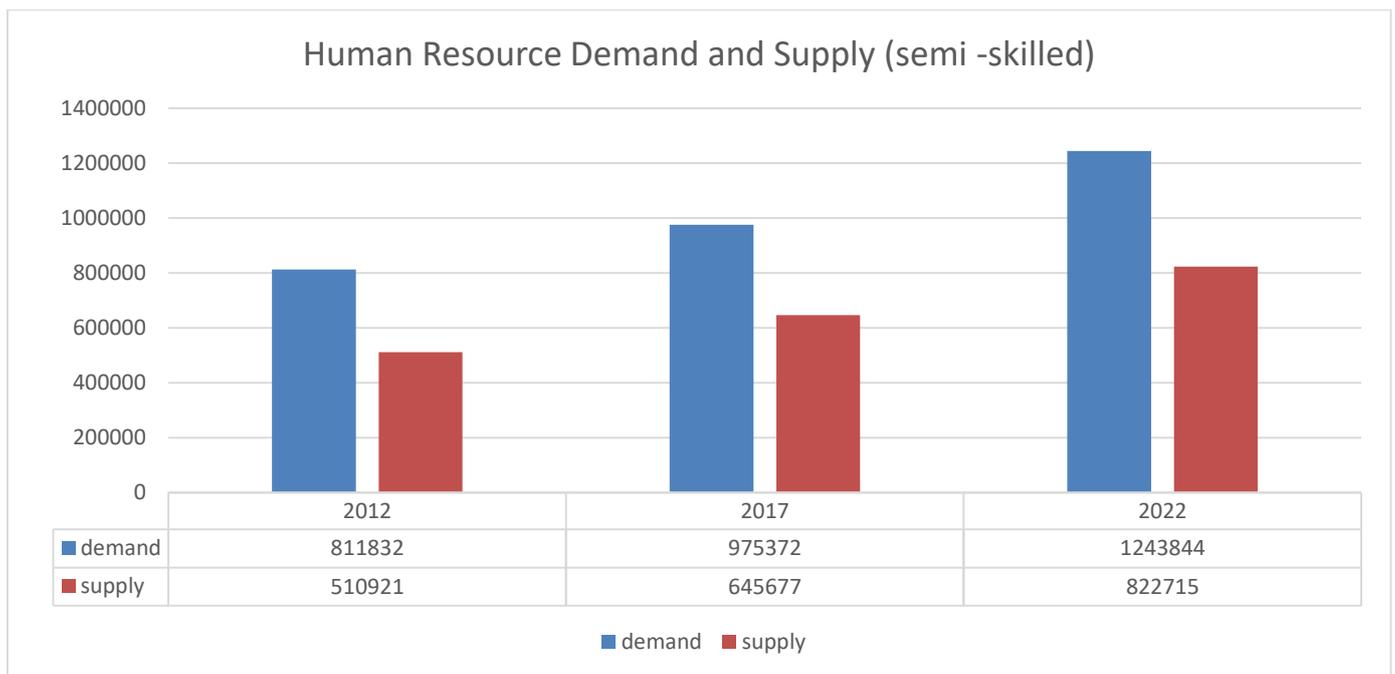


Figure 2 (Source- National Skill Development Corporation Report)

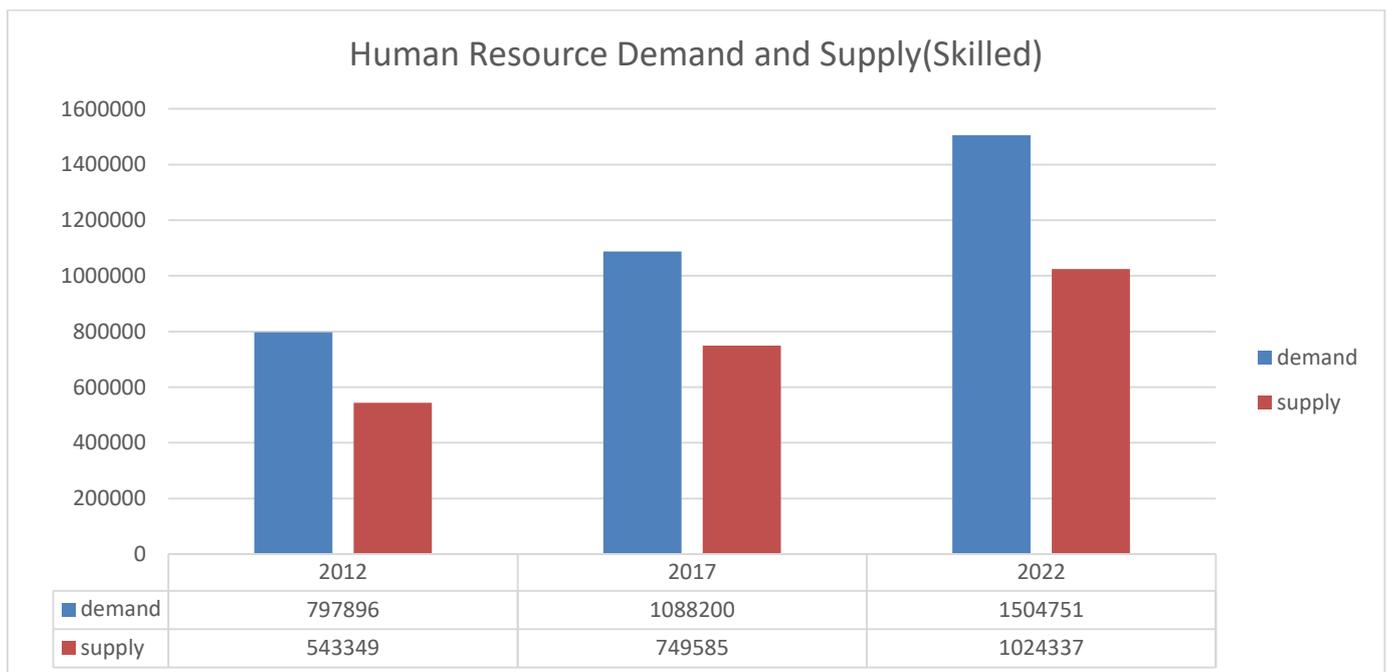


Figure 3 (Source- National Skill Development Corporation Report)

The data clearly depicts that there is a demand supply mismatch in the region. In the fore coming years, the following sectors will require maximum of human resource in both semi-skilled as well as skilled workforce. These sectors are Agriculture and allied services, Manufacturing, Tourism hospitality, and retail, Construction, Education, and Transportation and Logistics sector. Thus, the higher institutions should focus on training students in the following sectors by providing necessary training, courses and degree programs. This can help in solving employment problem as well as can help in solving migration problem. All this can help in increasing enrolment rate at both school as well as higher education level.

6. CONCLUSION :

The paper discussed the development of education sector in Uttarakhand and its challenges. Although the number of schools have increased over the period of time but the decline in enrolment in government schools present a very alarming situation. The total enrolment in government school has decreased from 209834 in 2013-14 to 180132 in 2017-18. However, at the same time the enrolment in private schools have increased at a steady rate. At present hundreds of schools still does not have a proper infrastructure facility with 826 school not having girl's toilet 810 schools did not have drinking water facilities and many hundreds of schools did not have other infrastructure facilities such as ramp, fences, playground, library, etc.

Various reports have also shown that there are more than 2044 schools have less than 10 students and thus will be closed by government in the year 2013-14. Various factors have been stated for low level of enrolment. Major factor being migration, lack of teachers, inadequate infrastructure facilities, competition from private schools. Thus, efforts should be made to improve the basic infrastructure facilities in schools (7).

In higher education the level of enrolment is low in hilly regions whereas urban regions had a good level of enrolment. The number of higher institutions in hilly regions is also very less as compared to urban areas. There is also a problem of lack of teaching faculty with teacher student ratio being 1:30 in the region(8). A large number of teaching position are also lying vacant in the higher education institutions. Many factors have contributed to such level of enrolment in hilly region majority being migration, inadequate infrastructure, lack of faculty, quality education.

Report from National Skill Development Corporation pointed at demand supply mismatch in the region. There was more demand of skilled and semi-skilled human resource than supply. This has been due to not focusing on key areas of job provider sectors in Uttarakhand. The report suggested that the following sectors will have the largest demand for the skilled and semi-skilled workforce which are Agriculture and allied services, Manufacturing, Tourism hospitality, and retail, Construction, Education, and Transportation and Logistics sector. Thus, the higher education institution should focus on these sector and train students accordingly. This can be very beneficial in solving migration problem, low level of enrolment of students in institutions and unemployment problems in the region.

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