

State of Elementary Education in Rural India 2023

For Prelims: State of Elementary Education in Rural India, Prevalence of Smartphone Usage, Entertainment over Educational Activities.

For Mains: State of Elementary Education in Rural India.

Source: TH

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Education has released the **State of Elementary Education in Rural India - 2023** report, highlighting the **Prevalence of Smartphone Usage among students.**

- The report was based on a survey conducted by the **Development Intelligence Unit (DIU)**, a collaboration between NGO Transform Rural India and Sambodhi Research and Communications.
- The survey gathered responses from 6,229 parents of schoolchildren aged 6-16 in rural communities across 21 States.

What are the Key Findings of the Survey?

- Smartphone Usage and Entertainment:
 - 49.3% have access to smartphones. 76.7% of parents indicated that their children primarily use smartphones for playing video games, indicating a preference for entertainment over educational activities.
 - Additionally, 56.6% of students use smartphones to download and watch movies, while 47.3% use them to download and listen to music.
 - In contrast, only **34% of students** use smartphones for study-related downloads, and a mere 18% access online learning via tutorials.

<u>//</u>

Aspiring for higher education

The table shows parental expectations of a child's educational attainment. About 78% of parents aspire for their girls to attain graduation or higher degrees



Dropping out: Parents of a section of girls
said their daughters dropped out of school
to help out in the family's earnings R. RAGU

Expected level of education of child	Boy (%)	Girl (%)	Total (%)
Up to elementary	4.4	3.9	4
Up to secondary	2.4	2.8	3
Higher secondary	11.1	15.2	13
Graduation	49.6	50.3	50
Postgraduation/Ph.D.	32.5	27.8	30

- About 80% of parents aspire for their children to become graduates or attain higher degrees
- The survey included responses of 6,229 parents across 21 States of India.

Differential Access Based on Class:

- Smartphone access varies across different class levels. Students in higher classes (Class VIII and above) have greater access to smartphones (58.32%), while even younger students (Classes I-III) show considerable access (42.1%).
- This indicates that smartphone usage for entertainment is prevalent across age groups, potentially impacting their educational engagement.

Parental Aspirations and Engagement:

- 78% of parents aspire for their children to attain graduation-level education or above, however, there is a gap in parental engagement.
- Only 40% of parents **have daily conversations with their children** about their school learning, while 32% engage in such **conversations a few days a week.**

Reasons for School Dropout:

- For girls, 36.8% of parents mentioned that the need to contribute to family earnings led to their daughters dropping out.
 - Meanwhile, 31.6% attributed the dropout to their child's lack of interest in studies, and 21.1% believed household responsibilities played a role.
- For boys, the primary reason for dropping out was a lack of interest in studies, cited by 71.8% of respondents, followed by 48.7% stating the need for boys to contribute to family earnings.

Parent-Teacher Meetings and Learning Environment:

- 84% of parents reported regular attendance. Nonetheless, the two main reasons for nonattendance, are short notice and a lack of willingness.
- Additionally, the availability of age-appropriate reading materials other than textbooks was reported by 40% of parents, highlighting the need for further resources to support children's learning at home.

What are the Recommendations?

 The findings emphasize the need for targeted efforts to enhance the educational environment at home and promote a balanced use of smartphones for both entertainment and learning purposes.

