EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE: A BLOCK LEVEL COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT OF JORHAT DISTRICT, ASSAM

Swapnali Saikia* and Barnali Gogoi**

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to evaluate the present condition of the educational infrastructure of Jorhat district of Assam, India. The term educational infrastructure covers dimensions like availability of schools, teachers, and intake capacity of schools. In addition to these three dimensions, some basic amenities of school like the condition of building, drinking water facility, toilet facility, electricity, and availability of proper furniture are also considered. The main attempt is to show the intra-district picture of educational infrastructure and how it is related to educational attainment status, i.e. enrolment & literacy. An attempt is made to formulate 'Educational Infrastructure Index' (EII) using these three dimensions besides conducting primary survey in selected villages of eight community development blocks to assess the real status of educational infrastructure.

Keywords: Educational Infrastructure Status, Enrolment, literacy, Development Blocks, Schools, Teachers, Intake Capacity, Jorhat District.

*Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Guwahati College, Assam, India. -781021; Email: swapnalisaikia7@gmail.com; https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2376-0892

**Professor, Department of Geography, Cotton University, Guwahati, Assam, India -781001; Email: barnali.gogoi@yahoo.com

Introduction

The development of educational sector depends on a large number of factors and among them, the availability of infrastructural resources in a particular school is the most effective one (Bhunia, Shit & Dubai, 2012). Educational infrastructure plays a decisive role in terms of educational outcomes. It covers determinants like number of schools, number of teachers, intake capacity of students in a particular institution, etc. 'The infrastructure of a school such as site, building, furniture, and equipment, contributes to the quality of learning environment' (Bhunia, Shit & Duary, 2012; Ayeni & Adelabu, 2012). 'School infrastructure includes classroom-level also which infrastructure covers school utilities (availability of electricity, potable water, and the condition of the building) and other features of the school (such as the existence of a library, a computer lab, or science labs)' (Cuesta, Glewwe & Krause, 2016). 'Infrastructure is an important tool for facilitating quality education' (Majhi & Mallick, 2019).

In present times, several studies show that positive associations between the physical conditions of schools and students' learning have increased. Studies by Berner (1993), Cash (1993), Earthman et al. (1996) and Hines (1996) estimated statistically positive effects between variables of school infrastructure (Duarte, Gargiulo & Moreno, 2011). The physical infrastructure of schools and the presence of utilities (electricity, drinking water, sewerage, and telephone) are highly associated with learning (Duarte, Gargiulo & Moreno, 2011). On the other hand, 'poor and insufficient school infrastructure negatively impact student learning and schooling outcomes' (Gershberg, 2014).

A study prepared by UNESCO using the data from the SERCE reveals that the physical conditions of schools may have a significant effect on students' performance and can contribute significantly to the reduction of the learning gap that is associated with social inequality (Duarte, Gargiulo & Moreno, 2010). According to the Right to Education Act (RTE) 2009, every school should have basic minimum facilities like an all-indicator classroom, teachers, toilets for boys and girls, safe and adequate drinking water, a playground, a kitchen for the mid-day meal, boundary wall, electricity, and computer (Majhi & Mallick, 2019).

In India, nearly 90 per cent of schools at the elementary level are run by the government. Most of the schools are situated in rural areas and do not have average criteria for quality education (Das, 2007). It may be due to poor infrastructures such as shelter-less school buildings, insufficient buildings, high pupil-teacher ratio, traditional methods of teaching, and high absentee rate (Bhunia, Shit & Dubai, 2012). Our government has made several concerted efforts to bring education within the reach of all, but problems like low enrolment, student dropout, and low-quality infrastructure play as a barrier in the path of development of the education sector (Assam Human Development Report, 2003). In the present time, news of low accessibility and infrastructure of schools plays a hindrance in the path of development of the education sector. In the State of Assam, dropout rates at the high school and higher secondary level continue to be high (Assam Human Development Report, 2003).

Jorhat is one of the highly literate districts of Assam located in the north-eastern part of India. The data shows that Jorhat district has the highest literacy rate (83.42 per cent) which is also higher than the State and national average from the years 1991 to 2011 (Assam Statistical Handbook, 2011). However, there is a gender gap between male (87.63 per cent) and female literacy rates (76.45 per cent) in the district and this gap has been almost steady over the past years (Assam Statistical Handbook, 2011). This gender gap in literacy is noticed not only at the district and State level, but the whole nation is facing the problem. While male literacy rates by gender follow almost the same pattern as the aggregate literacy rate, female literacy rates all over India present a grim picture (Das, 2007). In this case, educational infrastructure plays an important role in achieving an equal development of an effective learning atmosphere.

This paper is an attempt to explore the overall status of educational infrastructure in the rural areas of Jorhat district and relate infrastructure status to the level of educational attainment (enrolment & literacy). Though the literacy rate is high here and overall, it is a better-performing district. This study concentrates on the intra-district level of educational infrastructure (Majhi & Mallick, 2019) and tries to evaluate the internal status of the district. Jorhat district has eight community development blocks, namely North-West Jorhat, Majuli, Ujoni Majuli, Central Jorhat, Kaliapani, Jorhat, Titabar, and East Jorhat (The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-13) and the authors have attempted to present an intra-district picture of educational infrastructure on the basis of blocklevel data. With respect to the construction of indices related to educational infrastructure,

Figure 1

The Study area

Hanagodimath's (2008) 'Educational Infrastructure Index' is an important one. Hanagodimath selected indicators like number of primary schools per lakh population, number of primary schools per 100 sq. km. area, number of middle schools per lakh population, number of middle schools per 100 sq. km area, number of teachers per lakh students in primary schools, number of teachers per lakh students in middle schools to calculate the 'Educational Infrastructure Index'. Majhi and Mallick (2019) also computed a composite education infrastructure index using the technique of Principal Component Analysis. Ghosh, Guchhait and Sengupta (2018) have computed the Educational Development Index (EDI) as a simple average of the Literacy Index, Enrolment Index, and Disparity Index.



Source: Administrative Atlas of Assam, 2011

(Prepared by the author)

Objectives

- To assess the educational infrastructure in terms of availability of schools, teachers, and intake capacity in eight community development blocks of Jorhat district, Assam.
- To show the basic amenities or condition of the infrastructure of schools in development blocks through a primary survey.
- To find the relation between educational infrastructure and educational attainment, if any.

Database and Methodology

Both primary and secondary data were used to show the comparative assessment of the infrastructure level of schools in the district. Primary survey was done in eight development blocks of the district by taking 5 per cent of the villages of each block in the year 2016-2017 with the help of stratified random sampling. In this regard, the 5 per cent of villages to the total villages of each development block represents a suitable sample percentage and it fulfils the aim of this study. Some other factors are also taken into consideration like location of the village, population composition of the village, literacy rate of the village, distance to the road network, etc., while selecting the sample villages. The main aim of the primary survey was to

show the real picture of schools and know the people's perception of the quality of infrastructure at schools. The secondary data was collected from the Planning Map of Jorhat district, Assam Statistical Handbook, District Statistical Handbook, and The Census of India.

To assess the educational infrastructure in terms of availability of schools, teachers, and intake capacity in schools, an attempt was made to formulate 'Educational Infrastructure Index' (EII) (Hanagodimath, 2008; Ghosh, Guchhait & Sengupta, 2018; Majhi & Mallick, 2019), using these three dimensions. Ell is calculated for each block of Jorhat district with the help of three selected indicators - the number of primary, middle, high, and higher secondary schools per 10 sq. km., intake capacity in primary, middle, high, and higher secondary schools per 1000 populations and number of the teacher in primary, middle, high and higher secondary school per 1000 population. For calculating the number of teachers and intake capacity of schools, the population of a specific age group is considered. For instance, to find the number of teachers per 1000 population, the age group of 7-10 years is considered. Similarly, for middle and high school 11-16 years age group, for and higher secondary school, age group of 17-19 years were taken into consideration. After that, the average value educational infrastructure index was prepared.

Educational Infrastructure Index (EII) =

(No. of primary, middle, high, and higher secondary school ÷Total area*10 + Intake capacity in primary, middle, high school and higher secondary school ÷Total population (Age group 7-19)*1000 + No. of teachers in primary, middle, high school, and higher secondary schools ÷ Total population (Age group 7-19) *1000) ÷3

Combined Enrolment Index (CEI) is calculated to compare the educational infrastructure in eight development blocks. To prepare this index using the 'Range Equalization Method', the parameters used are number of students in primary, secondary, high, and higher secondary schools (Roy, 2008; Sen, 2010; Ashraf, Ahmed & Rawal; 2013; United Nations Development Programme 1995, 2002, 2010)

(Dimension index = actual value – minimum value/ maximum value – minimum value)

CEI = (Enrolment in Primary School Index + Enrolment in Secondary School Index + Enrolment in High School Index + Enrolment in Higher Secondary School Index) /4

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The status of educational infrastructure is correlated with the educational attainment status which is mainly a combination of combined enrolment index and literacy to show the role of infrastructure in development blocks.

Result and Discussion

Availability of Schools: The availability of schools at primary, middle, high, and higher secondary levels per 10 sq. km. is calculated for eight development blocks of the district, as this is the most important indicator of educational services. For better educational service, schools from primary to higher secondary levels should be available to each student in the district.

It is found that among all the community blocks of Jorhat district, the number of primary schools/10 sq. km. is the highest in Central Jorhat (1.3) and Jorhat development block (1.1) and it is low in blocks like Majuli and Ujoni Majuli which is 0.3 and 0.4, respectively (Table 1). In the case of availability of middle and high schools per 10 sq. km., Central Jorhat and North-West Jorhat blocks show the highest value which is around 3.4/ sq. km. for both the blocks. Availability of middle school and high school per 10 sq. km. is lowest in Majuli development block as it is only 0.9/10 sq. km. This means not even one school is present in every 10 sq. km. in this block. Again, the number of higher secondary schools/10 sq. km. is found to be high only in Jorhat development block (0.8/10 sq. km.) and the rest of the blocks show very poor results in this regard (Table 1). All eight blocks do not have one higher secondary school in every 10 sg. km. At last, taking the average of all these three indicators, it is found that mainly four blocks, i.e. North-West Jorhat, Central Jorhat, Kaliapani, and Jorhat development blocks have better availability of schools. On the other hand, in urban areas of the district (Jorhat MB+OG), the number of primary, middle, high, and higher secondary schools per 10 sq. km. is 19.25.

Table 1

Number of Primary, Middle, High and H.S Schools per 10 sq. km. in Jorhat District

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	Blocks	No. of Primary school/10 sq. km.	No. of Middle and high school/10 sq. km.	No. of higher secondary school/10 sq. km.	Total
	Majuli	0.3	0.9	0.06	1.2
	Ujoni Majuli	0.4	1.2	0.1	1.7
	North-West	0.7	3.4	0.3	4.4
	Central Jorhat	1.3	3.3	0.2	4.8
	Kaliapani	0.6	3.4	0.3	4.3
	Jorhat	1.1	2.9	0.8	4.8
	Titabar	0.6	2	0.3	2.9
	East Jorhat	0.6	2.3	0.2	3.1

Source: The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-13; District Statistical Handbook, Jorhat District, 2011 and above calculations are done by the author.

Educational Infrastructure: A Block Level ...

Availability of Teachers: Another important component of the educational infrastructure is the availability of teachers. The total strength of teachers is very important as it is one of the measures of the quality of education from school level to a higher level of education. In Jorhat district, it is found that the number of teachers in primary school per 1000 population of respective age group is very low in every block as only three blocks have around 1-2 teachers per 1000 population of respective age not even one teacher in such population. The number of middle and high school teachers per

1000 population of respective age groups is found to be satisfactory in Titabar and Jorhat development blocks but other blocks have a very small number of teachers (Table 2). In the case of a higher secondary school, only two blocks-Kaliapani and Jorhat development block - have more than three teachers per 1000 population of the respective age group (Table 2). The average number of teachers in three levels of education is more than ten in only three blocks, i.e. Jorhat Development, North-West Jorhat, and Titabar blocks.

Table 2

Number of Teachers in Primary, Middle, High And H.S. Schools Per 1000 Population of the Respective Age Group

Blocks	No. of teachers in primary school/1000 population (7-10 yrs)	No. of teachers in middle and high school/1000 population (11-16 yrs)	No. of teachers in H.S/ 1000 population (17-19 yrs)	Total
Majuli	0.12	3.54	0.19	3.85
Ujoni Majuli	0.14	2.13	0.16	2.43
North-West	2.93	7.69	1.44	12.06
Central Jorhat	0.07	5.25	0.39	5.71
Kaliapani	1.61	3.45	3.04	8.1
Jorhat	1.4	11.74	4.04	17.18
Titabar	0.39	10.42	0.26	11.07
East Jorhat	0.13	2.84	0.57	3.54

Source: The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-13; District Statistical Handbook, Jorhat District, 2011 and above calculations are done by the author.

Intake Capacity of Educational Institutions: Another important indicator of educational infrastructure is the intake capacity of schools which ensures the availability of schools for each student in different levels of education. From Table 3, it is found that in the primary education level (age group 7-10) total population for Jorhat district is 81,696, and the intake capacity is only 78,554. So, a total of 3,142 students are still not being served. The same condition is found for middle/ high and higher secondary level of education whereas the population for those particular age groups is much higher than the available facilities. In the higher secondary level, the unserved population is much higher than the other education level.

Table 3

Status of Carrying Capacity of Primary, Middle/High and Higher Secondary School to the Total Population, Jorhat District, 2011

Education Level	Age Group	Population	Intake Capacity	Deficit	Surplus
Primary	Age 7 - 10	81,696	78,554	3,142	0
Middle/high	Age 11 - 16	1,31,208	107,490	23,718	0
H.S.	Age 17-19	60,770	13,409	47,361	0

Source: The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-13; District Statistical Handbook, Jorhat District, 2011; Assam Statistical Handbook, 2011; District Census Handbook, 2011

In eight development blocks of Jorhat district, the intake capacity of primary schools per 1000 population of respective age groups is quite good in five blocks, i.e. North-West Jorhat, Central Jorhat, Kaliapani, Jorhat, and Titabar blocks. East Jorhat block has the lowest value in this regard (Table 4). On the other hand, intake capacity in middle and high schools is good only in Titabar and Jorhat development blocks, and the rest of the blocks have low intake capacity. Similarly, intake capacity in higher secondary level is also very low in Titabar block as the highest value is only 73.3 per 1000 population of the respective age group. In other blocks, values are lesser than this, and Central Jorhat has the lowest value, i.e. only 5.5. Taking the average value of intake capacity from primary to higher secondary school levels, the highest intake capacity is found in Jorhat and Titabar development blocks.

Table 4

Intake Capacity of Primary, Middle, High And H.S Schools Per 1000 Population of Respective Age Groups in Jorhat District

Blocks	Intake capacity of primary school/1000 r population (7-10 yrs)	Intake capacity of niddle and high schoo 1000 population (11-16 yrs)	Intake capacity of H.S /1000 population (17-19 yrs)	Total
Majuli	79.3	60.3	18.9	158.5
Ujoni Majuli	76.4	56.07	9.7	142.1
North-West	139.5	92.6	23.5	255.6
Central Jorhat	133.2	72.9	5.5	211.6
Kaliapani	75.27	76.8	12.7	164.7
Jorhat	223.3	200.0	73.3	496.6
Titabar	153.4	221.1	66.0	440.5
East Jorhat	80.8	39.1	10.6	130.6

Source: The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-2013; District Statistical Handbook, Jorhat District, 2011; and the above calculations are done by the author.

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Educational Infrastructure Index: For calculating the educational infrastructure index (EII), the above three indicators, i.e. availability of schools, availability of teachers, and the intake capacity of schools, were taken, as the infrastructure of

education covers these sectors mainly. After calculating the average values of these three indicators, the 'educational infrastructure index' is calculated.

Table 5

Educational Infrastructure Index, Development Blocks, Jorhat District

Blocks	Total no. of primary, middle, high school and H.S. per 10 sq. km.	Total intake capacity of primary, middle, high and H.S schools per 1000 population of respective age groups	Total no. of teachers in primary, middle, high and H.S schools per 1000 population of respective age groups	Educational infrastructure index
Majuli	1.2	158.5	3.8	54.5
Ujoni Majuli	1.7	142.1	2.4	48.7
North-West	4.4	255.6	12	90.6
Central Jorhat	4.8	211.6	5.7	74
Kaliapani	4.3	164.7	8.1	59
Jorhat	4.8	496.6	17.1	172.8
Titabar	2.9	440.5	11	151.4
East Jorhat	3.1	130.6	3.5	45.7

Source: Calculated by the author

The value of 'educational infrastructure index' is the highest in Jorhat CD block (172.8) followed by Titabar block (151.4). On the other hand, it is the lowest in Ujoni Majuli (48.7) and very low in East Jorhat (51.1) and Majuli (54.5) blocks (Table 5). Therefore, educational infrastructure is in very poor condition in these three blocks of Jorhat district due to the lack of sufficient schools, their low intake capacity, and shortage of teachers. These three blocks are also far away from urban areas and the remoteness of these blocks may be a cause of this condition. So, these three blocks need urgent attention in this regard. **Comparison of Educational Infrastructure Status with Student Enrolment and Literacy:** A comparison of educational infrastructure with student enrolment and literacy is done to show the role of infrastructure in terms of educational outcomes. Firstly, it is revealed that after primary school, enrolment in secondary school is low and in some blocks like East Jorhat and Majuli, it is very low. The Combined Enrolment Index (Table 6) comprising enrolment in primary school, secondary school, high school, and higher secondary school shows that Jorhat development block scores the highest value (1) and Majuli and Ujoni Majuli have the lowest value (0.03).

Figure 2

Block-wise Pattern of Educational Infrastructure Index, Jorhat District



Table 6

Enrolment Index using Range Equalization Method in Development Blocks

Blocks	Enrolment in primary school	Enrolment in secondary school	Enrolment in high school	Enrolment in H.S. School	Combined enrolment index
Jorhat	1	1	1	1	1
North-West	0.18	0.13	0.38	0.39	0.27
Central Jorhat	0.18	0.13	0.38	0.39	0.27
East jorhat	0.15	0.08	0	0.22	0.28
Titabar	0.15	0.08	0	0.22	0.28
Kaliapani	0.18	0.13	0.38	0.39	0.27
Majuli	0	0	0.11	0	0.03
Ujoni Majuli	0	0	0.11	0	0.03

Source: United Nations Development Programme, 1995, 2002, 2010; The Planning Map of Jorhat District, 2012-2013; District Statistical Handbook, Jorhat District, 2011 and above calculations are done by the author

Figure 3

Combined Enrolment Index, Jorhat District



It is found that availabilities of school and educational attainment (enrolment and literacy) are positively correlated (R^2 =0.56) and again, a strong positive correlation (r^2 =0.83) is found between the availability of teachers and educational attainment (enrolment and literacy). It has been observed that the blocks with better educational infrastructure facilities exhibit higher enrolment and literacy rates

than the other blocks. The only exception is Titabar development block where the infrastructure facility is good but enrolment is quite low and the literacy rate is also not very high. On the other hand, in Kaliapani block, educational infrastructure is comparatively low but both enrolment and literacy rates are high. These conditions can be ascribed to social factors.

Figure 4

Correlation of Availability of Schools and Teachers with Educational Attainment



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Block Name			Infre	structural Condit	tion of Primary	Schools in Su	rveyed Villages	s (per cent)		
	Buildi	sbu	Drinking v	vater facility	Toilet	Facility	Elec	tricity	Fui	niture
	Pucca	Kutcha	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available
Ujoni Majuli	85.71	14.29	85.71	14.29	85.71	14.29	100	0	100	0
Central Jorhat	90.9	9.1	90.9	9.1	90.9	9.1	100	0	100	0
East Jorhat	71.42	28.58	71.42	28.58	85.71	14.29	100	0	100	0
Jorhat	83.33	16.67	83.33	16.67	83.33	16.67	100	0	100	0
Kaliapani	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Majuli	87.5	12.5	87.5	12.5	87.5	12.5	93.75	6.25	93.75	6.25
North-West	06	10	06	10	06	10	100	0	100	0
Titabar	88.88	11.12	88.88	11.12	88.88	11.12	100	0	94.44	5.56
			-	nfrastructural Cor	ndition of Midd	lle School in Su	Irveyed Village	s (per cent)		
Block Name	Bui	ldings	Drinking v	water facility	Toilet F	acility	Electri	icity	Furn	iture
	Pucca	Kutcha	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available
Ujoni Majuli	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Central Jorhat	100	0	83.33	16.66	100	0	100	0	100	0
East Jorhat	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Jorhat	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Kaliapani	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Majuli	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
North-West	06	10	06	10	06	10	100	0	100	0
Titahar	100	C	100	c	100	c	100	c	100	c

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			Infr	astructural Co	ndition of High	School in Surve	eyed Villages (per cent)		
Block Name	Buil	dings	Drinking w	ater facility	Toilet	Facility	Elect	icity	Furn	ture
	Pucca	Kutcha	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available
Ujoni Majuli	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Central Jorhat	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
East Jorhat	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Jorhat	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Kaliapani	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Majuli	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
North-West	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Titabar	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0
Source: Primary Dat:	B									
*Primary survey is d people to know their	lone in each perception	ר primary, se of it.	condary and hi	igh school of th	e particular sun	reyed village of e	ach developme	int block and a	also interacted v	vith the village
*Calculated percents	ages are ba:	sed on the to	tal number of s	schools available	e in a particular	village of each bl	ock.			

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Table 9

Status of School Infrastructure in Community Development Blocks in Jorhat District

In eight development blocks, the infrastructural condition of the school is quite good. In the case of primary schools (Table 7), only two or three schools are found to have defective buildings in one development block while all others have proper buildings. Similarly, other facilities like drinking water, toilets, electricity, furniture, etc., are available except in a few schools. It is observed that the primary schools, which are located in very remote areas, do not have good infrastructure. In this case, students from these villages usually go to other nearby villages to avail proper primary education facility. On the other hand, the infrastructural condition of middle and high schools is much better than that of primary schools. All surveyed middle and high schools have sufficient facilities including good quality buildings, drinking water facilities, toilet facilities, electricity, availability of furniture, and even computers. Tables 8 and 9 show the infrastructural condition of middle and high schools of surveyed villages in eight development blocks of Jorhat district.

In terms of parents' or guardians' perception of the infrastructural condition of schools, it is observed that people from remote areas were not very happy about the availability of infrastructure facilities. Most parents compare government schools and private schools before admitting their children. At present, most people prefer private schools over government schools considering facilities and other factors like availability and emphasis on co-curricular activities. It is found that economically backward people and those from remote areas are bound to send their children to government schools though they are not satisfied with the qualities and facilities. Therefore, the point is, though facilities are available, somehow parents are not very satisfied with the qualities. Present day's government schools are hugely affected by this quality issue. During the survey, it is noticed that some primary and middle schools have no students: in some schools, there are only two or three students but the number of teachers is higher than the students.

Conclusion and Findings

In the eight development blocks of Jorhat district, the availability of schools (primary, middle, high, and higher secondary) per 10 sq. km. is found high in four blocks, i.e. Central Jorhat, North-West Jorhat, Kaliapani, and Jorhat development blocks. All these four blocks have more than four schools per 10 sq. km. On the other hand, Majuli and Ujoni Majuli blocks have more than one school per 10 sq. km.

In terms of availability of teachers in all the blocks, it is noticed that the number of primary, middle, high, and higher secondary teachers per 1000 population is very low. Except for North-West Jorhat block, no other blocks have more than two primary teachers per 1000 population. Ujoni Majuli and East Jorhat blocks have less number of middle and high school level teachers. It is also noticed the number of teachers available at the higher secondary level in all development blocks is very low. Therefore, the required number of teachers from the primary to the higher secondary levels should be appointed.

It is found that in the district, the intake capacity of primary schools per 1000 population of respective age groups is quite good in all blocks. However, intake capacity in the middle, high, and higher secondary levels is very low in comparison to the number of students in that particular age group. Mainly, at the higher secondary level, the unserved population is much higher than the other education levels.

Primary survey shows that despite government schools having proper building, drinking water and toilet facilities, electricity and furniture, the people are not satisfied as they consider private schools have better facilities.

To bridge the gender gap in literacy in all development blocks, facilities like educational institutions, number of teachers, and intake capacity of educational institutions should be sufficient to serve each student. Lack of these facilities can lead to problems like low enrolment, student dropouts, child labour, child marriage, low female literacy, etc. Therefore, it is important to

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invest in educational infrastructure, such as wellequipped classroom, toilet and drinking water facilities, boundary wall, playground, furniture, etc. It is found that the overall educational infrastructure is quite good in three blocks, i.e. Jorhat, Titabar, and North-West Jorhat. Ujoni Majuli and East Jorhat blocks score lowest in the district and these two blocks need proper planning and management in this regard. Moreover, co-curricular activities may be introduced from the primary level to attract more students and for their overall development. Though the area chosen for the study is small, the key issues highlighted in this paper are very relevant as interior rural areas of India are still deprived of the available educational facilities. This paper explores the present condition of educational infrastructure condition of rural areas and also rural people's perception towards the level of available infrastructure in their nearest schools.

Author's Contribution:

- Swapnali Saikia: Field Survey and data collection, Data processing, manipulation and validation, GIS mapping and statistical analysis, Analysis and interpretation of data, and manuscript writing
- Barnali Gogoi: Literature review and referencing, Data analysis, Manuscript writing, findings, and conclusion

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