

## Is Implementation of “Foundational Stage” of School Education of NEP 2020 A Solution to the Learning Crisis in Telangana State?

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### 1.Introduction

One of the important and landmark change suggested by the National Educational Policy 2020 (NEP2020) is the reorganisation of school structure from the existing 10(5+3+2)+2+3 to new 12( 5+3+3+4)+3 or 4. While appreciating the earlier structure, it stated the necessity of redesigning it keeping in view the changing needs. “The curricular and pedagogical structure of school education will be reconfigured to make it responsive and relevant to the developmental needs and interests of learners at different stages of their development, corresponding to the age ranges of 3-8, 8-11, 11-14, and 14-18 years, respectively. The curricular and pedagogical structure and the curricular framework for school education will therefore be guided by a 5+3+3+4 design, consisting of the Foundational Stage (in two parts, that is, 3 years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and Secondary Stage (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18)” (NEP 2020 Section-4.1 p.11).

NEP2020 categorically explained the importance of each and every part of this 5+3+3+4 design. “The Foundational Stage will consist of five years of flexible, multilevel, play/activity-based learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE.... The Preparatory Stage will comprise three years of education building on the play, discovery, and activity-based pedagogical and curricular style of the Foundational Stage, and will also begin to incorporate some light text books as well as aspects of more formal but interactive classroom learning, in order to lay a solid groundwork across subjects, including reading, writing, speaking, physical education, art, languages, science, and mathematics. The Middle Stage will comprise three years of education, building on the pedagogical and curricular style of the Preparatory Stage, but with the introduction of subject teachers for learning and discussion of the more abstract concepts in each

subject that students will be ready for at this stage across the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities. Experiential learning within each subject, and explorations of relations among different subjects, will be encouraged and emphasized despite the introduction of more specialized subjects and subject teachers. The Secondary Stage will comprise of four years of multidisciplinary study, building on the subject-oriented pedagogical and curricular style of the Middle Stage, but with greater depth, greater critical thinking, greater attention to life aspirations, and greater flexibility and student choice of subjects. In particular students would continue to have the option of exiting after Grade 10 and re-entering in the next phase to pursue vocational or any other courses available in Grades 11-12, including at a more specialized school, if so desired (NEP 2020 Section-4.2 P.11-12).

Further, as per the NEP 2020 “The above-described stages are purely curricular and pedagogical, designed to optimize learning for students based on the cognitive development of children; they will inform the development of National and State curricula and teaching-learning strategies at each stage, but parallel changes to physical infrastructure will not be required (NEP 2020 Section-4.1 P.7)”.

Though each stage is important in its own and as part of the overall structure, the Foundational Stage consisting of three years of pre-primary and Grade-1 and Grade-2 of primary section is considered to be the most important and be the basis for development of other stages. As rightly pointed out in NEP 2020 Preparatory Stage is depending on the Foundational Stage, Middle Stage on the Preparatory Stage and Secondary stage on the Middle Stage. Thus, each stage is built upon the earlier stage and the basis for all stages is the Foundational Stage. “Over 85% of a child’s cumulative brain development occurs prior to the age of 6, indicating the critical importance of appropriate care and stimulation of the brain in the early years in order to ensure healthy brain development and growth (NEP 2020 Section 1.1. p 7)”.

“Currently, children in the age group of 3-6 are not covered in the 10+2 structure as Class 1 begins at age 6. In the new 5+3+3+4 structure, a strong base of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) from age 3 is also included, which is aimed at promoting better overall learning, development, and well-being (NEP 2020 Section-4.3 P.12)”.

From the above it is clear that provision of quality pre-primary education for all children is important in addressing the learning crisis and at present it is not available to all the children.

Both the intensity of the learning crisis and availability of the quality pre-primary education for all children vary from state to state, it is necessary to examine the possibility and problems of ensuring universal provision of pre-primary education at the state level.

Therefore, this paper examines the importance of pre-primary education of the Foundational Stage in addressing the problem of learning crisis in Telangana State. Before examining the status and possibilities of implementing pre-primary education of the Foundational Stage in Telangana State a brief explanation is given about the Learning Crisis in Telangana State (Section-2). Importance of pre-primary education is discussed in section-3. Status of Pre-primary education in the Telangana State is analysed in Section-4. Implementing Process and Challenges for the Telangana State in providing free and compulsory pre-primary education of Foundational Stage to all the children in the age group 3 to 8 year is analysed in Section-5.

## 2. Learning Crisis in Telangana State:

Learning Crisis is said to exist if

- i. There is Gap between what is expected and Actual learning
- ii. The Gap between what is expected and Actual learning is widening
- iii. The Gap is rising with increase in Grade/Class i.e. cumulative deficiency is increasing
- iv. The Gap is more for the recent Cohorts than earlier Cohorts
- v. There are socio-economic differences in learning levels
- vi. The policies/measures initiated have not answered the above.

In Telangana state one can observe the above and hence there is a need to look into the above and address them. (See Shiva Reddy B and K. Anji Reddy, 2019 for details on the Learning Crisis in Telangana State).

In recent years one of the most debated issues in education is related to the quality of education. There would not have been much concern had the quality of education is satisfactory. Not only it is far away from satisfactory but it is also negatively afflicting the society and economy. Therefore, the debate on quality of education, referred to as the debate on learning crisis, is not

confined to a particular country or a particular level of education but taken at a global level and for all levels and types of education.

The global level learning deficits are assessed through programme called PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) test which tests the learning levels of 15 year old students and it is conducted by OECD on a regular basis. According to PISA ranking the average score in mathematics, science and reading is highest for Singapore, followed by Hong Kong, Japan and Macau. Of the 70 countries which participated in the test during 2015-16 the South East Asian countries have a better record even compared to some of the developed countries. The country known for global destination of higher education i.e. USA has secured score which is below the OECD average. The performance of several countries in the 75<sup>th</sup> PISA test is far below the OECD average performance.

According to World Development Report(2018:5) the percentage of grade 2 students who could not read was more than 80% in Malawi, India and Ghana. The percentage of grade 2 students who could not perform two-digit subtraction was more than 80% in India and Uganda. India's position in learning levels is far from satisfactory both in relative and absolute terms and its position was 73<sup>rd</sup> out of 74 countries in 2009-10.

There are two agencies regularly conduct survey on learning levels of children in India. One is National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) which conducts survey in the name of National Achievement Survey (NAS) on regular intervals by covering urban and rural schools. NAS survey covers only government and government aided schools. Second, Pratham a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) conducts survey in the name of Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) every year by covering rural schools only. The NCERT survey is based on grade specific learning outcomes assessed through formal test to the selected students in selected schools, whereas ASER conducts oral test to the children of selected households in the selected villages on early reading and basic arithmetic ability.

ASER and NAS surveys, despite differences in test content, methodology, sampling, purpose, and years reported poor learning levels at the national and state levels. At the national level ASER has presented poor learning levels over a period of 12 years (2005 to 2018) on a regular basis (ASER). Except a small section at the top of the class, the majority of the students have

obviously been let down. While 53.1%, of students in class V in rural government schools could read a text meant for class II in 2008 the corresponding figure for 2018 stood at 44.1%. In private schools the corresponding figures stood at 67.9% and 65.1% respectively. The performance in arithmetic is also far from satisfactory though there is some improvement since 2016. The improvement was 1.5% points in government and 1.8% points in private schools in class V.

In NAS survey during 2017 the Telangana state occupied 13<sup>th</sup> place in all India with 68% in the overall achievement in class 3<sup>rd</sup> and it is above the national average (65.7%) by about 3%. Similarly in class 5<sup>th</sup> also state occupied 13<sup>th</sup> place in all India with 55.7% achievement. But in class 8<sup>th</sup> it is lagging behind and occupied 27<sup>th</sup> place with 42.0% achievement only. In lower classes the achievement of Telangana State is better than many small and poor states and lagging behind big and developed states. But if we go to higher classes the achievement in Telangana is declining. It means when we go to higher classes the percentage of students' achievement is declining. In case of subject wise achievements the Telangana State achievement (68%) in language is on par with national average (68%) in class 3<sup>rd</sup>& 5<sup>th</sup> and little less (53%) than national average (57%) in class 8<sup>th</sup>. In case of mathematics, achievement of Telangana is better (69% in class 3<sup>rd</sup>& 56% in class 5<sup>th</sup>) than National average 64 % of class 3<sup>rd</sup>& 53% of class 5<sup>th</sup> but in class 8 Telangana achievement (37%) is less than national average (42%). In the overall performance the Telangana state lagged behind almost all the major states in India. Its position was 18 out of 20 states in 2016 which was in 17<sup>th</sup> position the previous year (NITI Aayog, 2019: p.5).

Learning levels are poor in Telangana according to ASER survey in 2018. The percentage of students who cannot even recognise the letter are present in all the classes i.e. Class I to VIII but it varies from class to class. It is 24.2% in class I and 1.8% in class VIII. Similarly the children cannot recognise the single digit and double digit numbers are present in all the classes. The highest percentage of students who cannot recognise two digits 60.5% in Class 2 and 16% in Class 7. Forget about the mathematical operations like addition, subtraction, multiplication and division the students are not even able to recognise the two digit numbers in class VIII is an indication of poor levels of learning in Telangana schools. According to World Bank(2018:3)

“...schooling without learning is a wasted opportunity.” Therefore, the main function of schools is to make children learn and improve their learning level as they climb the education ladder.

Though the two surveys NAS & ASER are not strictly comparable due to the differences in their methodologies. But one common trend is observed in the analysis of both the surveys. The achievement of students in Telangana state is relatively better in lower classes and becoming worse as moving to higher classes. In fact it was supposed to be happened otherwise due to cognitive and affective developments in the child. So, the decline in achievement of students as we are moving to higher classes is an indication of learning crisis in education.

In recent years there is increase in GER and decline in dropout rates. Unfortunately, they are not associated with increase in learning levels. This is probably due to the assessment test conducted by education system may not be able to comprehensively evaluate the children learning. So, the students are moving from KG class to PG class without learning anything. Obviously, the University education also has become nominal. The students successfully qualifying post-graduation from the Universities without achieving minimum levels of learning and it is evident from that many of them are not able to grab the available employment opportunities and also applying for low level jobs for which they are not suitable being holding post-graduation degree from Universities.

In recent time Telangana Public Service Commission (TSPSC) has issued notification for recruitment of low level jobs for various Departments with basic qualification as intermediate. For these low level jobs higher qualifications like MA, M.Sc, M.Com and Ph.Ds qualified candidates and professional qualifications like MBA, MCA, B.Ed, B.Tech and M.Tech qualified candidates have also applied. What it indicates is that the candidates though they are acquiring qualifications but failing in acquiring confidence in them resulting in standing them in queue for paltry jobs like Village Panchayat Secretaries, Village Revenue Officers, Forest Beat Officers and Lower division clerks. The crisis in learning coupled with crisis of unemployment is leading to a peculiar consequence in highly educated applying for even lower level Jobs.

### **3. Importance of Pre-primary Education:**

According to NEP2020 universal access to quality early childhood education is perhaps the best investment that India can make for our children's and our nation's future. Realising its

importance RTE Act is proposed to be extended downwards to include up to three years of ECCE prior to Grade-1(Draft NEP 2019 P8.4.1 p189).

Nobel Laureate Joseph Heckman Equation: ‘Early Childhood Education Benefits All’ indicates the overall importance of pre-primary education. According to Heckman “What is remarkable is that there are some policies that both are fair—i.e., promote equity—and promote economic efficiency. Investing in the early years of disadvantaged children’s lives is one such policy (Heckman 2011)”. Realising its importance UNESCO under SDG-4 Target 4.2 aimed at achieving quality ECCE to all children by 2030 such that they are ready for primary education.

In the Indian context also there is a demand to include pre-primary education as part of RTE in view of its importance in influencing outcomes at primary education. It is observed in the Indian context that exposure to pre-primary education has a direct relation with not only attendance and retention but most significantly with learning levels at primary stage and beyond. It is observed that over 85 percent of cumulative brain development occurs before the child enters the formal schooling(before six years)

According to ACER Report persistence of low levels of learning at primary level is mainly because children are unprepared for school and/or schools are unprepared for the children. By providing pre-primary education to all, the children are prepared to enter the primary schools without any difficulty. Further, having a pre-primary section in every primary school the schools are prepared for children. Hence, opening a pre-primary section in every primary school is expected to solve the problem of not only access but also the learning crisis. Therefore, one of the remedial measures suggested to improve the learning levels is to provide pre-primary education to all the children in the age-group 3-5 years, preferably within the premises of primary school.

Further, “ASER 2019 ‘Early Years’ data shows a clear relationship between children’s performance on cognitive tasks and measures of early language and early numeracy, suggesting that a focus on activities that strengthen cognitive skills rather than subject learning in the early years may generate substantial benefits in terms of children’s future learning. The entire age band from 4 to 8 needs to be seen as a continuum, and curriculum progression across grades and schooling stages designed accordingly. For an effective and implementable curriculum, the

process of designing, planning, piloting, and finalizing needs to keep ground realities in mind” (ASER 2019).

It is necessary to know to what extent the nation and for that matter the states are ready to provide pre-primary education to all the children and that too by having a pre-primary section within the school. To know this first we have to examine the status of pre-primary and then suggest measures needed. Here we make an attempt to examine them in Telangana state where promise is made to provide free education from KG (pre-primary) to PG(Post-graduation).

#### **4. Status of pre-primary education in Telangana State:**

Pre-schooling facilities are available in one form or the other in majority of the areas in Telangana state. But to provide to pre-primary education to all the children in the age-group 3-5 years is a stupendous task on many counts-technical, financial and administrative. To know all the tasks it is necessary to know the status of pre-primary education in Telangana state. It is also necessary to know whether 3 to 4 year old children have access to pre-primary education facilities and whether they are acquiring the foundational skills and abilities that are necessary for subsequent success in school and beyond in Telangana state. The number of children in the age group 3+ and 4+constitute pre-primary age-group. As per the Census 2011the population in the age group 0 to 6 years is 39 lakhs accounting for 11.14 percent (13.6 percent for All India)of total population. About one-third of the 39 lakhs children constitute in 3+ and 4+ (pre-primary school going children). Due to demographic transition the population in the pre-primary school age group may be even less than one-third of it . Roughly about ten lakh children constitute pre-primary age-group who has to be provided pre-primary education in the state.

According to Socio-Economic Outlook 2020 pre-primary enrolment has declined drastically in Telangana State. A decade back about four lakh children were enrolled in pre-primary education which came down to 1.52 lakhs by 2018. Though it is difficult to explain the decline, probably it may be due to decline in fertility rate in the last decade and presence of over aged/under aged children in pre-primary education then than at present and finally underestimation of actual enrolment in pre-primary education.

In Telangana state, for that matter in India a wide range of Centres like Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and Anganwadis(AWCs) besides some private/NGO agencies provide



some sort of pre-primary education in the state. Anganwadi centres which exist in almost all habitations have been under the management of Department of women and Child Welfare. ICDS program, renamed as Anganwadi Services Project in 2017 provides a package of health, nutrition and education services to women and children. At present there are 147 Anganwadi Services Project with 31711 Main Anganwadi Centres and 3989 Mini Anganwadi Centres are functioning in all 33 districts of Telangana state. Under ICDS a package of services comprising supplementary nutrition, immunisation, health check-up and referral services, pre-school non-formal education are provided to 336987 pregnant and lactating women and 1337033 children of 7 months to 6 years of age(Economic Outlook 2020).3 to 6 years age-group children are provided with mini-hot meal Rice, Dal, Oil, Vegetables and snacks every day at AWCs and 30 eggs per month, besides providing some sort of pre-primary education.

According to Save Education Study on ECCE out of 35700 AWCs sanctioned 35353 are functioning in the state. Out of them 33955 AWCs are providing pre-school education with an enrolment of 6.39 lakhs (3.18 lakh boys and 3.21lakh girls) in 2015.

About 38.3percent of AWCs are located in government school premises. Thus, less than two lakh children are getting pre-primary education and much less of it from AWCs located in government school premises. Pre-school- kit, developed and supported by ECCE experts is provided to all AWCs for the purpose of school readiness.

In the state AWCs cater to large number of children before they enter pre-primary grades. This can be strengthened to cover all the children in the state. However, the ability of AWCs to implement appropriate school readiness activities for 3and 4 years children needs to be strengthened.

In addition to AWCs some regular schools also provide pre-primary education in the state. According to CSF there are 0.2 percent of government primary schools and 16 percent of private primary schools have pre-primary section. The respective shares are15.5 percent and 43.3percent at the all India level. Thus, the state is lagging behind many states in providing pre-primary education.

According to ACER Report(2018) out of hundred 3+ old children 69 percent of children are in the AWCs, 1.7 percent Government schools and 12.4 percent are in private school are enrolled

in pre-primary education. 13.5 per cent have not been enrolled in pre-primary section in rural areas of Telangana. Similarly out of hundred 4+ old children 48 percent of children are in the AWCs, 3.6 percent Government schools and 38 percent are in private school are enrolled in pre-primary education. Only 2.5 per cent have not been enrolled in pre-primary section in rural areas of Telangana.

In private schools no defined curriculum is followed as there are no specific guidelines from the State level bodies. In the state most of the time is spent formal teaching activities when compared to AWCs where time is used mostly for play based learning activity (IECE Impact Study, 2017).

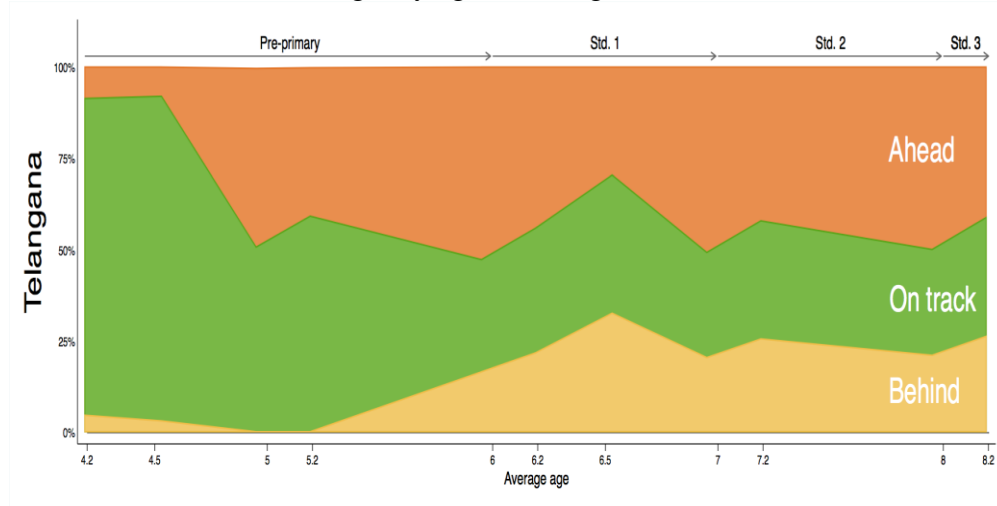
Table-1- % Time spent on different activities in Anganwadis/  
Private School inTelangana state

Time Spent on Different activities	Anganwadi Centres	Pre-Primary Section in Private School
1	2	3
Play based learning activities	68.4	11.9
Outdoor activities	0.4	0.0
School readiness a activities	0.4	2.4
Formal Teaching	5.7	58.6
Routine activities	18.6	24.8
UnplannedActivities	0.4	0.2
No activities	6.1	1.9
Any Other	0.0	0.0
	100.0	100.0

Source:Kaul, V., Bhattacharjea, S., Chaudhary, A. B., Ramanujan, P., Banerji, M., & Nanda, M. (2017) The India Early Childhood Education Impact Study. New Delhi: UNICEF.p.48

Figure-1 outlines the percentage of children in Telangana state whose progress is ‘behind’(bottom), appropriate(middle), or ‘ahead’(top) of track over time. For example, following the school year in which children turn 6, those who are in grade 1 are in the appropriate grade for age; those who are not participating in any educational institution, are in *anganwadi* or other ECE classes are ‘behind’; and those who are in grade 2 or higher are ‘ahead’. The following school year, children who are in grade 2 are in the appropriate age for grade, and so on. Survey waves are depicted in the graphs according to average child age at the given survey point. The charts highlight that in each state a substantial percentage of children are ‘behind’ or ‘ahead’ of track for most of the pre-primary and primary cycle (ASER 2019 15)

Figure-1: Proportion of children who are in the appropriate grade for age, by age In Telangana State



Source: ASER 2019 Figure -2 P 15

At the first survey wave (average age of 4.2 years) almost 100 percent students are in the appropriate grade meaning that they are attending ECCE centres. At average child age 5.2 years close to a half of children in Telangana are ‘ahead’, indicating that state norms permitting earlier entry into primary school matter far more in the state. From age six onwards substantial percentage of students are present in all the three categories. Further, at average child age 8.2 years, in Telangana approximately a quarter of the children are ‘behind’ track, roughly 30% ‘on’ track and remaining 40% ‘ahead’ of track. While state norms of earlier school-entry age can explain why a large proportion remain ‘ahead’, those who are behind are conforming neither to national nor to state policy norms.

## 5. Implementation of Foundational in Telangana State:

The NEP2020 suggests significant expansion and strengthening of facilities for ECCE. “ECCE shall be delivered through a significantly expanded and strengthened system of early-childhood education institutions consisting of (a) stand-alone Anganwadis; (b) Anganwadis co-located with primary schools; (c) pre-primary schools/sections covering at least age 5 to 6 years co-located with existing primary schools; and (d) stand-alone pre-schools - all of which would recruit workers/teachers specially trained in the curriculum and pedagogy of ECCE (NEP2020, p 7).

The above stated ways of strengthening of facilities for ECCE as part of Foundational stage would infact, not serve the purpose for which pre-primary education is included as part of Foundational stage. Having heterogeneous arrangement would not only inhibit the access to quality pre-primary education but also would hinder the learning environment. Though there are some technical aspects in bringing Foundational stage under one umbrella they can be sorted out by co-ordinated efforts if the Government really wants to strengthen it and there by strengthening the entire education system.

Government of Telangana can initiate steps in having exclusive structure for the Foundation Stage by combing pre-primary part of ECCE and Grade-1 and Grade-2 part of existing primary stage for children in the age-group 3 to 8. There are few issues which needs to be discussed/ addressed.

First, at present pre-primary education is provided by AWCs which are under the Department of Women and Child welfare. Pre-primary education is one of the activities and hence cannot be expected to provide full-fledged Pre-primary education. Though it is advantageous to locate AWCs in the primary school complex, till now, many are far away from the school.

Second, a most pre-school education is delivered in the form of AWCs, availability of trained Teachers is critical to deliver quality pre-primary education in them. At present there are few trained teachers exclusively meant for pre-school education. Readiness to handle pre-primary education by AWC teacher is far from satisfactory. Even in regular schools (whether government or private) where pre-primary section is located no separate trained teacher is provided. Therefore, it is important to provide exclusively trained teacher to handle primary section irrespective of where it is located.

3. Physical infrastructure also needs an improvement as delivery of pre-primary education require a somewhat different teaching learning equipment and environment than a normal school. There are no separate rooms in many AWCs exclusively for the pre-primary section. Unless the children in the age-group 3 to 6 are separated from below 3 years children it is difficult to provide play based and activity based learning.

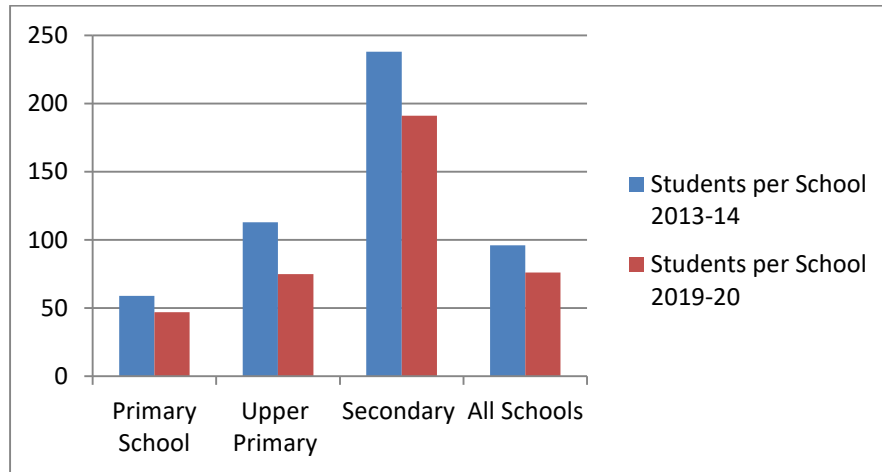
4. Curricular and Pedagogical aspects play an important role in providing quality pre-primary education. As suggested by ACER Study provide flexible and foundational curriculum which may be designed in upward continuity along the early learning continuum. It should focus on development of school readiness and early learning competencies through play and activity based pedagogical methods, with provision to learnt their own pace and consolidate their basic foundation.

The above are related to the pre-primary part of the Foundation Stage. The other part of the Foundation Stage includes Grade-1 and Grade-2. At present all the children appropriate to their age are Grade-1 and Grade-2is enrolled in school. Grade-1 and Grade-2 are part of the primary/upper primary or secondary school. The teachers of these schools mostly concentrate on higher grades and very junior or part time teachers handle Grade-1 and Grade-2 classes. As a result the deficiency in learning levels start from the very beginning because of organisational arrangements.

Therefore, having separate structure school structure Foundational Stage is necessary of te Government is serious about addressing the Learning Crisiswhich has been impacting not only the education system but also the economy and society. Government of Telangana can take the initiative on the following lines to create a separate structure/ school for Foundational Stage.

First, in the state majority of the primary schools are having very low enrolment. At the aggregate level average enrolment in primary school(having classes from one to five) declined from 59 to 47in rural Telangana(Figure-2). The average enrolment per class declined from 15 to less than 10 during 2013-14 and 2019-20.

Figure -2: Change in Students per School in MPP/ZP(Rural) Schools in Telangana State during 2013-14 and 2019-20

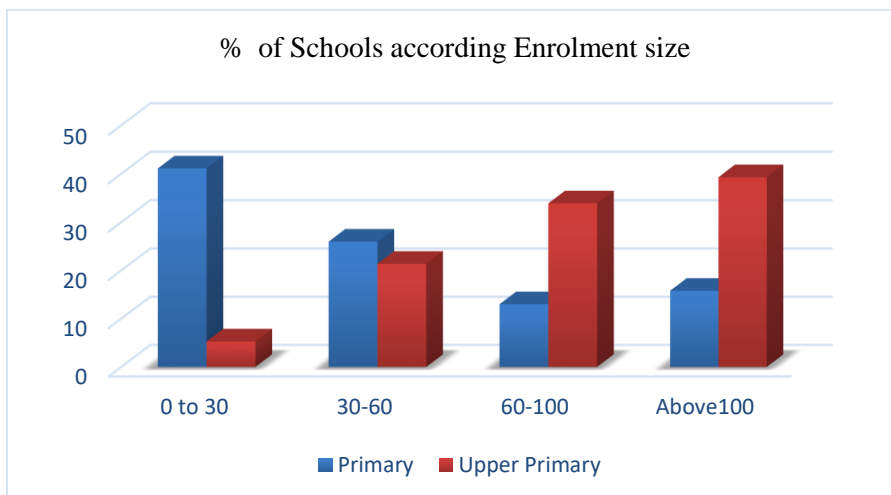


Source: Calculated based on U-DISE Data

Figure-2: Change in student

Further, there are many primary schools in the state having less enrolment than required to run it effectively. As per ACER Study (2019:222) the percentage of primary and upper schools with less than 60 students increased from 17.2% in 2010 to 34.8% in 2018. In two-third of the primary schools the enrolment is less than 60 and as many as 40 percent have less than 30 children in 2015-16. Similarly, in upper primary schools also there are less number of students. About 5% of the schools have less than 30 students; 27% have less than 60 students and 61% have less than 100 students (Graph-3).

Graph-3: Schools according to Enrolment Size in Telangana, 2016



Source: Shiva Reddy and Anji Reddy(2017:Figure- 9)

Added to this, the enrolment in Grade-1 and Grade-2 as percentage of total enrolment in school education has declined from about 22 percent in 2013-14 to about 20 per cent. The above two developments-decline in average enrolment per primary school and grade-1 and grade-2 students call for reorganising the school structure for the Foundational Stage. Students of the Class -3 to Class -5 can be accommodated in nearby Middle/Secondary School. All the primary schools having less than 60 can be converted into Foundational Stage School covering Grade-1 and Grade-2 students of primary school and Pre-primary students of Anganwadis. At no extra/marginal cost the rearrangement can be made. However, covering the existing primary schools into Foundational Stage School requires support from the Education Department, Health Department and Women & Child Welfare Department. Besides addressing the learning crisis, as pointed out by Nobel Laureate Joseph Heckman, taking such measures yield both monetary and non-monetary returns both in the short and long run to the individual(child/family) and to the society.

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