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Status of the Secondary and Senior Secondary Education Sector of Madhya Pradesh in Comparison with BIMARU (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh) States

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Abstract: ***Secondary and Senior Secondary education plays a formidable role in the career development of an individual. Traditionally the Indian education sector has primarily focused on schooling till the elementary education sector. This study attempts to trace the growth of secondary and senior secondary education sector in the state of Madhya Pradesh with a comparative analysis drawn with BIMARU states. This micro-level study provides insights for framing holistic policies to ensure equitable access to education.***

Keywords: Secondary Education, Senior Secondary Education, Madhya Pradesh, Education Sector, BIMARU States, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Pupil-Teacher Ratio, Gender Parity Index, Dropout Ratio

I. INTRODUCTION

Education forms the premise in determining the living standard of an individual. Literacy levels are an indispensable tool in determining the development of a society. It is Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that recognizes education as a right and states, 'Everyone has the Right to Education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.' However, Global regional disparities continue to exist in guaranteeing this right. While some countries in the West have successfully achieved a literacy rate of more than 90 percent other countries in the Middle East and South Asia were still struggling to achieve universal literacy rates (2020). As per United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) data for the year ending 2018, 258 million children are out of school and only six in ten young people will complete. If a comparison is drawn between the literacy rates of SAARC Nations, India still falls behind despite toiling hard in this arena (as per the 2011 Census[4]). In India, at the time of independence, the literacy rate was pegged at 12.2 percent. Post-Independence, the idea of Universal Education for the age group of 6-14 years was envisaged. However, initially, this right was not inserted in the Fundamental Rights but the non-justiciable Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 45).

Further, it was in 2002 that the enactment of the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act (2002) changed the subject nature of Article 45. The Right to Education was inserted in the ambit of Article 21A. As a result, the government had to ascertain the provision of early childhood care and education for children up to the age of 14 years. The Indian Parliament took a step further and enacted the Right to Education Act (2009) which came into effect on April 1, 2010. Thus, making India one of the 135 countries which have incorporated education as a Fundamental Right of each student.

II. EDUCATION SECTOR: STATE-WISE COMPARISON

In India, there exists wide regional disparities in terms of availability and access to quality education. These disparities can be seen between the states where Kerala, enlists a record high literacy rate of 96.2 percent, and states like Madhya Pradesh having a literacy rate of 73 percent. (NSO, 2020). The following figure elucidates the state-wise literacy gaps in India.

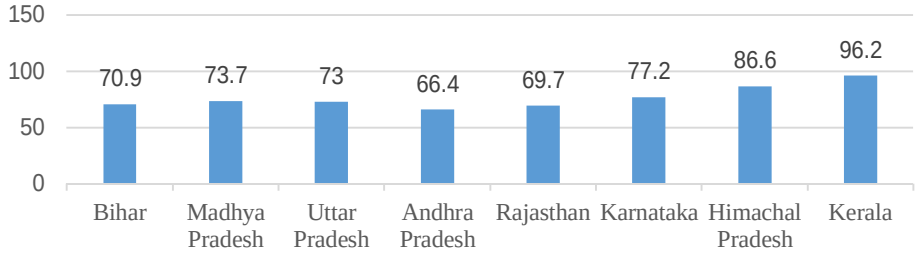


Fig. 1 State-Wise Literacy Rates (2017-18) (in %)

Source: NSS 75th Round Survey July 2017-June 2018[2]

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The state of Rajasthan had seen the highest decadal increase in the 2001 Census[4] where the literacy rate of Age of 7 and above increased from 38.55 percent in 1991 to 61.35 in 2001. However, Rajasthan is still a part of the four 'BIMARU' states (namely Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh) that consist of 445.1 million people of the total Indian population. The literacy rates of these four states failed to touch even the 75 percent mark (as per 2017) and hence pulled down the entire country's average.

This paper attempts to study the performance of Madhya Pradesh across important indicators of education. It further draws a comparison of Madhya Pradesh's performance with the other BIMARU states.

III. EDUCATION SECTOR OF MADHYA PRADESH

The heart of India, Madhya Pradesh, is one of the largest states of the country with a population of 7.27 crore (2011). In 1991, it was an underdeveloped state with a literacy rate of 44 percent only. The situation was so grave that less than one-third of the women were literate. However, this gap narrowed in 2001 when the literacy rate saw a massive jump of 20 percentage points in a single decade (1991-2001). This was a result of the government's sustained and implementation of innovative programs.

In the year 2000, mass education campaigns like *Padhna-Badhana Sangha* were initiated to educate the illiterates. (P.R. Pachamukhi, 2006). Moreover, the effective decentralization of the education delivery model added to the success of Madhya Pradesh. This decentralization was carried out by the revolutionary Education Guarantee Scheme, 1997 (EGS). EGS shifted the responsibility for ensuring primary and adult education to local and district bodies. (P.R. Panchamukhi, 2006). However, this growth was again stagnated in the following years between 2001 to 2011.

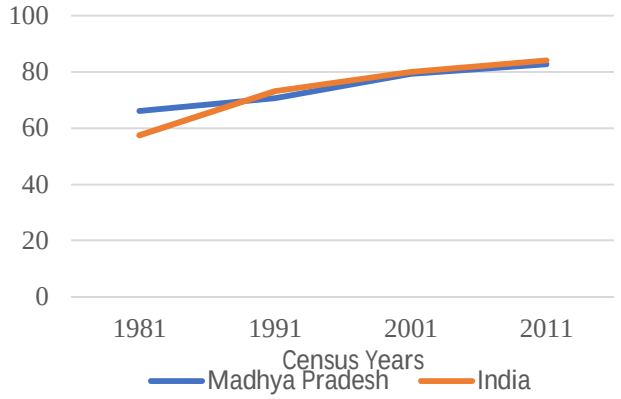


Fig. 2 Literacy Rate of Madhya Pradesh as compared to the National Literacy Rate (in %)

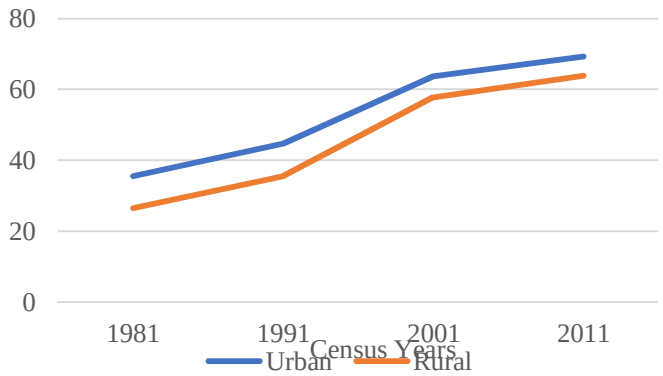


Fig. 3 Literacy Rate of Madhya Pradesh: Rural and Urban Areas (in %)

A glance at the above statistics reflects that the overall literacy rate along with the urban and rural literacy rates have increased significantly in Madhya Pradesh. However, the national average remains higher than the literacy rate of Madhya Pradesh. The highest increment of 19 percent occurred between the decade 1991-2001 lowest increment of 5.6 percent occurred in the decade between 2001-2011

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IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are *(A.)* To analyze the dynamics of the secondary and senior secondary education sector of Madhya Pradesh across different indicators in comparison with BIMARU states*; (B.)* To suggest possible policies, recommendations, and innovations to improve the secondary and senior secondary education sector of Madhya Pradesh

V. METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected from the following two sources.

A. Primary Data

The data was collected using Random Sampling Technique. A questionnaire was prepared to understand the on-ground dynamics of secondary and senior secondary schools in Madhya Pradesh. Responses were collected from secondary and senior secondary school teachers across various districts of Madhya Pradesh. Telephonic conversations were held with teachers from Private schools and schools run by the government of Madhya Pradesh.

B. Secondary Data

Information was collected from various websites, portals and Reports like; *(A.) U-DISE+, (B.) Ministry of Education, (C.) NITI Aayog, (D.) MP Education Portal, (E.) National Education Policy 2020, (F.) Other articles, journals, newspapers, etc.*

VI. ABOUT SECONDARY AND SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS

Secondary Education (Class XI-X) and Senior Secondary Education (Classes XI-XII) play a formidable role in shaping an individual's career by providing a subject and interest-specific study. Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) stresses on encouraging different forms of secondary education. It emerges that secondary education is acquiring the pure public good nature of education. Following this, secondary education enrolment has already been universal among many developed and industrialized nations (Geetha Rani, 2014). However, regional disparities still persist.

The indicators discussed in the following section will aid in determining the quality of education prevalent in Madhya Pradesh at secondary and senior secondary levels.

VII. GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO AT SECONDARY AND SENIOR SECONDARY LEVELS

The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is a widely used statistical tool. GER is the "specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education" (UNESCO). It appropriately mirrors a state's success in ensuring Education Cover for all.

An analysis of the 2011 Census[4] represents a stark difference between the male and female literacy rate in the state, the former stood at 80.53 percent, and the latter stood at 60.02 percent. Therefore, a 20.51 percentage point gap persisted between the two genders. In 2011-12 Madhya Pradesh recorded 7.34% of the total senior secondary education enrolment in the country and stood fourth in the list of states after Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh. In the same year, 7,57,281 students enrolled in Class XIIth. However, the state saw a pass percentage of 69.23% (2012) in CBSE board examinations as opposed to the national pass percentage of 80.19%.

Table 1

Gross Enrolment Rate At Secondary Education Level (In %)

Region	Year								
	2013-14			2014-15			2015-16		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Madhya Pradesh	84.15	82.45	83.35	80.99	79.26	80.18	81.54	79.30	80.49
Bihar	57.66	62.96	60.08	65.08	73.85	69.09	72.42	85.43	78.37
Rajasthan	85.33	71.02`	78.68	82.67	68.62	76.16	81.15	70.12	76.06
Uttar Pradesh	66.52	65.79	66.18	67.85	67.73	67.79	67.65	67.86	67.75
Kerala	103.83	101.12	102.51	103.63	102.82	103.24	102.31	102.58	102.44
India	76.80	76.47	76.64	78.13	78.94	78.51	79.16	80.97	80.01

Source: MHRD

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Table 1 elucidates the GER of Madhya Pradesh in consecutive years in comparison with Kerala, BIMARU states, and the corresponding All-India Average. It is interesting to note that according to the secondary education MHRD data for 2013-14 Kerala has outperformed all the states, however, there exists a wide disparity in GER levels of Kerala and BIMARU states. Interestingly, Bihar which over the years has become synonymous with poverty, unemployment, prevailing net-out migration has registered the highest Gross Enrolment Ratio growth among the BIMARU states. GER in Bihar has witnessed an 18 percentage point growth whereas Madhya Pradesh has seen a fall in GER. The drop can probably be attributed to poor schooling infrastructure, lack of means to access quality education.

The GER at the senior secondary level in Madhya Pradesh increased from 30.16% (2012) to 44.76% (2013) (Flash statistics 2012,2013). However, in the same year, the pass percentage saw a significant drop of 3.74 percent. According to the data published by UDISE[7], the enrolment in schools offering secondary education (9-10th) has remained stagnant except for an increase of one percent since 2013. Moreover, the number of schools increased but interestingly the number of classrooms in the state had decreased by 15 percent since 2016-17. Therefore, it can be substantiated that with an increasing number of schools but decreasing number of classrooms, the number of students in each classroom is increasing. The number of classrooms in the urban areas has witnessed a drop of twenty percent from 2016-17 to 2017-18. Interestingly, the decline in the number of classrooms has been less in rural Madhya Pradesh as compared to urban Madhya Pradesh. Notably, the total number of secondary classrooms in Madhya Pradesh comprises only six percent of the total secondary classrooms in India.

According to MHRD data for the year 2018, the BIMARU states have performed at equal levels at the senior secondary education level. Whereas MP has witnessed a decimal percentage point increase from (2013-2016) Bihar has taken a great leap of 12 percentage points both in the girl gross enrolment ratio and the overall GER. Uttar Pradesh however has recorded a fall in its enrolment levels.

VIII. GENDER PARITY INDEX BASED ON GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO

The Gender Parity Index (GPI) is a statistical tool used to measure the enrolment of girls in comparison to boys. GPI is the ratio of female students enrolled at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education to the corresponding number of male students in each level (MHRD).

"If you educate a man, you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman, you educate an entire civilization." - Mahatma Gandhi

A women's role in nurturing the future generation with the power of education is crucial. However, the performance of Madhya Pradesh has remained subpar in maintaining gender parity at schools. Notably, Madhya Pradesh's gender literacy gap in the decades 2000 to 2020 has been 15.7, which is more than the All-India Average of 14.4 (MoSPI 2020). In terms of GPI, it has increased towards the ideal 1.00 limit between the decade 2005-2015 in Madhya Pradesh.

Table 2. Gender Parity Index For Secondary Education

Region	Year				
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Bihar	1.07	1.10	1.12	1.10	1.11
M.P.	0.95	0.93	0.94	0.94	0.93
Rajasthan	0.81	0.83	0.85	0.87	0.89
U.P.	1.01	0.99	0.95	0.93	0.94
Kerala	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.99	0.99
India	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.99	1.00

Source: MHRD, UDISE+[7]

At the Secondary Education level, in the year 2018-2019, Madhya Pradesh had a GPI of 0.93 against the ideal GPI of 1.00 at the all-India level. A glance at the time-series data from 2014 to 2019, highlights various developments under this indicator. Between this time frame, there were only marginal fluctuations in the case of Madhya Pradesh, with an average GPI of 0.94. In comparison with other BIMARU states, Bihar has a GPI crossing the ideal 1.00 in all these years. This indicates that Bihar had more girls attending school than boys. In stark contrast, Rajasthan's GPI did not even cross the 0.90 mark during these years.

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Table 3
Gender Parity Index For Senior Secondary Education

Region	Year				
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Bihar	0.93	1.10	0.95	0.92	1.00
M.P.	0.88	0.93	0.93	0.94	0.95
Rajasthan	0.74	0.83	0.79	0.8	0.83
U.P.	1.02	0.99	1.01	0.98	0.96
Kerala	1.13	1.13	1.15	1.15	1.12
India	0.98	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.03

Source: MHRD, UDISE+[7]

At the Senior Secondary Education level, in the year 2018-2019, Madhya Pradesh had a GPI of 0.95 whereas the national average stood at 1.03. The time-series data from years 2014 to 2019, clearly marks the standing of BIMARU states under this indicator. In all these years, Madhya Pradesh has performed poorly in comparison to the national average. While Bihar and Uttar Pradesh's performance is similar to Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan remained far behind.

In a random sampling survey, an attempt was made to understand the proportion of girls in Secondary and Senior Secondary levels of education in Madhya Pradesh.

Table 4
Proportion Of Girls In A Classroom Of Co-Ed Schools In Madhya Pradesh (In %)

S. No.	Category of School/ Percentage of girls	State Govt. Schools	Private Schools	Total
1	Up to 15% of a class is girls	-	-	-
2	16% to 25% of a class is girls	35	15	26
3	26% to 50% of a class is girls	52	67	58
4	Above 50% of the class is girl	13	20	16
	Total	61	39	100

In 58 percent of the total surveyed schools, an average class consisted of 26 percent to 50 percent girls. On the higher side, in 16 percent of these schools, an average class consisted of more than 50 percent girls. And on the lower side, in 26 percent of these schools, an average class consisted of less than 25 percent girls.

The scenarios vary in the case of State Government schools and Private Schools. In the state government schools, an alarming rate of 35 percent schools had less than 25 percent girls in an average classroom. On the other hand, about 13 percent of the state government schools had more girls than boys in an average classroom.

As reported by the respondents, the number of girl students in secondary and senior secondary levels has increased over the years. However, Madhya Pradesh still remains one of the states with a high number of female dropouts. Respondents stated that over the years, child marriage as a reason for dropping out has reduced, however, financial constraints and family's reluctance to teach girls remain prominent reasons for such dropouts. It was also mentioned that the provision of free cycles under the *Muft ki Cycle Scheme* by the Government of Madhya Pradesh helped in 'luring' girls to schools from IXth standard onwards.

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IX. AVERAGE ANNUAL DROPOUT RATE FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVEL

A dropout is a pupil who leaves school before the completion of a school stage or at some non-terminal point of a given level of education.

The increasing Gender Gap aggravates with a surging dropout rate in Madhya Pradesh. On December 2, 2019, Union Education Minister Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal in a written reply to an unstarred question (No.2113)[9] stated that 'Madhya Pradesh was among the five states across India that have an annual dropout rate higher than the current average of 4 percent.

Madhya Pradesh has been a pioneer in adopting various education schemes with a focus on the education of girl-child, e.g., Free Bicycle schemes, *Ruk Jaana Nahi Yojana* including several cash incentives. However, an alarming situation persists in the state education system. With every 100 boys, only 64 girls attended a Senior Secondary School and only 63 girls per 100 boys have the privilege of enrolling in high school (MHRD 2011). The dropout rate of girls had hit an all-time high of 26 percent in 2015. This rate was higher in states like Uttar Pradesh (10 percent) which had a lower literacy rate in 2011 (67.68 percent) as compared to Madhya Pradesh.

Table 5

Drop-Out Rate For All Categories In Secondary Education (Classes I-X) (In %)

Region	Year										
	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
M.P.	70.51	69.39	57.6	53.3	51.1	42.3	26.47	24.77	23.8	24.2	25.54
Kerala	1.30	-0.50	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14.46	12.32	N/A	N/A	9.14
India	59.88	56.71	54.2	52.7	49.3	50.3	17.06	N/A	N/A	N/A	18.14

Sources: MHRD, UDISE+[7]

The Average Annual Dropout Rate of Madhya Pradesh for Secondary Education (Classes I-X) became almost half from 57.6 percent, at the beginning of the decade (2008-2018), to 25.54 percent towards the end of it. Yet Madhya Pradesh remains one of the states with the highest overall Dropout Rate at the Secondary Level alongside Bihar, Assam, and Tripura (UDISE+ Report 2018-2019[7]). Moreover, as elucidated in table 8, Madhya Pradesh's performance under this indicator is subpar as compared to the National Average. It can be observed that Madhya Pradesh is still positioned at the place where the country was during the closing years of the 20th century. From 2004 to 2019 Madhya Pradesh's (MP) dropout rates have not been lower or equal to the National Average. In stark contrast, Kerala has done a significant job by keeping its dropout rates of Secondary Education low, with only 9.14 percent dropouts in 2018-2019.

Madhya Pradesh is the birthplace of the *Beti Bachao Andolan*, which was replicated as the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* Scheme by the Centre. Still, it falls in the group of states that are worst hit by female dropout rates at the secondary level (UDISE+ Report 2018-2019[7]). This scheme was launched in 2015 and the following years not only witnessed an increment in the female dropout rates but also the overall Dropout Rates. Madhya Pradesh is also the state with the highest number of dropouts from STs and is among the cluster of states that top the dropout charts for SCs at the Secondary level (UDISE+ Report 2018-2019[7]).

According to the National Sample Survey Office, the major reasons for dropout include financial constraints, engagement in economic or domestic activities, child marriages, long distance between home and school, and other reasons. While engagement in Economic Activities is the reason for 31 percent of the male dropouts of India, about 29 percent of female dropouts leave school to engage in domestic activities (NSSO).

In a random sample survey, conducted across various districts of Madhya Pradesh, an attempt was made to understand the prominent reasons for dropouts in Madhya Pradesh.

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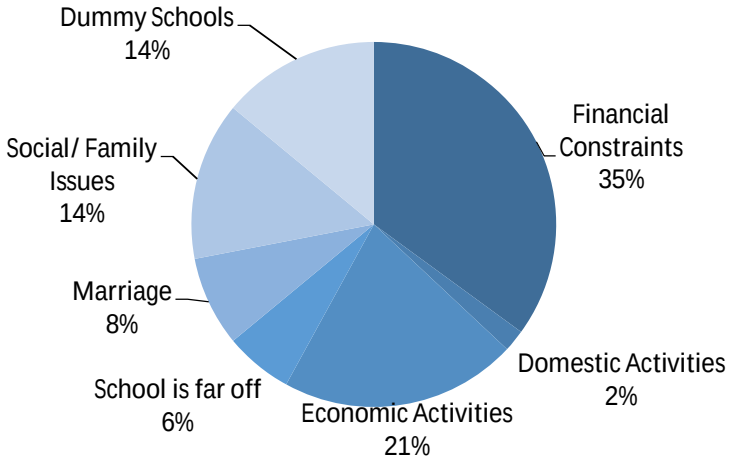


Fig. 4 Reasons for Dropouts in State Government Schools and Private Schools of Madhya Pradesh

The above chart illustrates that 'Financial Constraint' was the most prominent reason among the dropouts at the secondary and senior secondary levels in Madhya Pradesh. 'Social & Family issues', as well as 'Marriage', were other prominent reasons for dropouts in State Government schools. It was gathered from the respondents that societal taboos attached to educating girls encouraged families to withdraw them from schools after they complete their Primary education. It was also informed that, over the years, child marriages had reduced in the state, however, still, 9 percent of the dropouts occurred due to the same.

In the private schools of Madhya Pradesh, a unique scenario of dropouts persisted, where shifting to 'Dummy/Acting' schools was prevalent. Over 90 percent of the dropouts in these schools occurred because students preferred studying in dummy schools (coaching centers that tie-up with regular schools) after they pass X^{th} grade. It was informed by the respondents that the lack of career guidance blindside parents into believing that medicine and engineering were the only two professions that their child can pursue. This encouraged them to withdraw their child from schools and enroll them in coaching centers depriving the child of proper school education.

X. PUPIL-TEACHER RATIO FOR SECONDARY AND SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION LEVELS

'Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) is the average number of students per teacher at a specific level of education in a given school year. PTR is calculated by dividing the total number of pupils enrolled at a specific level of education by the number of teachers teaching pre-dominantly at that level.' (MHRD)

The *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) framework stipulates that the PTR at the Secondary level should be 30:1. In 2018-2019, the national PTR at the Senior Secondary level was ideal while it was below the stipulated 30 (i.e., 21) at the Secondary Education level.

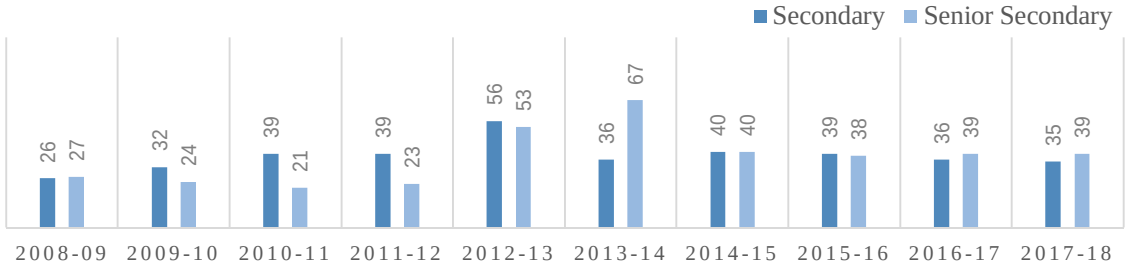


Fig. 5 Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Madhya Pradesh Over a Decade

Between the decade 2009 to 2019, Madhya Pradesh's PTR at the Secondary level remained above the stipulated ratio of 30:1. In all these years, it was also above the national average. At the Senior Secondary level, Madhya Pradesh's situation worsened over time with the ratio of 27:1 in 2008-2009 to 41:1 in 2018- 2019.

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Table 6. Pupil-Teacher Ratio At Secondary Level Of Education

Region	Year				
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Bihar	59	66	63	58	58
M.P.	39	40	36	35	36
Rajasthan	23	22	22	22	12
U.P.	57	56	54	48	48
Kerala	17	17	16	16	16
India	27	28	27	25	21

Table 7. Pupil-Teacher Ratio At Senior Secondary Level Of Education

Region	Year				
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Bihar	63	61	45	48	62
M.P.	40	38	39	39	41
Rajasthan	39	33	28	25	15
U.P.	105	98	90	81	48
Kerala	21	21	21	21	23
India	39	38	34	34	30

Between the years 2014 to 2019, at the Secondary level, the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh had a situation worse than Madhya Pradesh. On the contrary, PTR in Kerala, as well as Rajasthan, remained lower than the national average as well as the stipulated ratio of 30:1. This stark difference between the states reflects the poor deployment of teachers across the nation.

At the Senior Secondary level, the PTR was more than the PTR at the Secondary level for all the states in the corresponding years. Madhya Pradesh's performance was poor with an average PTR of 40 against the stipulated 30:1 ratio. Amongst other BIMARU states, Rajasthan performed better than others with an average PTR of 38. However, Bihar's and Uttar Pradesh's performance continued to remain subpar with an average PTR of 62 and 104 respectively. Even at the All-India level, the PTR remained above the stipulated 30:1 ratio before finally meeting the mark in 2018-2019.

The recruitment, service conditions, and redeployment of teachers are primarily in the domain of respective State Governments and Union Territory (UT) Administrations. However, the Central Government through the flagship programs of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) at the elementary level and *Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) at the secondary level assists the State Governments and UTs for additional teachers to maintain appropriate PTR as per the prescribed norms for various levels of schooling. (Press Information Bureau, GOI, MHRD 9 February 2017). Although a low PTR signifies better teaching conditions as it becomes easier to manage a small group of students for a teacher. However, in countries like India, high discrepancies in the PTR between the states show poor deployment of teachers and improper utilization of human resources.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

1) *Madhya Pradesh has seen a fall in the Gross Enrolment Ratio at the Secondary level of education.* This drop can be attributed to poor schooling infrastructure, lack of means to access quality education.
2) *The Gross Enrolment Ratio at the senior secondary level in Madhya Pradesh increased* from 2012 (30.16%) to 2013 (44.76%). However, in the same year, the pass percentage saw a significant drop of 3.74 percent.
3) In terms of GPI, according to the latest data (2018-2019), at the Secondary Education level, Madhya Pradesh had a GPI of 0.93 against the ideal GPI of 1.00 at the all-India level.
4) *Madhya Pradesh continues to report high female dropout rates at the secondary level of education***.** Although with time child marriage as a reason for dropout has reduced yet financial constraints continue to prevent enrolment of girl child in the schools, due to limited economic resources priority is given to teaching boys.
5) Between the decade 2009 to 2019, *Madhya Pradesh's PTR at the Secondary level remained above the stipulated ratio of 30:1***.** In all these years, it was also above the national average. *At the Senior Secondary level, Madhya Pradesh's situation worsened over time* with the ratio of 27:1 in 2008-2009 to 41:1 in 2018- 2019.

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XII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. It is recommended that the School Management Committees (SMC) mandated under the Right to Education Act should be replicated at the Secondary and Senior Secondary levels of education.

B. It is recommended that two *Chatra Vikas Kendras,* one for Class IXth to Xth and another for class XIth-XIIth, should be developed in each school. The students of class IXth will be assigned a mentor from Class Xth. This would ensure the exchange of knowledge, study material, and resources and hence ensure a smooth transition from one grade to another. The Mentor-Mentee model will be replicated in the *Chatra Vikas Kendra* of XIth to XIIth as well.

C. It is recommended that awareness sessions on topics pertaining to government schemes, financial literacy, etc. should be held by guest speakers from the concerned departments of the government. These sessions shall be conducted under *Chatra Vikas Kendras.*

D. It is proposed to Develop an Alumni Network (AlumNet) for each school. This will be headed by a senior secondary school teacher. The Alumni would guide students for career progression, entrepreneurial skills, and future studies.

E. It is suggested to Develop Academic Research Centres (ARCs) to facilitate research from an early stage. Research much be conducted in diverse fields covering Sciences, Commerce, and Humanities. Students must be incentivized and encouraged to take up research. Paper Presentation competitions should be conducted at Annual School fairs and zonal level competitions. To guide students with Research methodology, a Ph.D. A scholar should be assigned to schools and organize bi-monthly meetings.

F. It is proposed that a three-member Complaints Redressal Committee be established in secondary and senior secondary schools to address issues such as sexual harassment, substance abuse, bullying, cyberbullying, etc. It is recommended that the committee should be headed by a senior secondary teacher and must consist of two female teachers and a male teacher. An Online Portal should be developed to register the complaints.

G. It is recommended to ensure daily newspaper distribution of a leading national daily. Further, at each level of education from IX-XIIth, Monthly focus group discussions (FGDs) on current social, economic, national, and international issues should be held to ensure awareness-building and personality development of the students.

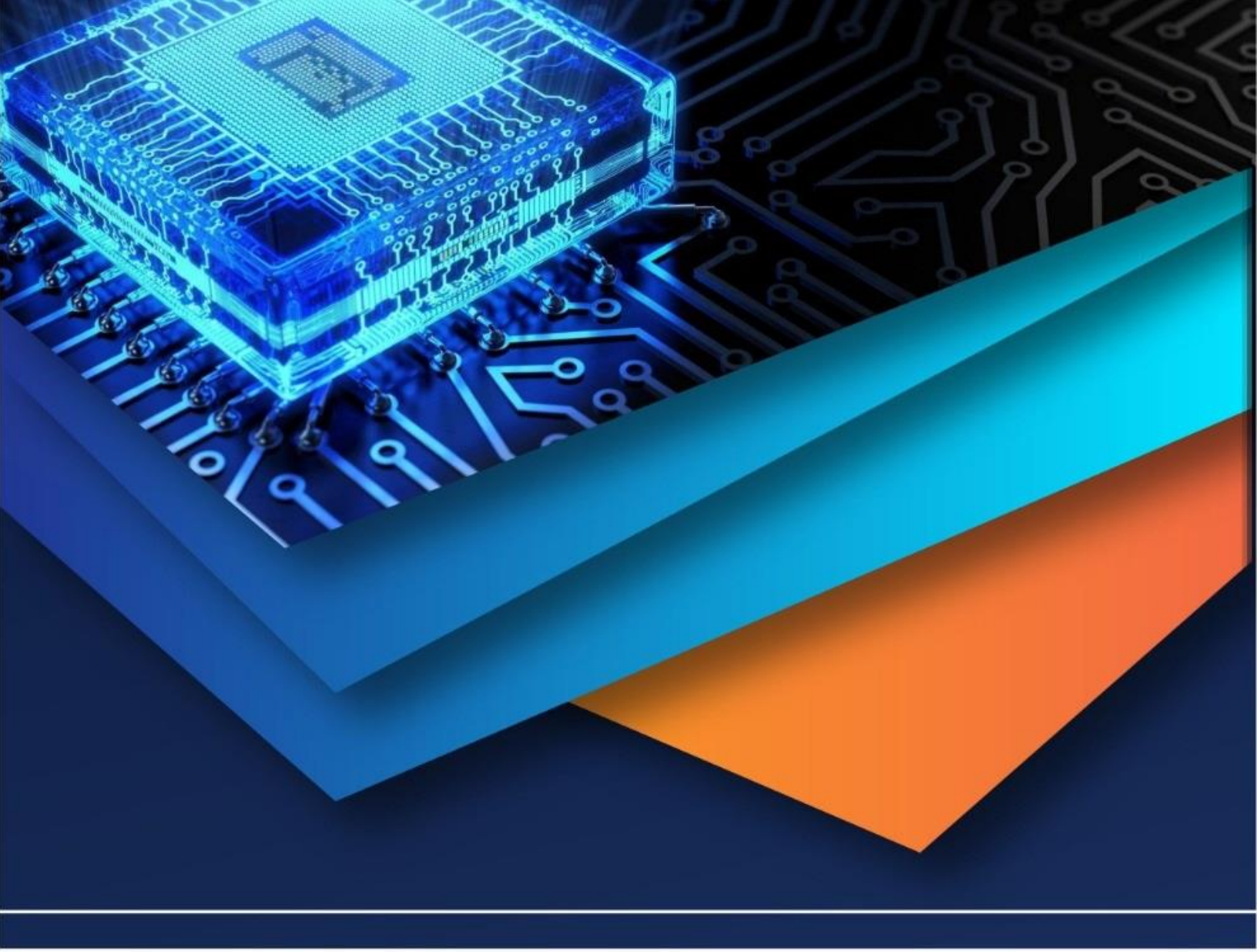
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