

Universalization of Elementary Education in India- Some Methodological Issues.

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Abstract

The National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) of India collected data from households on education level, current attendance and enrolment status of population through large scale sample surveys during 1986-87 (42nd round) and 1995-96 (52nd round). The sampling design used by NSSO in these two rounds was stratified two-stage with census villages and urban frame survey blocks as the first stage units in the rural and urban areas respectively and households as the second stage units in both the sectors. While the sample villages were selected using PPSWR scheme, the sample blocks were selected by SRSWOR scheme (both in the form of two independent sub-samples). Households listed in each of the sample villages / blocks were divided into two sub-strata, sub-stratum I consists of households with one or more members enrolled at post primary level, and sub-stratum II of all the remaining households. Three households were selected circular systematically from each sub-stratum (i.e.six households in all) for canvassing schedule on education and related items.

Recently a large- scale household survey (WB-PRI) was conducted in six districts of West Bengal. A sample of 6 villages from each district was selected in the form of two independent circular systematic sub-samples of equal size after arranging villages in the increasing order of population. Detailed data on education was collected from all the households in the sample villages. With the help of this data we have examined in this paper, the validity of NSSO sampling design for estimating important parameters related to education levels such as gender-wise literacy rates among persons of age 7 years and above, literacy rates with education level primary and above among persons of age 14 years and above and net enrolment ratio at primary level among children in the age group 6 to 10 years.

We have also studied from NSSO data, the number of children enrolled at post primary level per thousand households in selected major states in India.

Our results indicate the following:

- There is no justification in allotting equal sample size to sub-strata.
- The variation between the villages as a percentage of total variation is less than

10 for most of the variables related to education for the aggregate population, which suggests allotting larger sample size of households for selected villages.

- The results indicated in above need not be the same if we study the same variables across social categories of population such as Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Minorities.
- Estimates of relative standard errors of the estimates of certain parameters related to education across social categories may not be possible since one of the sub-samples may not contain desired category of households.

The paper also contains a brief review on the universalization of elementary education in India.

REFERENCE

1. NSSO report numbers 439, Attending an educational institution in India, Department of Statistics, Government of India, October 1998.
2. Report on “Role of Panchayat Raj Institutions in the development of primary education in West Bengal, 2001,”

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