

Status of Secondary Education in Bihar: An Overview

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Abstract

According to the Indian constitution, one of the fundamental rights is the right to education, and secondary education is an important sub-sector of the entire education system because it shapes and directs the child toward a bright future. Bihar has historically been a major centre of learning and is home to one of the oldest universities in the country, but the state's modern education system paints a different picture. Bihar has the lowest literacy rate in the country, at 61.80%, according to the latest census data. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the state of secondary education in Bihar. This research is based on content analysis, which includes newspaper articles, articles from reputable sites such as CENSUS, U-DISE, NUEPA, and NCERT, and reports from reputable sites such as CENSUS, U-DISE, NUEPA, and NCERT, among others. The data shows Bihar's vulnerability in achieving secondary education after analyzing several reports and articles. According to NUEPA statistics for 2014-15, Bihar's net enrolment ratio in secondary education fell to 42.08 percent, compared to 93.77 percent in primary education. Although the Bihar government has made significant efforts at the secondary level, such as making text books available to all secondary students at a low cost through BSTPC and introducing several schemes such as Bihar Shatabdi Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojna, Mukhyamantri Bicycle Yojna, and Shaikshnik Paribhraman Yojna, the overall transition rate from elementary to secondary education remains at 84.64 percent. The study of secondary education in Bihar highlighted the major issues that require immediate attention and action in order to ensure that high-quality education is maintained.

Keywords— *bihar, policies, secondary education, status*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education, as one of the fundamental rights, is critical to an individual's overall development, whether social or economic, as it manifests itself in a variety of ways, such as cognitive thinking, affirmative thought, and so on. The level of literacy and educational attainment of a society are important indicators of its progress. A number of steps have been taken by the government to ensure that all children receive a basic education. To put it another way, elementary education is an eight-year free and compulsory schooling programme that starts when a child is six years old. However, no steps have been taken to ensure that secondary education is universalized, as it is neither compulsory nor free. It acts as a link between elementary and secondary education, preparing young people between the ages of 14 and 18 for higher education. The gender gap has narrowed at the elementary level thanks to the implementation of several policy measures and the introduction of the Right to Education (RTE) Act in 2009 for children aged 6 to 14. Nonetheless, gender disparities in education persist, particularly at the secondary level

(IX-XII). India's education system is known as the 10+2 system, and it follows a uniform structure of school education. Until now, this system has been followed by all Indian states and union territories. However, according to the system, not all of them follow the same pattern. In India, there are four stages of schooling: primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary, with schooling lasting 12 years and following the "10+2 pattern." 'School education minus primary education should be termed secondary education,' according to Pathak (2012). (p.58). Secondary education consists of two stages: high school (IX and X classes) and higher secondary (IX and X classes) (i.e. XI and XIII classes). In the school education system, secondary education is the most important stage. It is at this point that the student is introduced to the various roles of science, humanities, and social sciences (Government of India, 1998). Individuals are prepared for higher education at this stage, and young people choose whether to pursue higher education or vocational education (Ramamamy, 2016). Within the first ten years of schooling, however, there are significant differences between the

various states in terms of organisational pattern. In India, it begins in class VIII or IX, depending on the states or union territories. Classes IX – X are taught in the secondary stage in 19 states/UTs, including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, UP, West Bengal, Andaman and Nicobar, Chandigarh, Delhi, and the Karaikal region of Pondicherry. Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Gujrat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Orissa, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshdeep, and Mahe & Yamen regions of Pondicherry are among the 13 states/UTs that have adopted the other stages, namely classes VIII to X.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research relies heavily on secondary data analysis. Various census reports, the District Census Handbook for all of Bihar's districts, the official website of the Officer of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, and the Economic Survey 2019-20, Finance Department, Government of Bihar were used to compile the data for this research paper.

III. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this paper is to investigate and analyze the state of secondary education in Bihar. Its goal is to identify the issues that students face while pursuing a secondary education. The purpose of this study is to see what opportunities the Bihar government offers in order to universalize secondary education. It also plans to look into Education Indicators for students in Bihar's secondary schools, such as Gender Parity Index, Gross Enrolment, Net Enrolment, Retention, Transition, and Drop-out Rates, among others.

IV. DISCUSSION

4.1 STATUS OF EDUCATION IN BIHAR

Bihar has historically been a major center of learning and is home to one of the oldest universities in the country since 5th century BC. It was here that Nalanda, a centre of excellence, existed; and it was here that a scientist of Aryabhata's stature pursued his mathematical and astronomical interests. In terms of statecraft, it was the kingdom where royal messages were communicated to the public via edicts, which, as Jawaharlal Nehru put it, "speaks to us in a language that we can understand and appreciate." Even after the destruction of Nalanda, the

land's connection to academic activities persisted—Abul Fazal-i-Allami mentions "good paper is manufactured here [in Rajgir]" in his monumental work *Ain-i-Akbari* (ghosh, P. Prabhat). With such a glorious history, would it not make us wonder how this land of profound academic tradition has been reduced to a state where more than one third of the population is devoid of letters? Even more distressing is the fact that nearly half of all women suffer from this basic infirmity.

Bihar's depressing literacy situation is the result of the government's long neglect of education. Bihar was a major seat of the First War of Independence in 1857 during British rule, and as a result, colonial rule was more oppressive here than in the rest of India. One part of that oppression in Bihar was the colonial administration's neglect of education. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that, in their eagerness to avoid anything colonial, the people of Bihar had also avoided formal schooling, which had been started by the British administration, albeit on a small scale, at the time. Furthermore, the colonial administration's entrenchment of feudal forces through the institution of Permanent Settlement severely hampered the spread of education in Bihar. The feudal lords, who were only interested in collecting rent, were uninterested in economic development, let alone social development through the spread of literacy. Unfortunately, even after independence, the colonial trend was allowed to continue through a development strategy that, rather than reducing regional economic and social disparities, exacerbated them by favoring the already-developed regions with resource allocations that pushed disadvantaged states like Bihar further behind, both economically and socially.

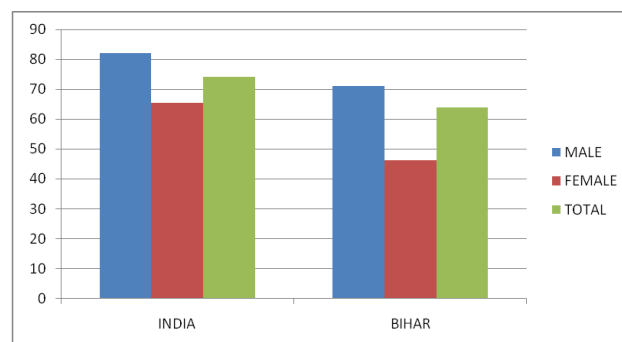


Fig.1: Literacy rate in India and Bihar

Source – (CENSUS 2011)

Although Bihar's literacy rate remains among the lowest in the country, the state has made significant progress in this area over the last decade. Bihar's literacy rate increased from 47.0 percent in 2001 to 61.8 percent in 2011, a 14.8 percentage point increase over the decade (fig.1). Not only is this decadal increase the highest among all decades since

1961, but it is also the highest among all Indian states for the decade 2001-2011. It's worth noting that the overall literacy rate in 2011 was 72.9 percent, up from 64.8 percent in 2001, implying an increase of 8.1 percentage points. Apart from having the highest increase in literacy rates, Bihar has also been able to reduce the gender gap in literacy rates significantly. In Bihar, male and female literacy rates were 60.3 percent and 33.6 percent, respectively, in 2001, implying a 26.7 percentage point difference.

In 2011, the male literacy rate was 71.2 percent and the female literacy rate was 51.5 percent, implying a 20.1 percentage point reduction in the gender gap. This was possible because the female literacy rate in Bihar increased by 17.9% over the decade, compared to 10.9 percent for males. Bihar's outstanding performance in promoting literacy can be attributed to two factors. First, as a result of increased awareness of social justice, demand for education has risen dramatically across the board, and second, the state government has significantly increased its education spending. Bihar has increased its total number of secondary schools from 40,934 in 2011-12 to 42,932 in 2017-18. In the same way, the number of upper primary schools grew from 236 in 2011-12 to 31,074 in 2017-18, bringing the total number of elementary schools to 74,006 from 41,170 in 2011-12.

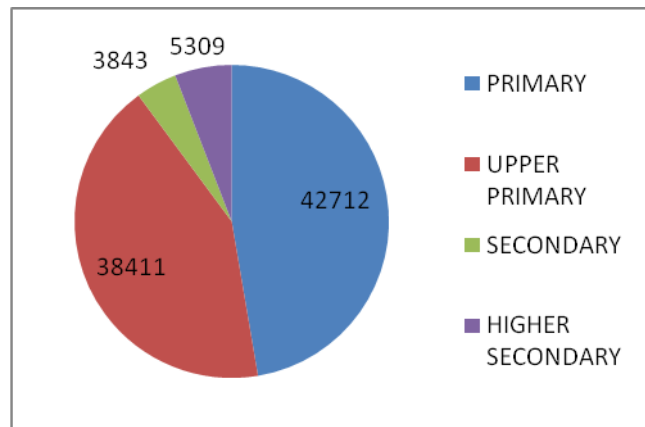


Fig. 2: Total number of schools in Bihar

Source - (U-DISE 2019-20)

Bihar still has a long way to go before secondary education is universally accessible to all. According to the UDISE REPORT, the projected population of 14-15 years old in Bihar is 11.50 percent of the total 14-15 year old population in the country. This percentage can be compared to the proportion of secondary schools in Bihar

compared to the total in the country to get a rough estimate of the size of the relevant age group population and their access to appropriate levels of schooling. Bihar's share of secondary institutions in India was 2.53 percent (UDISE, 2019), compared to 11.50 percent of the relevant age group population in the country. This clearly indicates that the state must increase its secondary school share in order to meet the growing demand for this level of education.

Since the 1970s, there has been a significant increase in the number of secondary educational institutes. When we compare the data from the STATISTICS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION (2011-12) to the U UDISE report for 2019-2020, we can see that the total number of schools has increased dramatically. There were 42112 primary schools, 27620 upper primary schools, 2608 secondary schools, and 2492 senior secondary schools in the 2011-12 school year. At the moment, the data (fig 2) shows that there are 42712 primary schools, 38411 upper primary schools, 3843 secondary schools, and 5309 high secondary schools. Only 4% of secondary schools in the state exist, compared to 47% of primary schools. There are only 3843 secondary schools in 38 districts, which is a major source of concern.

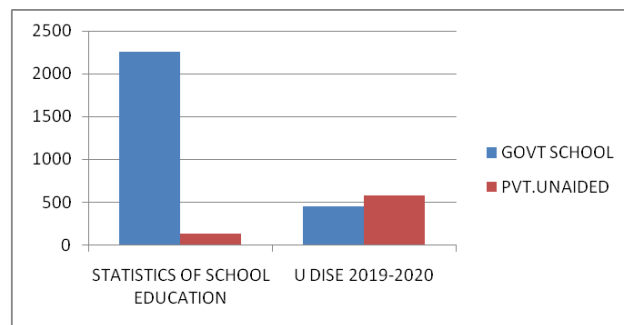


Fig.3: Percentage of secondary schools against total no of secondary schools

Source - U DISE+ (2019- 2020) & STATISTICS OF SCHOOL EDUCATION (2011-12)

The number of secondary education institutions by management (fig 3) shows the two types of managements: government and private unaided. At the secondary level, we have seen an increase in the percentage of private unaided schools, while the percentage of government schools has decreased significantly. When comparing the Statistics of School Education report from 2011-12 with the U-DISE report from 2019-20, it becomes clear that private schools have played an increasingly important role in Bihar in recent years.

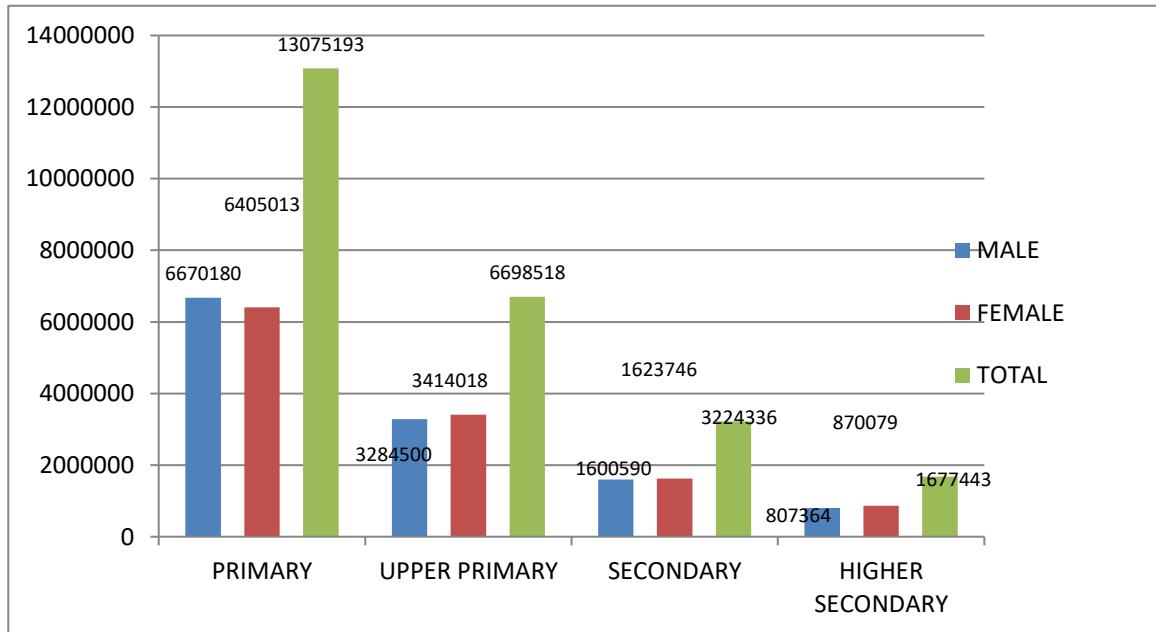


Fig.4: Enrollment Rate

Source- U-DISE+ (2019-2020)

An enrollment program determines how many students are enrolled in any educational institution, whether it is a school or a university. It is necessary for everyone to know how many times a person has attended his or her class or lecture. Because enrollment reflects how well and well-known an educational system is. The only way to have a great education system these days is to first perfect their enrollment system. In order to create a perfect school and college in terms of educational management, it is critical that you first create a great enrollment system in which your institute is praised for its method of education unless there are a large number of students who want to be educated.

According to the 2019-2020 U-DISE+ report (FIG 4), there is a significant enrollment gap at the class level. Total enrollment was 13 million at the primary level, but dropped to 3.2 million at the secondary level. There is also a significant gender divide. At the primary school level, male enrollment is 6.6 million, while female enrollment is 6.4 million. At the secondary level, both genders see a decrease in their numbers. Transitioning is a period of dropout for both genders, but especially for girls. Primary education has grown significantly since the implementation of RTE, while secondary education has been neglected.

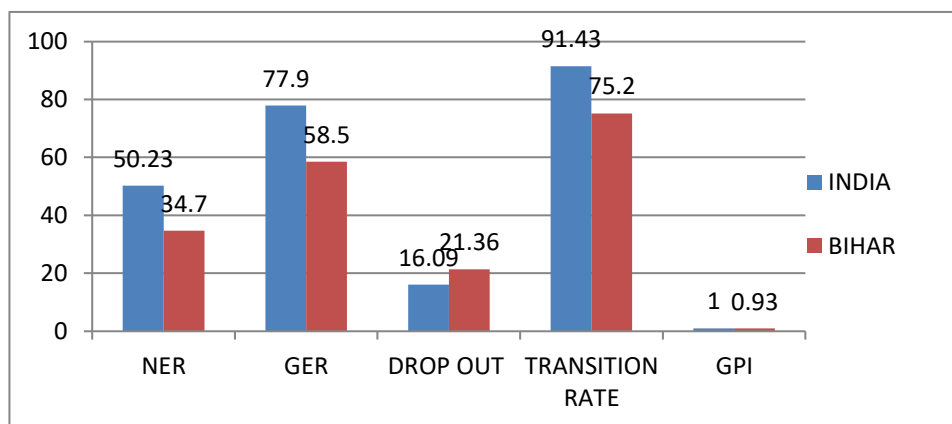


Fig.5: Education Indicators

Source- (U-DISE 2019-20)

The table above depicts the current state of secondary education in the United States. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics defines the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) as the enrolment of the official age-group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population. Bihar has a NER of 34.7 percent, while India has a NER of 50.23 percent.

The number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education, as defined by UNESCO. It's calculated by multiplying the number of students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, by the population of the age group that corresponds to that level of education. According to the above data, Bihar has only 58 percent GER at the secondary level, while India has 77 percent. The target should be higher than 100. A large number of students drop out of secondary school. Bihar's dropout rate is 27 percent, which is higher than India's overall dropout rate of 16 percent at the secondary level. The reasons may differ from one person to the next. According to the NITI AYOJ's Multidimensional Poverty Index, 2021, Bihar is the poorest state in the country, with 51 percent of the population living in poverty, which is one of the main reasons for students dropping out of school. One of the reasons for early marriage is poverty. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4, 2015-16), 39.1% of women in India between the ages of 20 and 24 marry before they turn 18 years old. The problem is much worse in Bihar, where 42.5 percent of girls in this age group are married before they turn 18. . Though over the years the situation has improved in the state, some worrying statistics show that districts like Supaul accounted for more than 56% of girl child marriage, while Begusarai (53.2%), Jamui (50.8%), Samastipur (49.6%) and Gaya (47.6%) closely followed. Girls drop out due to a variety of factors, including distance. Efforts such as the distribution of bicycles to girls and the hiring of escorts (Tola Sevaks in Bihar) make schooling safer for girls and increase their retention. Girls' age-appropriate enrolment in secondary schools has been shown to increase by 30% in programmes like the former. The availability of usable toilets in schools needs to be improved. Traditional gender norms push girls to help with household chores and sibling care at this stage, resulting in irregular attendance and eventual dropout. Early marriage, a lack of safety in schools, and low educational aspirations for girls all contribute to their dropping out.

According to the U DISE + report, Bihar's GPI is 0.93, compared to India's 1; Bihar's transition rate is around 75%, which is lower than India's 91 percent.

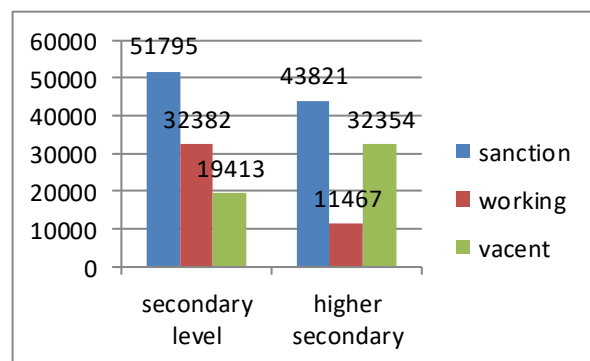


Fig.6: Secondary school teacher status (sanctioned, working, vacant) under state & samagra shiksha –(2020-21)

Source- (AWP & B. 2019-20 & 2020-21)

Teachers play a critical role in shaping and moulding a child's future. The fulcrum of the educational system is teachers. Teachers with advanced degrees are required to improve the quality of education. However, a shortage of qualified teachers is a common feature of the Indian education system. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), India's school system is still short on teachers and suffers from a poor student-teacher ratio, with up to 69 percent of teachers working without contracts. In the years 2019-20 and 2020-21, the status of secondary and higher secondary school teachers in Bihar is explained in the table above. In the 2019-20 school year, there were 76440 sanctioned posts for secondary school teachers, with 41174 teachers working and 35266 vacant seats. In Higher Secondary, there were 28128 sanctioned posts and 11182 working posts, with 16946 vacant seats.

In the academic year 2020-2021, 51795 secondary seats were sanctioned, 32382 teachers were appointed, and 19413 seats were vacant. At the secondary level, the situation is even worse, with only 11467 teachers appointed out of 43821 sanctioned seats, leaving 32354 seats vacant. At secondary level, vacant seats accounted for 46 percent of total sanctioned posts in 2019, and 36 percent in 2021.

The reasons for the teacher shortage are a lack of regular recruitment, not clearing positions, bungled teacher deployment, and a lack of specialist teachers for certain subjects and small schools, all of which result in a thin distribution of available teachers.

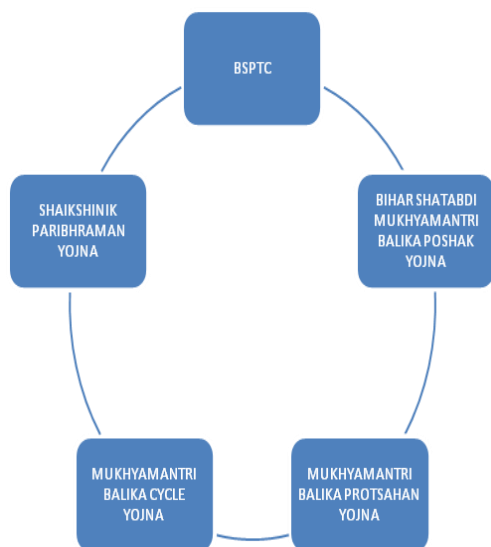


Fig.7: State Initiatives

1. The state government has made arrangements to make text books available to all secondary school students at a low cost through the Bihar State Text Book Publishing Corporation's distribution network (BSTPC).

2. Bihar Shatabdi Mukhyamantri Balika Poshak Yojna: The state government is providing Rs1000 school uniforms to girls in class 9 who have at least 75% attendance (by the month of September).
3. Mukhyamantri Balika Protsahan yojna: Incentive of Rs 10000/- per girl in the form of cash grant to the girl students, who have secured 1st class in class 10th secondary school leaving Exam.
4. Mukhyamantri bicycle yojna : Rs. 2500/ - per Girl student of 9th class for procurement of Bicycle is provided by the state Government, subject to the student having at- least 75% attendance by the month of September.
5. Shaikshnik Paribhraman yojna – Rs 10000 to every school is being given by the state government for excursion tour to the students.

| DISTRICT NAME | SECONDARY SCHOOLS | ENROLMENT (IX-X) | TEACHERS | CLASS-ROOMS | PT R | C TR | SC R |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------|----------|-------------|-------|------|--------|
| ARARIA | 46 | 24242 | 320 | 198 | 75.76 | 1.62 | 122.43 |
| ARWAL | 39 | 19871 | 281 | 199 | 70.72 | 1.41 | 99.85 |
| AURANGABAD | 92 | 53083 | 777 | 535 | 68.32 | 1.45 | 99.22 |
| BANKA | 72 | 27902 | 525 | 327 | 53.15 | 1.61 | 85.33 |
| BEGUSARAI | 84 | 45782 | 731 | 488 | 62.63 | 1.5 | 93.82 |
| BHAGALPUR | 111 | 51113 | 986 | 574 | 51.84 | 1.72 | 89.05 |
| BHOJPUR | 117 | 55376 | 1087 | 666 | 50.94 | 1.63 | 83.15 |
| BUXAR | 71 | 39149 | 710 | 484 | 55.14 | 1.47 | 80.89 |
| DARBHANGA | 79 | 47022 | 784 | 469 | 59.98 | 1.67 | 100.26 |
| GAYA | 128 | 72109 | 1094 | 873 | 65.91 | 1.25 | 82.6 |
| GOPALGANJ | 61 | 52445 | 614 | 467 | 85.42 | 1.31 | 112.3 |
| JAMUI | 46 | 24278 | 336 | 211 | 72.26 | 1.59 | 115.06 |
| JEHANABAD | 43 | 24386 | 356 | 265 | 68.5 | 1.34 | 92.02 |
| KAIMUR | 45 | 32407 | 442 | 321 | 73.32 | 1.38 | 100.96 |
| KATI HAR | 58 | 34075 | 522 | 275 | 65.28 | 1.9 | 123.91 |
| KHAGARIA | 41 | 25297 | 338 | 176 | 74.84 | 1.92 | 143.73 |
| KISHANGANJ | 25 | 12056 | 169 | 144 | 71.34 | 1.17 | 83.72 |
| LAKKHISARAI | 43 | 18007 | 315 | 178 | 57.17 | 1.77 | 101.16 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| MADHEPUR | 50 | 29287 | 397 | 222 | 73.77 | 1.79 | 131.92 |
| MADHUBANI | 122 | 61771 | 1126 | 600 | 54.86 | 1.88 | 102.95 |
| MUNGER | 74 | 29193 | 695 | 299 | 42 | 2.32 | 97.64 |
| MUZAFFARPUR | 111 | 70481 | 1081 | 583 | 65.2 | 1.85 | 120.89 |
| NALANDA | 136 | 49712 | 1102 | 626 | 45.11 | 1.76 | 79.41 |
| NAWADA | 66 | 40107 | 537 | 391 | 74.69 | 1.37 | 102.58 |
| PASHCHIM CHAMPARAN | 66 | 35325 | 559 | 352 | 63.19 | 1.59 | 100.36 |
| PATNA | 214 | 91035 | 2830 | 1168 | 32.17 | 2.42 | 77.94 |
| PURBI CHAMPARAN | 93 | 63538 | 834 | 602 | 76.18 | 1.39 | 105.54 |
| PURNIA | 59 | 30117 | 529 | 342 | 56.93 | 1.55 | 88.06 |
| ROHTAS | 119 | 68166 | 864 | 703 | 78.9 | 1.23 | 96.96 |
| SAHARSA | 48 | 20068 | 430 | 194 | 46.67 | 2.22 | 103.44 |
| SAMASTIPUR | 111 | 67253 | 984 | 621 | 68.35 | 1.58 | 108.3 |
| SARAN | 127 | 89741 | 1157 | 762 | 77.56 | 1.52 | 117.77 |
| SHEIKHPURA | 30 | 11002 | 240 | 148 | 45.84 | 1.62 | 74.34 |
| SHEOHAR | 12 | 5325 | 87 | 73 | 61.21 | 1.19 | 72.95 |
| SITAMARHI | 63 | 33950 | 568 | 326 | 59.77 | 1.74 | 104.14 |
| SIWAN | 95 | 63834 | 942 | 591 | 67.76 | 1.59 | 108.01 |
| SUPAUL | 50 | 25435 | 431 | 282 | 59.01 | 1.53 | 90.2 |
| VAISHALI | 90 | 71781 | 776 | 567 | 92.5 | 1.37 | 126.6 |
| BIHAR | 2,937 | 1615721 | 26556776 | 16302 | 60.84 | 1.63 | 99.11 |

Fig.8: Education Indicators

V. CONCLUSION

The government should ensure the safety of school-aged students by making public transportation more affordable and safe, building separate toilets for girls, and maintaining a balance of male and female teachers in schools. The Bihar government's Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Cycle Distribution Program is a good initiative. Parents should be made aware that in the twenty-first century, boys and girls are not unequal, and that a well-groomed girl can perform better than a well-groomed boy in terms of employment. More participation will be ensured by encouraging women to form self-help groups in villages, reserving jobs for girls, and reserving seats in the legislature. Improving the infrastructure of schools as well as the quality of teachers. Initiatives such as the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana will relieve parents of the burden of marriage. More participation will be ensured if this subject is linked to the completion of schooling. Skill-based training for girls in schools, such as courses in IT, sewing, painting, and restaurants, among other things. The time has

come for the government to expand its RTE initiative from primary to secondary school. The age limit for compulsory and free education should be raised to 18 years of schooling. According to experts, if we increase women's participation in the workforce by 10%, GDP will rise to double digits.

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