

13. Education and Human Development in Jammu and Kashmir

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Introduction

Abstract : The role of education enters the discourse on development from several perspectives. Traditionally lack of education has been identified as one of the indicators of underdevelopment. Most of the developing countries are reported to have very low levels of literacy when these countries embarked upon the path of the development. However, education entered into the formal economic analysis much latter.

The attempts made by individual researchers were encouraged by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This agency consolidated the attempts of researchers and introduced the HDI in 1990. One of the main indexes in the first Human Development Report (HDR) was Human Development Index (HDI) which uses adult literacy as one of its three components. There are three main dimensions of human development viz-leading a long and healthy life captured by life expectancy, education and knowledge captured by literacy and a decent standard of living captured by the per capita income.

It is apparent that the most fundamental aspect and crucial determinant of human development and economic growth is education. All the other indicators of human development are directly or indirectly influenced by education. Education plays a crucial role in enlarging choices, by opening up a world of opportunities for the people, enhancing skill and capabilities, enabling the individuals and households to access information and generate new ideas. At the same time education enhances the ability to make better choices by improving the decision making process of individuals and gives a wider vision. In other words, education empowers people and builds stronger nations. It improves human conditions by creating human capital, increasing labour productivity and labour force participation rates, particularly in case of women.

Education especially of women improves health outcomes like life expectancy, and decreases a mortality rate that indirectly contributes to production besides, leads to the personal development. It also raises awareness, consciousness and leads to greater participation in civic life. The numerous benefits of education in improving social as well as economic conditions in terms of reducing poverty, unemployment and inequality, improving health, thereby promoting economic growth and development, have been well documented in the economic literature.