

Chapter II

Madhya Pradesh : Background of Elementary Education

The State of Madhya Pradesh, as its name implies, is centrally located in the country. It came into existence on 1st November, 1956, consequent upon re-organisation of the then States of Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Bhopal and Vindhya Pradesh as also the Sironj region of district Kota of Rajasthan. The Mahakoshal region of the new state comprising of 17 districts formed a part of the old Madhya Pradesh (known as Central Provinces and Berar, prior to independence), while Madhya Bharat was formed in May 1948 by integrating the princely states of central India and had 16 districts (Sunel, an enclosure of Mandasaur was excluded from the new state at the time of re-organisation.) The princely state of Bhopal, which had two districts was taken over by the central government in June 1949 and was given the status of a 'Part C' state in 1950. Similarly, the state of Vindhya Pradesh had come into existence as a result of the merger of a number of erstwhile princely states which, after passing through various phases of integration, were constituted into a 'Part C' state in 1950.

Physical Features

Location

Its boundaries touch seven states, namely Rajasthan in the north-east, Uttar Pradesh in the north, Bihar and Orissa in the east, Andhra Pradesh in the south and Maharashtra and Gujarat in the west and south-west respectively. The tropic of Cancer passes through the middle of the state. It extends over 17°46' to 26°30' north latitudes and 74°09' to 84°51' east longitudes.

Area

In terms of area, Madhya Pradesh is the biggest state in India with an area of 4,43,446 sq. kms. which is 13.49 per cent of the total area of the country. Nearly 30

per cent of the state is covered by forests and 43 per cent by non-cultivated tract. Geographically, it is more a part of the deccan plateau and can broadly be classified into six district physical regions : (a) Northern low lying Plains; (b) Malwa and Vindhya Plateau, (c) Narmada Valley; (d) Satpura Region; (e) Bastar Plateau and (f) Chhattisgarh Plains.

Demographic and administrative Informations are as follows -

Table 2:1

Population

Population (1991) (In Crores)	Total	Male	Female
Total	6.61	3.42	3.19
Rural	5.08 (76.79%)	2.61	2.47
Urban	1.53 (23.21%)	0.81	0.72
Scheduled Castes	0.96 (14.55%)	-	-
Scheduled Tribes	1.54 (23.27%)	-	-

Table 2:2

Literacy Rate

Literacy Rate (in %)	Total	Male	Female
Total	43.45	57.43	28.39
SC	37.41	49.91	23.76
ST	29.60	40.65	18.19

Table 2:3

Sex Ratio

Sex Ratio (no. of female per 1000)	Total	Rural	Urban
	932	944	893
Revenue Divisions	-	12	
Revenue Districts	-	61	
Education Divisions	-	13	

Education Districts	-	54
Tehsils	-	317
Towns	-	465
Blocks	-	459
Tribal Blocks	-	174
Gram Panchayat	-	30,922
Villages (inhabited)	-	71526
Vidhan Sabha seats	-	320
Lok Sabha seats	-	40
Population Density	-	149/ sq.km.

Table 2:4

Population by Languages

Language	Percentage of Population
Hindi	78.92%
Marathi	3.38%
Urdu	2.37%
Oriya	1.16%
Bengali	6.38%
Punjabi	0.38%
Gujarati	0.37%
Telugu	0.25%
Malayalam	0.11%
Tamil	6.07%
Others	12.61%
Total	100.00

Source : Census of India, 1981

Economy

Madhya Pradesh has an agriculture dominated economy as about 76 per cent of its population depends on agriculture. About 70 per cent of the state's workforce is engaged in agriculture activities, out of whom 52 per cent are cultivators and 24 per cent are mainly engaged in other occupations like trade, commerce, industry and mining.

About 50 per cent of the state's total income is derived from agriculture. Its mineral wealth includes an adequate range of useful products necessary for its industrial development. It has deposits of high grade iron and manganese, besides large deposits of mica, bauxite, lime-stone and diamond. Its other minerals are

coal, iron, quartz, silica sand, dolomite, corundum, asbestos, copper, fire clay, phosphorite, graphite and soap stone.

Education System

The structure of education in the state is based on the national pattern with 12 years of schooling, consisting of eight years of elementary education, that is five years of primary and three years of middle school education for the age groups 6-11 and 11-14 years respectively, followed by high and higher secondary school education of two years each besides three years of pre-primary education.

Schooling education is administratively managed by Directorate of Public Instruction, Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal. At district level, office of District Education Officer and at block level, office of Block Education Officer manage and coordinate schooling.

State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) does academic work at state level. The Council manages 4 state level Institutes, 10 Education colleges, 45 DIETs, 5 BTIs and 1 Institute of Pre-Primary Training. The Council also inspects and decides curriculum. It works for innovation and research in the field of education. Publication and distribution of text books is done by Madhya Pradesh Text Book Corporation. Examinations are conducted by Madhya Pradesh Board of Secondary Education. Rajiv Gandhi Prathmik Shiksha Mission implements DPEP for universalization of primary education.

Community Participation in Education

After 73rd Amendment Act, Madhya Pradesh became the first state which enacted new panchayat raj system in the state and formed PRIs. After formation of PRIs, state government gave several powers and duties to PRIs and education was one of such areas.

In rural areas all schools from Pre-primary to Higher Secondary Schools are managed and operated through panchayat. The main functions of Panchayats are -management of schools, operation of schools, construction and extension of school buildings, teaching aids in school, operation of non-formal education system, appointment of Shikshakarmies and implementation of promotion schemes.

Village Education Committee (VEC) is also one of the significant aspects of community participation in education. Every village has a VEC. The VECs are formed instead of School Development Committees. The VECs are empowered to see the presence of teachers, operation, control and inspection of schools, enrolment campaigns, ensure the enrolment of each school going age child in school and control the tendency of dropout.

Various Schemes related to Elementary Education

(A) Centrally Sponsored Schemes

1. Non-formal Education

This is a centrally sponsored scheme which is implemented in the state and looks into the fundamental rights and directive principles of education for all. Non-formal education centres are operated for the free and compulsory education of dropout children, working children and children of weaker sections of villages in deprived geographical areas.

The state has 340 projects in operation in 54 education districts, which sanctioned 34080 Non-formal education centres, out of which 31072 primary and 3008 are middle centres. In all 29790 centres are in operation.

Every project has 20 to 80 centres and every 10-12 centres have a part time supervisor. Every project has a project director along with a supportive subordinate staff. For the successful monitoring and planning of the scheme at divisional level, a divisional coordinator is appointed.

Presently in the state after three tier panchayati raj system the various powers like that of appointment of instructor or supervisor, inspection, payment of honorarium etc. are given to panchayats. Except state government centres, NGOs are also running their centres fully funded by central government.

2. Professional Education

Kothari Commission (1964-66) recommended for professional education at 10+2 level to provide employment oriented examination and to avoid crowding from college education.

Professional education means training for such subjects/areas where sufficient possibility for employment is available. The main objective of this education is to meet the necessity of man power for the development of the nation and to end the unemployment from the society.

In the year 1987-88 and 1988-89, 1112 courses were sanctioned in 369 Higher Secondary Schools.

3. Operation Black Board

Operation Black Board scheme was introduced in Madhya Pradesh in 1989-90. The funds were primarily utilized for teaching aids, sports articles/items and apparatus.

In the year 1996-97 under Eighth Five Year Plan Rs. 7.14 crore were received for the payments to teachers. The scheme was extended under Ninth Five Year Plan in the year 1997-98. The scheme was mainly for the appointment of additional teachers in schools.

4. Mid Day Meal Scheme

In the year 1995-96 Mid Day Meal Scheme was introduced in the government and aided primary schools of 297 blocks in the state. The school provides food to children. In the year 1997-98, the scheme was implemented in all the blocks of the state. In tribal regions the scheme provides prepared food and in non-tribal regions from September 1997 onwards the scheme of providing prepared food is stopped and now 3 kg. food is distributed for every child every month.

5. Minorities Welfare

For the welfare of minorities the Government of India launched Madarasa Modernization scheme. 102 Madarasas are assisted under this scheme. Rs. 36.18 Lakhs were disbursed for construction of Madarasas. 1100 posts of order Teachers were sanctioned in the year 1996-97 and post of 1000 "Urdu teachers" were sanctioned in the year 1997-98.

6. Class Project

Information related to computers and its utility is crucial for students. Looking into this aspect class project was started in Higher Secondary Schools from the year 1996-97. Under this project basic training of computers is imparted to class IX students. In addition to this, computer training for XI to XII class has been started in 300 Higher Secondary Schools.

(B) State Sponsored Schemes-

1. Free Books

The scheme provides free books to the students of class I to IV belonging to SC, ST and OBC category. This scheme of free books is for all girls up to class III and also for the boys of upto III class of families living below the poverty line. Books for the scheme are provided by Madhya Pradesh Text Book Corporation. In the year 1998-97 an amount of Rs. 4.00 crore was provided in the budget of school education for this purpose.

2. Book Bank Scheme

Book Bank Scheme provides books to the SC/ST students from class VI to XII. However, this scheme could make available the benefits to the students of class IX to XII due to paucity of funds.

3. Coordination between Primary Schools and Anganwadies

Integrated Child Development Scheme and Universalization of Primary Education are complimentary to each other. Due to lack of coordination between these two schemes at grassroots level, the expected results could not be achieved. Looking into this aspect the state government gave necessary instructions to subordinate officials to ensure better coordination between Primary Schools and Anganwadies.

4. Uniform to Girl Child

The state government provides school uniform to girl child SC, ST & OBC at primary level. This scheme helps in promoting girl child for schooling. This scheme has a budget of one crore every year.

5. Shishu Shiksha Scheme

Primary Education Mission concentrates on pre-school education of children. To make the children aware about school atmosphere and to develop the habits of learning among children of 3 to 5 years age, the state runs 4056 shishu shiksha kendras.

6. Health Check-up for school children

The scheme is basically of Health Department but School Education Department has a significant role in this scheme. The officials of Education Department coordinate with health to get done the health check-up of students in their respective areas.

7. Student Security Insurance Scheme

The state government implements student security insurance scheme for the students. The responsibility of execution has been handed over to 'The New India Insurance Company Limited'. This scheme gives Rs. 10,000=00 in case of death, Rs. 10,000=00 on total handicap and Rs. 5,000=00 in case of damage of one organ or partial handicap.

8. Education Guarantee Scheme

On January 1, 1997, the Government of Madhya Pradesh pioneered a community centred and rights-based initiative to universalise primary education called 'Education Guarantee Scheme' (EGS). Under the scheme, the government guaranteed provision of a teacher, her/his salaries, training of teacher, teaching-learning material and contingencies to start a school within 90 days wherever there was a demand from a community without a primary schooling facility within 1 km. provided this demand came from at least 25 learners in case of tribal areas and 40 learners in case of non-tribal areas. The community that made the demand could also suggest the name of a suitable local resident to be the teacher and be called 'guruji'. The gram panchayat is empowered to appoint such a "guruji" after the chief executive officer of the Janpad (block) panchayat had verified the bona fides of the demand and the qualifications of the proposed guruji. The training of the guruji would be organised by the district administration which would also credit the amount of annual salaries upfront in the gram panchayat's bank account. The local community or gram panchayat was expected to come up with the provision of space for teaching-learning. While the government ensured the critical basic inputs for transacting primary education (here defined as the teacher and his or her salaries, training, teaching-learning material, contingencies and academic supervision), the community shared the task of universalisation primary education by its contribution to creating the demand, identifying the teacher and providing the learning space. The EGS was, in short, an effort of the state government to universalise access to schooling facility focusing on the hitherto unreached sections in the quickest possible time and thereby convert the rhetoric on universalisation of primary education into reality in Madhya Pradesh.

9. Alternative School Scheme

The scheme is for the children of remote small habitations or for the children those who are busy with household work and are not able to come. Such schools have autonomy of time and place. The system gives continuous education. Under District Primary Education Programme 2224 alternative schools are running in 19 districts.

Rajiv Gandhi Prathmik Shiksha Mission

The Rajiv Gandhi Prathmik Shiksha Mission was set up as an autonomous registered society headed by the Chief Minister of the state to supplement the state government's efforts to universalize primary education in Madhya Pradesh. The main challenges for the Mission were posed in the form of inadequate outreach of

educational facilities specially in the interior, rural or tribal areas, marginalisation of economically or socially deprived children, insufficient support to academic processes and above all a delivery hierarchy that did not factor in the perceptions of its large user community. These challenges influenced the way that defined its objectives, processes and tasks. The objectives of the Mission were to create a positive environment for education, increase enrolment and to improve the quality of teaching-learning processes so as to promote retention and achievement levels.

To work towards these objectives, the Mission had to perform a dual role to create a demand for education as well as to fulfil it by providing adequate educational infrastructure and qualitative educational inputs. Hence the Mission had to evolve participatory methodologies that resolved the supply demand dichotomies in primary education and created a sense of ownership.

The specific tasks undertaken by the Mission to achieve its objectives were : community mobilisation, opening new schools, construction of educational buildings, upgrading schooling amenities, developing approved teaching-learning materials, teacher training, strengthening academic support systems and strengthening the information base for primary education. These tasks were mediated through the District Primary Education Programme which enabled the Mission to mobilise over US \$250 million of external assistance as grant to the state to be deployed in its 34 educationally backward districts.

DPEP Districts

Phase - I (1994-2001)

Betul, Raisen, Rajgarh, Sehore,
Bilaspur, Raigarh, Sarguja, Guna,
Mandla,
Dhar, Rajnandgaon, Rewa, Satna,
Shahdol, Sidhi, Chhatarpur, Panna,
Tikamgarh, Mandsaur, Ratlam

Phase - II (1997-2002)

Bastar, Bhind, Dewas, Damoh, Datia,
Jhabua, Khandwa, Khargone,
Morena, Raipur, Seoni, Shajapur,
Shivpuri, Vidisha

Resource support through DPEP was an additionality to the state government's resources. The Mission had to evolve its own innovative strategies to tap resource potential internal to the state to address the task of universalisation primary education with the urgency it required. A single significant expression of an innovative paradigm evolved by the Mission was the *Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS)*.

Work done by the Mission

Collaborating with the community the Mission has succeeded in universalising access to primary schooling in the state. The mission undertook a door to door survey and mobilisation campaign designated as the Lok Sampark Abhiyan (LSA) in July-August 1996 covering 55295 villages in 34 DPEP districts and contacting 1.01 crore children in the age group of 5-14 years. The LSA built up an alternative peoples information system on the status of primary schooling in these districts.

LSA demonstrated that large scale tasks like identifying out of school children and motivating them to school could be done effectively through the partnership of panchayats and teachers in a way that enabled people's perception of problems to emerge and influence government decisions. The LSA revealed a large gap in the outreach of schooling infrastructure, indicating how the tribal and far-flung habitations were still unserved by the school network. To make schooling reach the unreached children, specially for those who predominantly belonged to the socio-economically deprived groups, was thrown up by LSA as the topmost priority of the government. The Mission responded to this challenge by formulating the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS).

The EGS was a pioneering initiative in the country acknowledging the child's right to primary education and to guarantee it. EGS perceived this guarantee as immediate action for creating opportunities of education rather than as a legal decree because it saw the responsibility for providing education as a collaboration between government and people. Under the scheme, whenever there is a demand from a tribal area from 25 children for a facility to learn (40 for non-tribal areas) and there is no school within 1 kilometre, the government guarantees to provide a trained teacher known as the Guruji within 90 days.

The space for learning is provided by the community which also proposes the Guruji's name who has to belong to that village. Within one year of the launching of the scheme on 1 January 1997, 15568 EGS schools came up implying that on an average more than 40 primary schools came up each day of the year in Madhya Pradesh through EGS in 1997. The scheme is sensitive to the habitation pattern in the tribal areas of the state where people reside in hamlets called *majras*, *tolas* or *phalias* which are distinct from one another.

EGS has made possible the universalisation of access to primary schooling facility in Madhya Pradesh in an extremely cost-effective and time-bound manner without compromising on quality and is an argument in favour of community-centred, cost-effective models of education.

On 20.8.98 the mission completes the task of universalising access to primary

schooling in the state. In 4 years, it has expanded access in 30,274 habitations. Out of this 10,985 have been by DPEP in 34 districts in 4 years time and 19,289 through the EGS in one and half years in the entire state. Whereas the formal system provided 80,000 primary schools in 50 years, the Rajiv Gandhi Prathmik Shiksha Mission provided 30,274 primary schools in 4 years indicating a dramatic acceleration in the rate of growth of school services possible through a Mission process. Since these 30,274 facilities are dominantly in the remote, deprived habitations, it also shows the targeting of school services towards the most needy groups.

The Mission has brought the issue of the quality of learning upfront. For the first time in the state the teaching-learning material (TLM) for primary classes was developed on a field trial basis involving teachers, NGOs and academicians. The new TLM designated as the ***Sikhna Sikhana*** package is designed to facilitate competency based learning. There has been a quantum jump in training of teachers in the state. Prior to the Mission an average of 12,500 teachers were trained in a year. As a result of the Mission's academic interventions an average of one lakh teachers are trained every year for an average period of 12 days. Prior to the Mission, institutional academic support was centralised and inadequate stopping short at the district headquarters quite far removed from the schools. The Mission filled in this major gap in the academic system by setting up 369 Block resource Centres (BRC) and 6296 Cluster Resource Centres (CRC). Such academic decentralisation has created a regular academic support and supervision system for schools which was missing before. Above all, it has inverted the hierarchical structure of academic support and brought the school teacher centre stage. About 15,000 teachers have been developed as master trainers and academic coordinators thereby creating an ownership of schooling tasks by the teachers community.

Alternative approaches to curriculum have also been initiated through the *Alternative Schooling* programme which investigates the possibility of non-graded contextualised learning to motivate children particularly those of marginalised groups to participate in schooling working through local teachers and flexible time and space, Alternative Schooling has been able to arouse considerable community participation in contributing resources to constructing durable attractive shelters and buildings for their children. 3366 Alternative Schools have already been opened in 34 districts.

Through community participation, 2632 school buildings have been constructed and 3379 school buildings are under construction. 198 Block Resource Centres have also been constructed in 19 DPEP districts while 171 Block Resource

Centres are under construction in 15 DPEP districts to facilitate teacher's training at the block level. 5221 additional rooms are also being constructed.

For the first time pre-primary education was introduced in rural schools through Shishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK) which gave attention to the 3-5 age group children. To inculcate among them appropriate habits of learning and socialisation through a schooling environment. The Shishu Shiksha Kendras also facilitated children, specially girls engaged in sibling care, to attend to a regular primary school. 4025 Shishu Shiksha Kendras have been opened till date.

These innovations have succeeded in creating increased opportunities for girls' education, because they intend to make schooling more flexibly organised, locally proximate, so as to mobilise community attention towards supporting girls education. A special Mahila Shiksha Abhiyan was undertaken in 1997 enrolling 7 lakh additional girls in schools. This has been followed up this year with special emphasis on girls belonging to scheduled castes and tribes.

Working through the panchayats and using flexible, fast-track procedures, the Mission has been able to address salient educational issues with urgency and establish an effective model of decentralised educational management. The Mission devolves 85% of its funds to panchayats of which 57% goes to gram panchayats, investing them with critical powers of recruitment, construction and procurement. To that extent the Mission has shown the way to institutional restructuring of primary education in a way that makes it move closer to the people. Moving in a decentralised manner, the Mission has also demonstrated the *do-ability* of a seemingly formidable task like universalising primary education in a quick and cost-effective manner.

Continuing Challenges for the Mission

The efforts of the Mission to ground educational initiatives on community support, as demonstrated through Education Guarantee Scheme, Alternative Schooling, Lok Sampark Abhiyan and the central role for panchayat raj in primary education, indicate that universalising primary education requires a strong base of societal mobilisation. This in turn requires a restructuring of the entire sector of primary education on the principles of decentralisation and community participation. Decentralisation holds the key. The immediate need is for institutional reform in the direction of decentralisation to give over the entire responsibility for primary education and total literacy to panchayat structures at district and sub district levels. The Mission has already proposed a model for such institutional reform. Decentralisation will also push the school management literally towards the

community thereby restoring the school to the community. The responsibility for enrolling and retaining every child in school will then truly become a collective task of the government and the people.

Rajiv Gandhi Prathmik Shiksha Mission has created a widespread demand for education. This in turn intensifies the demand on the system which has to be able to mobilise greater resources to meet the rising graph of needs. While participatory processes may be expected to effect community support, the state will have to priorities education as a major sector for investment. Infrastructure at the primary education sector level will have to be continuously upgraded. Investments in quality inputs like professional development of teachers and supervisors would have to be strengthened. A thorough review and reform of the evaluation system is urgently required without which the effort to transform transactional processes will be negated. There is an urgent need for the government to focus on increasing educational spending at the higher levels of middle schools and high schools. The constitutional assurance in India is for free and universal elementary education for children up to the age of fourteen and therefore the need to increase investment at the middle school level and at the high school level becomes a major priority.