International Journal of Social Science Research (IJSSR)
Volume- 3, Issue- 2 | March - April 2026 ISSN: 3048-9490

School Education and Social Development in Odisha: A Sociological Study of Enrolment, Gender Parity, and Educational Institutions

Monalisha Rout[1*] & Dr. Pabitra Mohan Nayak[2]
[1]Ph.D. Research scholar (Sociology), Fakir Mohan University, Odisha
[2]Prof. of sociology, Fakir Mohan University, Odisha

Abstract:

School education plays a vital role in fostering social development by enhancing human capital, reducing inequality, and creating opportunities for social mobility. This study examines the relationship between school education and social development in Odisha using key indicators such as the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Gender Parity Index (GPI), and the distribution of schools, teachers, and students across districts. It is based on secondary data from the Odisha Economic Survey 2025–26 and other official sources. The findings reveal that Odisha has made considerable progress in expanding school education, particularly in increasing enrolment and promoting gender inclusion. The GER at the preparatory and middle stages is relatively high, indicating improved access to education. However, enrolment at the foundational level remains comparatively low, highlighting the need to strengthen early childhood education. At the secondary level, the GER declines, reflecting issues such as student dropouts, socio-economic barriers, and limited access to higher-level educational facilities in some regions. Gender parity in education appears largely balanced across most stages, with GPI values close to or slightly above one. This suggests that female participation is comparable to, or even exceeds, that of males in certain stages, especially at the secondary level. Government initiatives such as scholarships, residential schools, and awareness programmes have played a significant role in reducing gender disparities. District-level analysis shows uneven distribution of educational resources. Highly populated districts like Ganjam, Khurda, and Mayurbhanj report higher enrolment, while several backward and tribal districts face shortages of infrastructure and teaching staff. Variations in the Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) further indicate disparities in teacher allocation and potential challenges to educational quality. Overall, while Odisha has achieved notable progress in access and gender equality, regional disparities and infrastructural gaps persist, requiring targeted policy interventions.

Keywords: School Education, Social Development, Gross Enrolment Ratio, Gender Parity, Educational Infrastructure.

Introduction:

Education has been recognized as one of the most effective tools for social transformation and

*Corresponding Author Email: monalisharout403@gmail.com
Published: 08 April 2026
DOI: https://doi.org/10.70558/IJSSR.2026.v3.i2.30963
Copyright © 2026 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0).

has been seen to influence not only individual life trajectories but also social development patterns. In the case of Odisha, which is characterized by high socio-economic diversity, school education has been identified to be one of the most effective tools for addressing issues of inequality, marginalization, and human development. Several researchers and theorists such as Tilak (2002) and Dreze and Sen (2013) have emphasized that education is one of the most effective tools for addressing issues of health, employment, and social mobility and is thus one of the most important aspects of inclusive development. In this context, this study aims to discuss school education in Odisha through the sociological aspects of enrollment, gender equality, and the structure of education. Odisha has shown promising developments in expanding educational access to its citizens over the past two decades, especially in the primary level of education. Several government schemes and initiatives such as universalization of elementary education have contributed to an increase in enrollment ratios. According to the recent data available, the rate of enrollment of girls in schools has shown a gradual rise, reaching 48.3% in 2024-25, thereby indicating a gradual shift towards gender inclusivity in the school system. However, the problem of sustained enrollment still remains a challenge for the state. As indicated by a report by Mohanty (2025), the declining rate of enrollment, coupled with high dropout rates, especially at the secondary level, is a major challenge to the progress of education in the state, which can be attributed to some underlying factors.

Gender parity in education has come to the fore as a major indicator of social development. The Gender Parity Index (GPI), as explained by UNESCO (2019), is a measure of the relative access of girls to education in comparison to boys. In the state of Odisha, the gender gap is seen to be reducing over the years, as indicated by studies that show a gradual rise in the participation of females at all levels of education. For example, the gender parity index for higher education has shown a gradual rise, though it still remains below the national average (Ministry of Education, 2022). This indicates that while the policies have shown positive results in increasing the participation of girls, socio-cultural factors still play a major role in the education of females, especially in the tribal and rural areas of the state.

From a sociological perspective, educational institutions are considered to be not only learning centers for acquiring knowledge but also for socialization and transformation. The availability and development of educational institutions have a major influence on social inclusion and exclusion. While referring to educational inequality in India, Das (2023) states that one of the major challenges is that there is inequality in educational development in rural and urban areas, especially for states like Odisha, where there is a challenge in educational development. Besides this, there is another aspect of educational inequality that is considered to be of major concern and has a major influence on the disadvantaged sections of society. Education is closely related to social transformation in Odisha. The increase in the number of girls and other marginalized sections of society is also a reflection of the changing attitude of society. Besides this, there is another aspect that is considered to be of major concern and is reflected through the drop-out rate and learning achievement. As argued by Dreze & Sen (2013), in the field of education, it is not just the question of access and equity; it is also the question of the quality of education that is being provided. The study of the process of school education in the state of Odisha is significant in providing an understanding of the complex relationship between the process of education and social development. Though there is significant progress in the field

of education, the question of equitable education is still an issue that needs to be constantly addressed in the field of sociology.

Existing Literature Review:

The literature reviewed above represents an extensive and disjointed understanding of educational inequality, school engagement, gender inequality, and socio-emotional development in different contexts. A critical analysis of the literature suggests that there is some conceptual strength in some of these studies, but there is also an absence of certain concepts in these articles. Raufelder et al. (2026) have shown significant conceptual strength in their study by using the Self-System Model of Motivational Development (SSMMD), focusing on the role of social support and academic self-concept in school engagement. Longitudinal study and Latent Change Modeling are significant aspects of this study.

However, this study is conducted in the context of Finland and Germany; therefore, it is not possible to generalize this study in developing regions due to significant differences in structural inequality. Doshi et al. (2026) have shown significant conceptual strength in their study by focusing on the role of early self-regulation in social development. However, there is significant methodological soundness in this study; it is clear that it is conducted from a psychological perspective and ignores socio-economic and cultural factors. Arapa et al. (2021) is an interesting study that further extends this debate by focusing on pre-school education in relation to socio-emotional development. The longitudinal study is significant in this article; however, focusing on certain aspects of agency and pride is quite narrow in nature as it ignores structural factors of poverty and gender. In contrast, the study by Wang et al. (2025) makes the important but somewhat isolated contribution of the dimension of sleep patterns and the role of institutions in the well-being of adolescents. While this study has explanatory power, the variables are not strong in explaining the variance. The issue of gender disparity has been extensively explored in numerous studies. Oberoi (2019) has taken a macro-level approach to understanding the issue by using advanced statistical models to identify key global indicators that impact gender disparity. However, the study does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the issue from a micro-level perspective. Nayak (2025), Das (2018), and Sahu (2021) have also explored the issue of gender disparity in India and Odisha. The studies have focused on the issue of gender disparity in India and have emphasized the issue of marginalization faced by women. In addition, Panda and Sahoo (2014) have also emphasized the role played by perceptions in gender disparity. However, the studies have taken a case study approach and have focused more on secondary research. Joshi (2010) and Das (2021) have also explored the issue of gender disparity in India and have emphasized the issue of disparity in enrollment and higher education. The studies have also emphasized the issue of poverty and inequality faced by women. However, the studies have focused more on the issue of gender disparity and have not explored the issue of interventions to address the issue. Gupta (2024) provides a more optimistic view in terms of improvement in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), but no critical analysis is provided.

Tarai et al. (2025) and Mahapatra and Sahu (2024) provide a new direction towards socio-economic and policy-related aspects. Although Tarai et al. (2025) provide positive trends in terms of women's education, they may be overemphasizing this aspect without paying due

attention to caste and tribal differences among them. Mahapatra and Sahu (2024) critically analyze public expenditure and show that there is a lack of alignment between populism and human capital formation, which is a structural problem that is often not addressed at the micro-level. Zhang (2026) provides a new and unique dimension to the educational discourse in terms of civic identity and textbooks. Although this study is highly relevant from a theoretical point of view, it is not related to educational inequality and access at a direct level. Borman (2010) again emphasizes the ongoing debate regarding school and family effects.

The literature as a wholeserves to emphasize the multidimensionality of educational inequality, combining the perspectives of psychology, socio-economics, and policy. However, the major limitation of the literature is the absence of integrative models that link the micro-level factors of psychology with the macro-level factors of inequality. Future research should be interdisciplinary and context-focused, especially on the disadvantaged in the developing world.

Objectives:

I. To analyse the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and gender parity in different stages of school education in Odisha.
II. To assess the distribution of schools, teachers, and students across districts and its implications for educational equality and social development.

Data Sources & Methodology:

The study entirely relies on secondary research, and the data have been collected from a number of authentic government reports, national surveys, and research articles to understand the dynamics of school education and its role in the overall social development of the state of Odisha. Some of the authentic sources of data for the study include the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE+), the Economic Survey of Odisha (2023-24), and reports from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (2024). These reports provide a wide range of information on the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), gender parity, infrastructure, and the distribution of teachers across the state of Odisha. For example, the recent reports from the government indicate that the Gross Enrolment Ratio differs across the levels of education, and gender disparities are also visible at the secondary and higher secondary levels of education in the state of Odisha. The research method for the study can be identified as descriptive-analytical. Quantitative methods such as GER and Gender Parity Index (GPI) are used to evaluate the enrollment trends for primary, upper primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels of education. The comparison is also made across different districts to evaluate differences in the distribution of schools, teachers, and students. Simple statistical methods such as ratios and percentages are used to analyze and interpret trends. The method also includes the social aspect, as it correlates educational access with social development indicators such as gender and regional equity. This method provides a comprehensive understanding of how educational structures contribute to social transformation in Odisha, keeping in view authentic and realistic data.

Result and Discussion:

Table No. 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) by Gender and Level of School Education, 2024-25: All Social Groups

India/State/UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) - Overall											
	Foundational* (Pre-Primary to Class II) (Class VI to Class VIII)			Preparatory (Class III to Class V)			Middle (Class VI to Class VIII)			Secondary (Class IX to XII)		
(1)	Boys (2)	Girls (3)	Total (4)	Boys (5)	Girls (6)	Total (7)	Boys (8)	Girls (9)	Total (10)	Boys (11)	Girls (12)	Total (13)
India	41.4	41.4	41.4	93.8	97.0	95.4	88.3	92.5	90.3	66.8	70.5	68.5
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	67.9	66.6	67.3	83.2	84.1	83.6	89.4	95.0	92.1	82.9	96.2	89.1
Andhra Pradesh	48.9	48.2	48.5	90.6	91.7	91.1	100.1	102.0	101.0	76.7	80.4	78.5
Arunachal Pradesh	73.2	72.7	73.0	99.7	102.5	101.1	83.4	90.5	86.9	54.1	59.4	56.7
Assam	52.6	53.8	53.2	105.2	111.8	108.4	84.6	98.2	91.1	55.0	68.2	61.5

Bihar	24.6	24.3	24.5	84.4	88.8	86.5	65.9	72.2	68.9	41.9	47.6	44.7
Chandigarh	59.9	62.6	61.2	102.8	114.4	108.0	112.0	131.2	120.3	99.9	120.7	108.7
Chhattisgarh	48.0	47.7	47.9	89.1	90.6	89.9	89.6	93.0	91.3	60.2	71.2	65.6
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	61.4	58.8	60.2	106.3	109.5	107.8	107.3	117.3	111.8	73.4	105.1	86.4
Delhi	50.0	54.8	52.2	100.5	110.1	104.8	113.1	122.0	117.1	88.3	95.7	91.7
Goa	72.2	69.6	70.9	118.0	118.1	118.1	112.6	120.3	116.2	95.8	106.4	100.8
Gujarat	35.5	36.7	36.1	90.1	95.8	92.7	90.9	95.1	92. 8	60.7	61.4	61.0
Haryana	45.0	45.9	45.4	94.7	98.7	96.5	100.8	104.6	102.5	79.8	82.4	81.0
Himachal Prades	70.4	70.0	70.2	104.5	106.9	105.6	101.4	105.4	103.2	90.9	96.5	93.6

h												
Jammu and Kashmir	94.1	92.3	93.2	104.4	107.6	105.9	74.9	80.0	77.3	53.8	56.8	55.2
Jharkhand	38.6	37.3	38.0	95.9	97.6	96.7	81.2	85.3	83.1	58.0	63.2	60.6
Karnataka	41.5	41.9	41.7	106.6	109.0	107.7	101.8	103.9	102.8	77.5	85.3	81.3
Kerala	56.8	56.5	56.6	93.1	93.6	93.3	97.8	100.1	98.9	92.7	95.5	94.1
Ladakh	88.2	83.2	85.7	106.6	109.1	107.8	76.8	93.0	84.3	63.1	78.2	70.4
Lakshadweep	63.0	63.6	63.3	103.1	96.2	99.7	80.9	81.3	81.1	64.4	66.3	65.3
Madhya Pradesh	40.5	38.4	39.5	80.5	81.4	81.0	81.1	82.7	81.8	55.9	57.6	56.7
Maharashtra	39.8	41.9	40.8	101.9	109.3	105.3	94.5	98.9	96.5	81.6	82.6	82.1
Manipur	91.5	92.3	91.9	128.9	133.1	130.9	90.2	95.6	92.8	67.2	70.2	68.7
Meghalaya	126.2	124.2	125.3	161.2	167.0	164.0	105.0	126.8	115.6	52.6	72.7	62.5
Mizoram	99.0	100.7	99.9	121.7	122.4	122.0	101.9	106.9	104.3	68.3	79.3	73.7
Nagaland	80.4	81.4	80.9	85.4	89.0	87.1	67.1	75.2	71.0	46.6	54.8	50.5
Odisha	35.2	34.8	35.0	94.4	94.8	94.6	94.8	96.4	95.5	70.4	74.3	72.3
Puducherry	66.6	64.1	65.3	91.1	92.5	91.8	96.1	101.4	98.6	91.0	103.5	96.9
Punjab	81.3	80.9	81.1	104.3	106.0	105.1	100.0	103.2	101.5	83.4	89.0	86.0

Rajasthan	41.4	40.4	40.9	92.4	96.0	94.1	90.9	93.5	92.1	75.1	73.2	74.2
Sikkim	91.1	89.5	90.3	95.0	91.4	93.3	74.3	77.5	75.8	56.7	63.7	60.2
Tamil Nadu	54.0	54.6	54.3	90.5	93.0	91.7	96.4	98.9	97.6	86.2	92.8	89.4
Telangana	63.9	63.2	63.6	109.0	112.2	110.5	109.9	113.5	111.6	80.6	86.8	83.6
Tripura	55.7	56.2	56.0	115.8	118.7	117.2	96.4	103.7	99.9	63.4	72.3	67.7
Uttar Pradesh	31.9	31.2	31.6	89.6	91.8	90.6	81.8	86.3	83.9	61.0	60.8	60.9
Uttarakhand	58.8	59.7	59.2	109.7	116.1	112.6	101.0	107.2	103.9	84.2	90.4	87.1
West Bengal	52.6	53.9	53.2	107.2	109.3	108.2	99.1	103.8	101.4	70.0	80.6	75.2

Source: UDISE+ 2024-25

This table provides an overview of how children are entering the education system in India as a whole and in Odisha in particular. If we consider Odisha in particular, it is clear that the GER in the foundational stage is quite low at 35. However, as we move to the next two levels of education preparatory and middle there is an increase in GER to above 94. This is an encouraging factor in that once children enter school, they do continue their education. If we consider gender participation in education as well, it is clear that there is very little difference between boys and girls in all levels of education. In fact, the figure for girls (74.3) is higher than that for boys (70.4) in the secondary level, showing an increase in the social attitude towards the education of girls. However, the real concern arises when we examine the trends across the stages. The figure for the secondary level shows a decline in the GER, which suggests that children are not pursuing further education after middle school. Comparing the state with states such as Kerala or Tamil Nadu, it is found that Odisha is lagging behind in the higher stages of education.

Table No. 2: State wise Gender Parity Index of Gross Enrolment Ratio by Level of School Education, 2024-25

State/Union Territory	Foundational	Preparatory	Middle	Secondary
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2
Andhra Pradesh	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

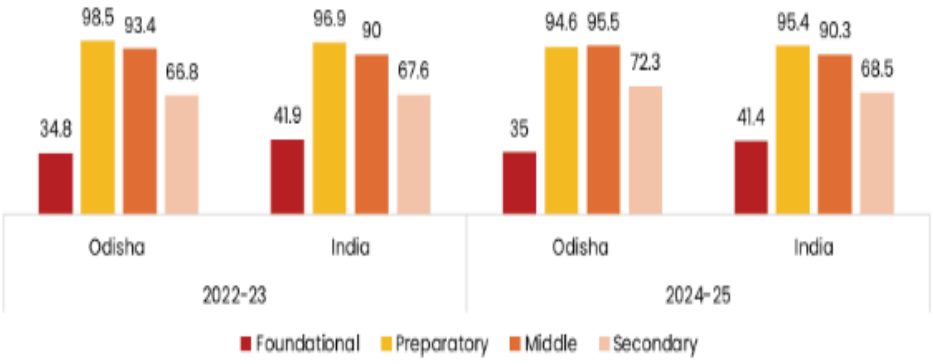
Arunachal Pradesh	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Assam	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2
Bihar	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1
Chandigarh	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2
Chhattisgarh	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.4
Delhi	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Goa	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Gujarat	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.0
Haryana	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Himachal Pradesh	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Jammu and Kashmir	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Jharkhand	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Karnataka	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Kerala	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Ladakh	0.9	1.0	1.2	1.2
Lakshadweep	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.0
Madhya Pradesh	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0
Maharashtra	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
Manipur	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
Meghalaya	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.4
Mizoram	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2
Nagaland	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.2
Odisha	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Puducherry	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Punjab	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1

Rajasthan	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Sikkim	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Tamil Nadu	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Telangana	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1
Tripura	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1
Uttar Pradesh	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0
Uttarakhand	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1
West Bengal	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.2
ALL INDIA	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1

Sources: Odisha Economic Survey (2025-26)

This table shows the balance between the number of boys and girls enrolled in school, and it is a story of quiet power about how society is changing over time. For the state of Odisha, the Gender Parity Index is nearly perfect at 1.0 for the foundational, preparatory, and middle stages of education. This shows that nearly as many girls as boys are enrolled in school, which is a major success story for gender equality. However, at the secondary level, the Gender Parity Index increases to 1.1 for the state of Odisha. This shows that more girls than boys are enrolled at the secondary level, which is a positive change. It shows that the policies for the education of girls, the scholarships, and the awareness programs are actually working to change society for the better. The state of Odisha performs quite consistently across the board, whereas other states have more males or females enrolled in schools. This is indicative of the relatively inclusive environment in the state of Odisha. Gender equality between the two genders does not mean equality between the sexes, but it is a good place to start.

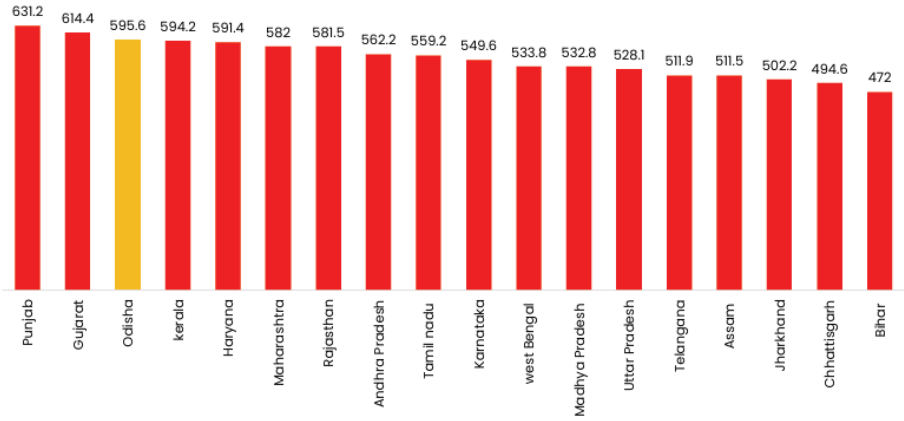
Figure No.1: Overall, Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), 2022-23 and 2024-25 (in Per cent)



This figure graphically represents the progress made in enrolment over time and is like watching a slow but significant process. The difference between 2022-23 and 2024-25 represents an upward trend in Gross Enrolment Ratio, indicating that more children are entering the education system. This is because of the effects of government schemes like school infrastructure development, midday meal schemes, and awareness campaigns that promote education for children. At the same time, it is an indication that people are increasingly realising the value of education for their children's future. The progress is not uniform

for all levels of education. For instance, primary and middle levels show better progress compared to secondary levels. This is an indication that though there is better access to education for children, there is less retention. The figure indirectly speaks to the topic of social development because better enrolment is an indication of better standards of living. Yet, the pace of improvement suggests that more targeted interventions are needed, especially for vulnerable and rural populations. In essence, the figure tells a hopeful story, but also reminds us that progress in education is gradual and requires sustained effort.

Figure No. 2: Performance Grading Index 2.0 among major States in India, 2025 (score for 1000)



This figure goes beyond enrollment and tries to assess the quality of education that is being imparted through the use of the Performance Grading Index. This figure tries to assess and understand the performance of different states relative to one another on aspects such as learning outcomes, infrastructure, governance, and equity. When we consider the case of Odisha, we can see that the state has scored moderately on aspects such as PGI. The figure is neither too high nor too low. It is average. This means that though Odisha has performed reasonably well in terms of enrollment in schools and other educational institutions, there is still scope for improvement in terms of quality. What is important to note about this figure is that it tries to bring about a transition from "how many children are in schools?" to "how many are learning?" We must note that though numbers are important in terms of enrollment in schools and educational institutions, learning is equally important. The PGI figure helps policymakers to go beyond enrollment and focus on improving the quality of education.

Table No. 3: "District Wise School, Enrolment and Teacher of all Management (2024-25)"

SLNO	District Name	PRIMARY SCHOOL			UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL			SECONDARY SCHOOL			HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL		
		NO. OF SC	ENROLMENT	NO. OF TEACHER	NO. OF SC	ENROLMENT	NO. OF TEACHER	NO. OF SCHOOL	ENROLMENT	NO. OF TEACHER	NO. OF SC	ENROLMENT	NO. OF TEACHE

		H O O L			H O O L						H O O L		R
1	Angul	746	97287	3623	669	63640	3760	269	38337	2224	85	23537	686
2	Balasore	1395	171805	5836	1184	114426	7039	567	69301	4219	168	52424	1447
3	Baragarh	732	99095	3668	723	64569	3661	334	41242	2733	99	30463	823
4	Bhadrak	887	116733	3910	751	76500	4798	342	48184	2571	97	28930	713
5	Bolangir	1079	134961	4470	906	85163	4998	381	53210	3061	128	37968	923
6	Boudh	350	34743	1451	321	22397	1377	75	14381	641	29	8871	218
7	Cuttack	1081	170414	6000	1013	114676	7288	557	70595	4888	166	61159	1746
8	Deogarh	244	23974	919	237	15066	1290	87	9144	665	31	6396	224
9	Dhenkanal	636	87108	3154	664	56766	3193	272	35254	1945	79	25035	658
10	Gajapati	533	47039	2494	272	31904	1800	154	18440	1214	46	11467	260
11	Ganjam	1762	249351	8125	1290	164771	9142	639	101379	5229	196	74229	1724
12	Jagatsinghpur	533	67291	2962	521	46052	3179	276	27811	2167	70	20356	582
13	Jajpur	1000	143968	4685	929	92330	5718	474	56646	3718	129	43093	1159
14	Jharsuguda	306	40966	1693	276	27035	1696	128	16678	1202	52	9632	363
15	Kalahandi	1356	133730	4975	776	80391	4327	321	47725	2970	127	32823	842
16	Kandhamal	917	68634	3239	631	45365	2493	211	25758	1561	60	18001	351
17	Kendrapara	859	100776	3374	732	66817	4311	366	40110	2657	103	28036	928
18	Keonjhar	1575	160854	5639	1000	101412	5313	492	57392	3731	110	33727	944
19	Khurda	706	18195	6044	803	12549	7437	355	77050	4526	219	7868	2661

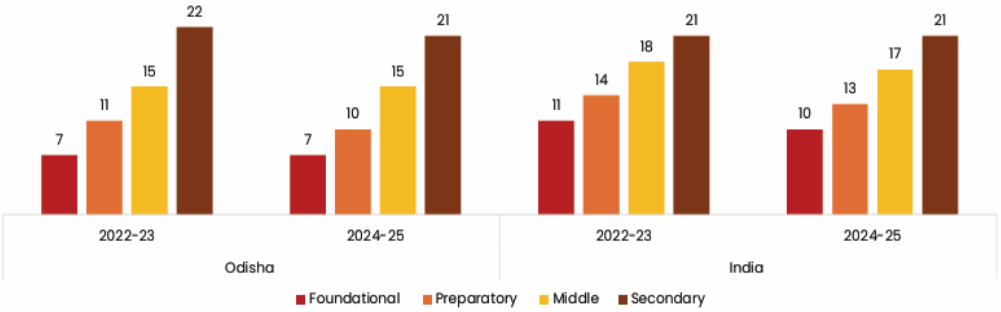
			4			3						1	
20	Koraput	1347	134096	4719	760	79611	3954	278	41796	2209	91	24986	574
21	Malkangiri	796	65260	2454	406	43770	1784	125	20845	962	45	12479	290
22	Mayurbhanj	2559	204831	7939	1344	128584	7377	643	71814	4969	171	56913	1540
23	Nawarangpur	1099	130391	3573	580	78668	3562	223	47247	1672	63	17965	398
24	Nayagarh	600	61917	2387	433	42047	2794	244	25784	1907	65	22622	637
25	Nuapada	439	63950	2050	444	41017	2126	154	19122	1202	49	14783	318
26	Puri	1172	105683	4680	862	70641	4609	371	44698	3157	115	37541	997
27	Rayagada	1135	91040	3919	559	54050	2821	216	28166	1681	76	17865	536
28	Sambalpur	690	76984	3115	528	50512	3107	226	29930	1980	89	27519	828
29	Sonepur	454	45061	1913	383	28736	1916	135	18106	988	58	16173	428
30	Sundargarh	1419	150929	6408	855	103322	4860	417	62205	3862	158	45878	1333
Grand Total		28407	3260825	119418	20852	2115731	121730	9332	1258350	76511	2974	919552	25131

Source: UDISE+ 2024-25, existing structure

The above table represents the detailed ground-level picture of the educational infrastructure in the state of Odisha. From this table, we can understand the details of the schools, students, and teachers in different districts. Some districts, such as Ganjam, Khurda, and Cuttack, have more students and a greater number of schools and teachers. In these areas, more facilities are available, and they are better equipped, especially due to urbanization and administrative importance. However, in some areas such as Boudh, Deoghar, and Malkangiri, fewer schools and fewer students are enrolled. From this table, one can see that more schools and teachers are available in more populated areas. However, this does not necessarily mean that they are distributed equally. In some areas, the number of teachers is not proportional to the number of enrolled students. Another important feature is that fewer schools are available at the higher secondary level compared to primary levels. This may be one of the reasons for dropouts. The table gives a view of the educational scenario in Odisha. From this table, one

can see that geographical and socio-economic conditions have not yet allowed for equal access to educational facilities

Figure No.3: Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR) across educational levels, Odisha, India, 2022-23, 2024-25



This figure also shows the relationship between students and teachers. This relationship is important to understand. If the ratio is balanced, more individual attention can be given to each student. However, if the ratio is high, it means that classrooms are overcrowded. From the figure, it can be seen that the ratio varies for different educational levels. It can also be seen that there has been some improvement in the ratio over time. In general, the primary levels have a better ratio compared to higher levels. This is because the higher levels have more pressure due to fewer teachers. From the figure, it can also be seen that there has been some improvement in the ratio in the recent years. This means that more teachers have been recruited to increase the ratio. This figure also shows that there are some underlying issues. In rural and tribal areas, the ratio is higher compared to urban areas. This means that the quality of learning is low in rural and tribal areas. This figure also shows that the increase in enrollment should be balanced by the availability of teachers. If this does not happen, the quality of learning will be affected.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) is an important indicator used to measure the sufficiency of teacher supply with respect to the number of student enrolments across the districts. The PTR, for the present study, is calculated by dividing the number of student enrolments across all the levels of school education, i.e., Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary, and Higher Secondary, by the number of teachers. Mathematically, it can be represented as:

$$PTR = \frac{\text{Total Enrolment (Primary + Upper Primary + Secondary + Higher Secondary)}}{\text{Total Teachers (All Levels)}}$$

This measure helps to understand classroom pressure and the quality of educational delivery, where a higher PTR indicates teacher shortage and a lower PTR suggests better teacher student interaction and improved learning conditions.

Table No. 4: District-wise Pupil–Teacher Ratio (PTR), Odisha (2024–25)

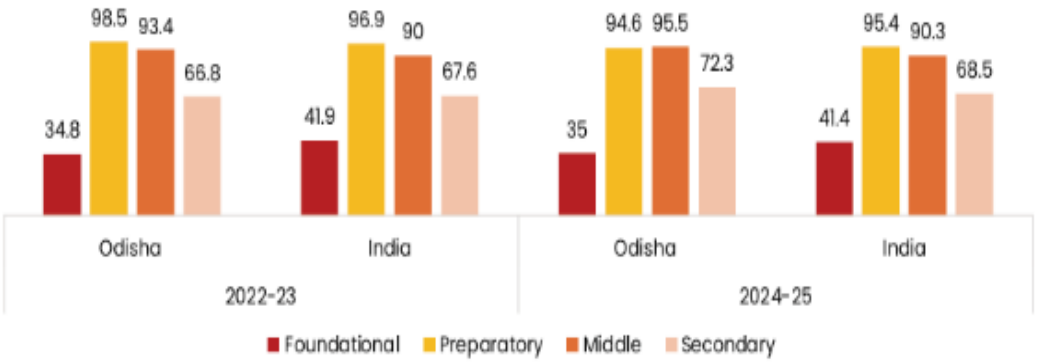
Sl. No	District	Total Enrolment	Total Teachers	PTR
1	Angul	222,801	10,293	21.65
2	Balasore	407,956	18,541	22.00

3	Bargarh	235,369	10,885	21.62
4	Bhadrak	270,347	11,992	22.54
5	Bolangir	311,302	13,452	23.14
6	Boudh	80,392	3,687	21.80
7	Cuttack	416,844	19,922	20.92
8	Deogarh	54,580	3,098	17.62
9	Dhenkanal	204,163	8,950	22.81
10	Gajapati	108,850	5,768	18.87
11	Ganjam	589,730	24,220	24.35
12	Jagatsinghpur	161,510	8,890	18.17
13	Jajpur	336,037	15,280	21.99
14	Jharsuguda	94,311	4,954	19.04
15	Kalahandi	294,669	13,114	22.47
16	Kandhamal	157,758	7,644	20.64
17	Kendrapara	235,739	11,270	20.92
18	Keonjhar	353,385	15,627	22.61
19	Khurda	463,178	20,668	22.41
20	Koraput	280,489	11,456	24.48
21	Malkangiri	142,354	5,490	25.93
22	Mayurbhanj	462,142	21,825	21.17
23	Nabarangpur	274,271	9,205	29.80
24	Nayagarh	152,370	7,725	19.72
25	Nuapada	138,872	5,696	24.38
26	Puri	258,563	13,443	19.23
27	Rayagada	191,121	8,957	21.34
28	Sambalpur	184,945	9,030	20.48
29	Sonepur	108,076	5,245	20.61
30	Sundargarh	362,334	16,463	22.01

Sources: Odisha Economic Survey (2025-26)

This table provides a better idea about the availability of teachers in different districts. Most of the districts in Odisha have a PTR within the range of 20-23. However, some districts show a high PTR. Nabarangpur has a high PTR of 29.8, and Malkangiri and Koraput have 25.9 and 24.5, respectively. The teachers in these districts may be more burdened. These districts may be tribal and remote, and it may be more difficult to find teachers for them. Some districts, such as Deogarh (17.6), Jagatsinghpur (18.2), and Gajapati (18.9), have a low PTR, which may indicate better teacher availability and better teacher-student interaction. From this table, it is evident that not only is it important to increase the number of teachers, but it is equally important to distribute them equitably. It is important to address these imbalances to improve the quality of education and ensure socially inclusive development in Odisha. Most districts show values within the 20-23 range, indicating moderate levels of teacher-student distribution. The variations show disparities in educational infrastructure and teacher distribution across districts.

Figure No. 4: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), 2022-23 and 2024-25 (in Per cent)



This figure also reinforces the trend observed earlier, showing the changes in enrolment over time. The movement upwards in the GER represents the continuous progress being made in ensuring more children are being brought into the education sector. The figure also visually represents the fact that development in the education sector is not staticIt is dynamic, as it changes depending on the various interventions made, the economy, and the level of awareness in society. The increasing number of the GER also shows the reduction of barriers, which include poverty, distance, and cultural values. The figure also shows that while some places are improving rapidly, others are not improving as expected. The figure also shows that education is a critical aspect of the country's social development. The more children being enrolled in the education sector, the better the chances for the country. The human significance of the graph shows the increasing aspirations of the children and the people of Odisha, seeing the sector as a chance for a better tomorrow.

Conclusion and Policy Suggestions:

The present study aims to highlight the intricacies of school education and its implications for social development in the state of Odisha. The analysis of the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) points out the enrollment rates are reasonably high for the preparatory and middle levels, i.e., above 94 percent. However, there is a sharp decline in the foundational level, i.e., around 35 percent, and the secondary level, i.e., around 72 percent. This points out the crucial problem of early access and retention at higher levels of schooling. This shows that though children are accessing education, retaining them in the schooling system is a matter of concern. On the other

hand, the analysis of the Gender Parity Index (GPI) points out an optimistic scenario. In Odisha, gender parity has almost been achieved at all levels of school education, i.e., close to or slightly over 1. This shows that girls are increasingly accessing education at par with boys. This is a significant step towards achieving gender equality and empowerment. However, this does not automatically imply equality. The district-wise analysis further indicates that there exist large gaps in the distribution of educational institutions, teachers, and students. While districts such as Cuttack and Khurda report better pupil-teacher ratios, where PTR ranges between 21-22, other districts such as Nabarangpur report a high PTR of 29.8, Malkangiri reports 25.9, and Koraput reports 24.5. Such imbalances in educational institutions indicate unequal opportunities in quality education in these districts, particularly in tribal and backward districts, which might act as an impediment in achieving inclusive social development in these regions. The study indicates that Odisha has achieved commendable success in enhancing educational access and gender inclusiveness in the state. However, regional imbalances in educational quality continue to influence uneven developmental outcomes in these regions. In this context, education is considered an instrument of empowerment as well as an indicator of existing social imbalances.

In order to overcome the challenges, what is required is a more targeted and human-centric approach. The first step towards the same is to improve foundational education. Improving early childhood care and pre-primary education can ensure better preparedness and lower dropout rates. he second step is to take specific measures to improve secondary education in order to minimize the chances of dropouts, particularly among the economically and socially disadvantaged sections of society. The third step is to rationalize teacher allocation. Incentives need to be offered to improve teacher allocation in high PTR districts such as Nabarangpur and Malkangiri. This will improve teacher-student ratios. The fourth step is to improve infrastructure development in the less served districts. The final step is to ensure that while the gender gap has narrowed, the focus must shift from access to quality, safety, and learning outcomes for girls. The key, therefore, is to bridge the gap between the regions and ensure that every girl, and every boy, receives not only the right to education but also the opportunity to transform their lives through the power of education.

References:

Rivers, J. C., & Sanders, W. L. (2002). Teacher quality and equity in educational opportunity: Findings and policy implications. *Teacher quality*, 13-23.

Borman, G. D., & Kimball, S. M. (2005). Teacher quality and educational equality: Do teachers with higher standards-based evaluation ratings close student achievement gaps?. *The elementary school journal*, *106*(1), 3-20.

Borman, G. D., & Dowling, M. (2010). Schools and inequality: A multilevel analysis of Coleman's equality of educational opportunity data. *Teachers College Record*, *112*(5), 1201-1246.

Das, A. B. (2021). Disparity in Enrolment in Higher Education in Odisha, India.

Ghosh, Sanghita. "Determinants of gender parity index in higher education in India: A panel data approach." (2019).

Das, L. (2017). Gender Disparity in School Education in Odisha. *Orissa Economic Journal*, *49*(1).

Sahu, S. P., & Patra, A. K. SCENARIO OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN ODISHA: A DISTRICT LEVEL ANALYSIS. *TRANSFORMING ODISHA*, 138.

Ahya, N., Samanta, A., & Misra, S. N. An Insightful Foray into Odisha's Education Sector.

Sahu, K. K. (2021). Education for Sustainable Development of Tribal Girls in Odisha. *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*, *9*(1), 1-12.

Saha, D., & Agarwalla, S. REVISITING ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN INDIA FROM GENDER PERSPECTIVE. *EDUCATION AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN 21ST CENTURY*, 339.

Dash, M. (2015). Status of Secondary Education in Odisha. *Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, *20*(3), 9-20.

Gupta, R. (2024). AN ANALYSIS OF CHANGING TRENDS IN GROSS ENROLLMENT RATIO AT PRIMARY & UPPER PRIMARY LEVELS IN JHARKHAND. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, *12*(1), h333-h344.

Ravindranath, K., & Viswanathan, B. (2021). *Gender parity in higher education enrolment: Role of family networks*. Madras School of Economics.

Ghosh, S. (2019). Determinants of gender parity index in higher education in India: A panel data approach.

Imran, M., Behera, A. R., & Chinara, M. (2023). An analysis of students' transition rates, drop-out rates, and retention rate in secondary education in Odisha. *International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research*, *5*(5).

Mahalik, H. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT–A CASE STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO TWO DISTRICTS OF ODISHSA.

Nayak, D. K. (2025). Gender Inequality in Educational Status of Tribals in India–An Extensive Review of Studies. *International Journal For Multidisciplinary Research*, *7*(1).

Bhoi, D. (2013). Educational privatisation and access to higher education: Experiences of scheduled caste students in Odisha. *Social Change*, *43*(3), 341-363.

Samantaray, P. Tribal Education: Issues and Concerns of ST Girls of Odisha. *SATRAACHEE*, 90.

Bandyopadhyay, M., & Subrahmanian, R. (2008). *Gender Equity in Education: A Review of Trends and Factors. CREATE Pathways to Access. Research Monograph No. 18*.

TARAI, S., NAYAK, P. M., & ROUT, M. From Marginalization to Empowerment: A Sociological Analysis in Insights into Women's Higher Education in Odisha.

Joshi, K. M. (2010). Indigenous children of India: enrolment, gender parity and drop-out in school education. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *30*(9-10), 545-558.

Parida, B. (2017). *Socio-cultural complexities in educational attainment of Kondha girls: a sociological study on Koraput district, Odisha* (Doctoral dissertation, Central University of Odisha).

Panda, M., & Sahoo, J. R. (2014). Gender Inequality, Social Exclusion and Educational Policy: A Case Study of Khodha District in Odisha. *Social Research*, *2*(2), 138-146.

Das, P. K., Naik, I. C., Swain, S., Dangi, R. K., & Jain, S. (2025). Tribal Students and Educational Aspiration: A Sociological Investigation of Tribal School in Odisha. *Contemporary Voice of Dalit*, *17*(1), 80-91.

Sahoo, J. R., & Panda, M. (2015). School Enrolment and Girl's Education among Marginalised Community: A Special Focus on Nabarangpur and Khordha Districts of Odisha. *Madhya Pradesh Journal of Social Sciences*, 102.

Wang, C. J., Teo, W. P., Gooley, J. J., Chian, L. K., Burns, S. F., Mukherjee, S., ... & Sumarta, T. T. (2025). Adolescents' sleep patterns, chronotype, social jetlag, school arrival time and sleep duration: Comparisons of three post-secondary education systems in Singapore. *Acta Psychologica*, *260*, 105711.

Doshi, A., Weinert, S., & Huang, W. (2026). Social development from preschool to primary school: Contribution of self-regulatory abilities during the preschool years. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *103*, 101924.

Zhang, Y. (2026). Constructing the nation through textbook discourse: Social representations of China in middle school civics education. *Linguistics and Education*, *92*, 101506.

Arapa, B., Sánchez, E., Hurtado-Mazeyra, A., & Sanchez, A. (2021). The relationship between access to pre-school education and the development of social-emotional competencies: Longitudinal evidence from Peru. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *87*, 102482.

Raufelder, D., Steinberg, O., Virtanen, T., Eskola, V., & Vasalampi, K. (2026). Engaging students in school: Two studies on the benefits of social support and high self-beliefs. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *126*, 102860.

Raufelder, D., Steinberg, O., Virtanen, T., Eskola, V., & Vasalampi, K. (2026). Engaging students in school: Two studies on the benefits of social support and high self-beliefs. *Learning and Individual Differences*, *126*, 102860.

Joshi, K. M. (2010). Indigenous children of India: enrolment, gender parity and drop-out in school education. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *30*(9-10), 545-558.

Das, S. (2023). *Inequality in educational attainment: Urban-rural comparison in the Indian context*.

Dreze, J., & Sen, A. (2013). *An uncertain glory: India and its contradictions*. Princeton University Press.

Mohanty, D. (2025). School enrolment declines below national average in Odisha. *Hindustan Times*.

Ministry of Education. (2022). *All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE)*.

Ministry of Education. (2025). *UDISE+ Report on School Education*.

Tilak, J. B. G. (2002). Education and poverty. *Journal of Human Development*, 3(2), 191–207.

UNESCO. (2019). *Global education monitoring report*.

UDISE+ 2024-25