Chapter VII
SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Spatial and social disparities in the levels of development of school education is quite evident from this research. It has been observed that the development of school education in rural India presented a dismal picture whereby a large section of population in the school-going age have not been in a position to benefit themselves from the provisions of educational infrastructure at all. Among them the scheduled communities, females and children belonging to the landless and small cultivators seem to be the most deprived ones.

In terms of regions the statewise study of various educational indicators have shown enormous disparities. It was not only that enrolment ratios varied across the country, the availability of schooling facilities such as schools of various stages, teachers, and coverage of schools in terms of population and area; per pupil cost of education at different stages of schooling and the like have been quite unequal.

It has been evident that the coverage of elementary education has been far from complete. Nearly 20.0 per cent children in 6-11 years of age in the countryside were yet to enrol themselves in the primary schools. Not more than one-third in the age 11-14 years attended middle sections
and only a meagre 9.00 per cent in the 14-18 years age went to the secondary schools. This speaks volumes of the sorry state of school education in India. The extent of educational deprivation in the countryside of India receives an added dimension when age-specific enrolment ratios for the age group 6-11 years is compared between the rural and urban areas and also between those for boys and girls. It has been observed that while the urban-rural differentials in age-specific enrolment may not have been large, those between urban girls and their counterparts in rural areas and also between the rural boys and girls there are enormous gaps. Similarly, while 41.60 per cent boys in rural areas attended middle sections only 18.00 per cent among the girls went to the middle schools. The proportion of girls students in secondary schools to their population has been no greater than 4.00 per cent against 13.00 per cent among the boys.

One may agree that the task of extending education to all in the country is no child's game, at the same time one must also point out the lack of initiative on the part of state in pursuing the targets set by themselves. It is not to suggest that progress in the field of education has not been there. But it cannot be ignored that growth of enrolment at various stages of school education has not received the same urgency since 1950. During the fifties
enrolment in primary sections increased at the rate of 83.0 per cent and at the rate of over 100.00 per cent in the case of girls, it was somewhere between 10.00 and 15.00 per cent respectively during the seventies. What intrigues an observer of educational development in India is the fact that despite the declared purpose of promoting elementary education, secondary and higher education has been rising much faster. The implications of such a trend is bound to have serious social and spatial implications. One shall come to this later.

Looking at the patterns of regional disparities in the levels of development of school education one finds that enrolment indicators have shown very high index in Kerala and Nagaland while it has been very low in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. One must remember that these states include some of the most populous states and also those with a very high fertility rates. It has been low in as many as eight states of India namely Assam, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal. The remaining states have medium index values. It has also been observed that the states with very low and low levels of school enrolment include those where enrolment in elementary sections have been very poor.

GER for primary sections for Madhya Pradesh was as low as 57.00 per cent, while those for Rajasthan, Jammu
and Kashmir, Bihar, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh were 59.7, 61.6, 70.5, 72.6 and 72.9 per cent points respectively. These are also the states where inequality in enrolment levels between boys and girls has been strikingly large. While 78.00 per cent boys were enrolled in the primary sections it was only 34.00 per cent for the girls in the relevant age group. Similarly, Rajasthan, Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, Haryana, Orissa, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh exhibited very large gaps between the boys and girls in their enrolment levels. It has also been observed that the inter-state disparities were lower at the primary stages of school education as reflected by the coefficient of variation. However, it was substantially large in the case of girls and also for the middle and secondary levels of schooling.

The comparative picture pertaining to enrolment levels in schools between Bihar and Haryana revealed that the general level of enrolment in Haryana was higher than that in Bihar. It was significantly higher in the case of girls whereby nearly 42.0 per cent in 6-11 years of age were enrolled in primary sections against only 34.57 per cent in Bihar. Similarly the GER of girls for middle and secondary sections of school education in Haryana were 17.36 per cent and 5.25 per cent respectively against 9.7% per cent and 2.04 per cent in Bihar. At the same
time it has been observed that the extent of disparity between the boys and girls enrolment in Haryana was larger than those in Bihar.

Reflecting upon the inter-district disparities in the levels of enrolment in various stages of school education, it was found that the extent of disparity as indicated by the coefficients of variation were low in Haryana in comparison to Bihar. Although, the coefficients showed an increasing value for the successive higher stages of school education it remained appreciably lower in Haryana than those in Bihar.

The levels of development of enrolment obtained by the composite indices showed that only Patna and Ranchi districts in Bihar had high levels as many as 21 districts out of the total of 32 in Bihar had either very low or low levels of development in school education. Thus Aurangabad, Giridih, Gopalganj, Katihar, Muzaffarpur, West Champaran, Darbhanga, Gaya, Purnea, Hazaribagh, Saharsa, Samastipur, Siwan had very low and Begusarai, Bhojpur, East Champaran, Madhubani, Nalanda, Santal Pargana, Sitamarhi and Vaishali districts had low levels of school enrolment. The spatial patterning of school enrolment thus exhibit remarkable contiguity whereby around the high category district are found the districts with 'medium' levels of development of school education.
The picture obtained for Haryana also reflect enormous inter-district disparities in the levels of development of school education. Despite being a small state of nearly 11 districts (as relevant for the reference years of this study) nearly 7 districts comprising Gurgaon, Hissar, Jind, Sirsa, Bhiwani, Karnal and Kurukshetra had very low to low values in the composite index. It is surprising that, locationally speaking, with the exception of Sirsa and Jind districts of Haryana, the remaining have had the advantage of their proximity with Delhi, Chandigarh and other major urban centres. Besides, some of these districts have experienced rapid agricultural and industrial growth. Kurukshetra and Hissar themselves have emerged as important educational centres. The low level of enrolment in the above mentioned districts go to confirm the nature of trade between the processes of urban-industrial development and rural underdevelopment and stagnation. This pattern is, however, different from that observed in the case of Bihar. It may be hypothesised with reference to Bihar and Haryana that the course and pace of development is intimately associated with the levels of development i.e., a high and sudden growth brings about polarisation of development impulses while a non-performing or lower and slow rate of growth, although, no less polarised insofar as developmental impulses are concerned, may help the process of trickle
down of growth characteristics. Bihar, therefore would belong to the later while Haryana to the former.

It has also been observed that there were significant differences in the magnitude of inter-state and inter-district disparities. If one compared the coefficients of variation for inter-state enrolment variables with those of inter-districts it was observed that inter-district disparities were less pronounced for all relevant enrolment parameters.

As stated in the objectives of this research, the focus has been to understand the patterns and processes of regional disparities in the levels of development of school education as obtaining in the rural areas of India. For this purpose, the findings of the sample study conducted by the author needs mention here.

At the outset, it was asked as to 'who' goes to school and 'who' is left out and 'why'. It was obtained from the sample study of 18 villages spread over in the two sample states of Bihar and Haryana that among the villagers the landless sent few children to schools. 'Big' cultivators sent a higher proportion of children to schools that did the 'medium' cultivators, who in turn sent larger proportion of their children for education.

Cutting across the occupational categories were the social groups who presented a somewhat different picture
of enrolment in schools. It was observed that among the landless and cultivators there were significant differences in the proportion of children sent to schools from the scheduled and the non-scheduled communities of the sample villages. The non-scheduled households belonging to the 'landless' category sent although small but higher proportion of their children to schools than did the scheduled communities. It was also observed that 'cultivators' among the scheduled communities sent, although lower proportion in comparison to the non-scheduled communities, but a higher number of children to schools than those who were landless amongst them. This observation helps in demystification of such opinions which ascribe illiteracy and low levels of education among the scheduled communities as a product of the lack of motivation on one hand and on the other resulting out of social discrimination in the hands of the 'high' castes.

The sample study instead found that class-differentiation arising out of the ownership of production means and economic conditions of the household had significant bearings on the educability of children. Tradition of education and learning, motivation etc., were themselves products of the class background. The study indicated that class-differentiation in enrolment was more striking and permanent than that of caste differentiation. However, caste and class differentiation in the countryside of India
had many common features.

The social differentiation in the levels of school enrolment in the sample villages lends support to the opinion that educability is a function of individual and social returns from education. Thus educational levels of higher classes are bound to rise because only they reap higher benefits of education. The 'opportunity cost' of education thus was low for the higher classes and higher for the lower classes because the opportunity cost of labour resulting from the fact that children belonging to the lower-classes are used in gainful work forgo the benefits and returns education in the long run. It was also noted that as lower classes were largely confined to lower levels of schooling, the benefits of high school education and higher education went to the high classes while the lower classes paid higher costs of educational provisions.

It has been also observed the low levels of education among the lower classes may be linked up with the lower enrolment of females. The fact that education of girls was less likely to be socially valued good at low income levels and that girls in the lowest classes are more likely to have useful household chores and hence higher opportunity costs for attending schools than girls in higher income groups or higher classes, are likely to accentuate the disadvantage in investing in girls' education. However,
more empirical evidence needs to be found to support this opinion.

As one of the factors that affected educational levels in any society, it was sought to ascertain as to how the spatial distribution of educational infrastructure was related to rural education. It was observed that the extent of inter-state disparity in provision of primary education was quite inequitable. While majority of the rural habitations had primary schools either located within the habitation or up to a walking distance of 1 km., the small-sized habitations in general and those predominantly populated by the scheduled communities lacked this basic facility. It was also found that non-availability of girls’ schools for higher school stages affected educability of girls in the rural areas. It has been noted that most of the single-teacher schools were located in villages and some of them existed only on papers. This research has also attempted to draw attention to the unscientific and ad-hoc nature of pupil-teacher ratio observed in primary schools. A higher pupil-teacher ratio does not help imparting effective education at the lower levels of education. There was a great need for more primary schools with lower pupil-teacher ratios.

In terms of availability of educational facilities in India and comparative inter-regional framework at
various levels of spatial aggregation may help understanding the nature of it. It has been indicated in this research that inter-state disparities have been generally large in comparison to inter-district disparities in the provision of educational infrastructure. The disparity was observed to be less pronounced in Haryana than that in Bihar.

The relationship of the provision of educational facilities with the population size obtained from the sample study showed that while small-sized villages had no schools at all, there was hardly any evidence of any linear relationship between size of the village and provision of educational facilities.

Contesting the views that investment in education in underdeveloped countries should remain low in relation to GNP, because it becomes uneconomic in terms of rates of returns etc., it has been argued in this research that investment in education, so far as India was concerned was not uneconomic at all. There were greater social and individual returns to education flowing to various sections of population commensurate to their level of education. This research has also argued that elementary education should receive greater allocations not only so that elementary education is expanded but also because the benefits of primary education flowed largely to the common masses of India while those of higher education only to the elite
classes of the country.

It has been observed with concern that the allocations to education since the First Five Year Plan had been gradually coming down while there has not been any attempt to cut on the size of expenditure on higher education.

In terms of inter-state patterns in educational investment, it has been observed that budgetary allocations on education have shown a decline from 21.7 per cent in 1970-71 to 19.5 in 1980-81. It was also found that states such as Bihar, Assam, Nagaland, Orissa, Punjab, U.P. and Rajasthan allocated higher proportions to education than some of the high-income states such as Maharashtra and Gujarat. It has also been seen that the low-income states also spent higher proportion of their Net Domestic Product on education than the high-income states did. It was again the low-income states which spent more on primary education, although the total sum was small in relation to that spent by high-income states. It was remarkable to observe that the extent of inter-state disparities in educational investment had shown signs of decline. However, it remained high. On the contrary, those between the districts have been increasing. It has been observed that in the context of inter-state and intra-state inequalities they were pronounced in the case of elementary levels of schooling whereby the rich states and rich districts tend to have benefited more-
from all levels of education and also consolidated higher education at the cost of expansion of elementary education in the poor regions of the country.

Although inter-state disparities may have shown signs of reduction, they continue to be significant. If one examines the patterns of inter-state disparities for the various stages of education one finds that with successive higher stages of education the disparities tend to increase. On close scrutiny one finds that lower levels of disparity in the case of elementary education may not be the product of equalization of effort on the part of the states rather the cause of it may be ascribed to increasingly low allocations being made to the elementary sections of schooling.

It may be understood that higher allocations to higher education and research was a natural course in educational planning. It means that greater emphasis is required in the field of elementary education before having shifted the priority of educational policy in favour of higher education.

India has committed itself to universalization of elementary education. As the situation obtains presently it had not been possible for the state sources to earmark higher share of their plan to the education sector leading to paucity of funds. Thus with a lower level of expenditure on education, if increasingly larger part of it is devoted
to higher education, the progress of elementary education suffers a setback. The task towards universalization of elementary education is increasingly acquiring gigantic proportions. The need of the time is to increase allocation to elementary education. It may be seen that Kerala despite having the highest literacy rates in the country continued to allocate one of the highest proportions of its total budget to school education and more so to elementary education. Some states such as Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, Punjab, etc. gave more attention to their secondary stages of schooling.

The present trend has been towards equally distributing the resources to the three sectors of education. As a matter of fact in 1965-66 about one-third of the total expenditure was devoted to all the three levels of education. The question that arises here is that when the country is yet to expand its school education so as to cover the entire school-going children, even a marginal decline in the level of expenditure may prove to be a disadvantage to the schooling system. Further, it may also be noted that the course of development of higher education itself may not yield desired results in the absence of universal elementary education.
A greater share to higher education against a cut in the level of expenditure on school education tends to benefit the urban areas and affect the rural areas adversely. It is well known that higher education is an urban phenomenon. It may be worthwhile to examine this hypothesis as to what is the nature of relationship obtaining between disparities in urban-rural educational development and the allocation of resources to various stages of education.

The pattern of stagewise allocation of expenditure may also affect class inequalities in educational development. It has been argued that in capitalist Least Developed Countries (among whom India qualifies), the benefits from higher education tend to go to the elite groups and the benefits from primary education to the masses. Given the influence of the class structure on state action, one should expect that the capitalist Least Developed Countries are likely to overspend resources on higher education and underspend them on primary education. Since the elite groups are likely to benefit from higher education and the masses from primary education, this indicates that the capitalist Least Developed Countries pursue a resource-
allocation policy which is favourable to the elite groups. Thus Bhagwati argues that "for each class of education, the state (in capitalist Least Developed Countries) will subsidize the cost of education; the benefits of these subsidies will accrue disproportionately less to the poorer groups at each level of education; the higher the educational level being considered, the higher will be the average income-level of the groups to which the student belong; and the rate of governmental subsidization to higher education will be greater than that to primary education." Further it has been suggested that the benefits can be handed out to elite groups by the State without obvious disaffection if they are handled via the educational system which, in principle, at least, is open to all classes and castes and therefore conceals effectively its inegalitarian impact.

It has been observed that where many of the members of the lower-income groups, especially the rural based, have indebtedness at high rates of interest, their opportunity cost of capital is greater than that of the middle and upper income groups in general. Such asymmetry may also be observed in the context of regional disparities as spatial structures evolve out of social structures.
It was also noted that in the event of centre-state fiscal relationship the low-income states with small size of budgets received less from the centre. The mechanisms of federal financial transfers themselves creates inequality.

In the final analysis the research found that Kerala, Gujarat, Manipur and Punjab had higher levels of development of school education while Haryana had low and Bihar very low levels.

The levels of development of school education revealed wide disparities among the districts of Bihar. Out of the 31 districts nearly 18 districts have very low to low levels of educational development while only two districts had high levels of development. The spatial patterns exhibited remarkable contiguity in the levels of development of school education whereby the remaining districts in the 'high' category were concentrated around Patna district. The districts with 'medium' levels formed the immediate periphery around it.

As it was observed in the case of all-India inter-state patterns, one found that low per-capita income districts have made great efforts by allocating greater proportion of their resources to education while the seven developed districts had shown 'low' to 'very low' investment in education. In terms of educational facilities Begusarai
and Dhanbad districts have extensive educational provisions along with Bhojpur, Nalanda, Muzaffarpur, Hazaribagh, Monghyr, Singhbhum and Ranchi districts. It is important to note that most of the districts of North Bihar, with the exception of Saran and Vaishali, not only showed lower levels of enrolment but also low to very low levels of overall development of school education.

It has already been observed that Haryana had higher levels of educational development and lower levels of inter-district disparities.

Rohtak district exhibited a high level of development for all the three sets of indicators followed by Sonipat. On the other hand, Sirsa, Gurgaon, Jind and Hissar districts have shown tremendous lag in levels of development. The position of Ambala district presents a paradoxical situation. Despite showing a consistent 'medium' rank with respect to the three attributes of educational development it was found to have had 'low' rank in the cumulative index. Mahendorgarh and Karnal districts showed significant shifts in the levels of the three attributes while Sirsa consistently ranked low.

In the present study no attempt was made to view educational development in a cause-effect perspective and therefore simple correlation analysis has been made in order to identify as to what relationship does education have with other attributes of educational development in particular and
The relationship between enrolment in primary sections with per cent SNDP expenditure on education showed a high positive relationship. It has been already observed that secondary education has been receiving favourable climate insofar as expenditure is concerned. This has been further corroborated with reference to per cent budgetary expenditure on education. One may observe that enrolment in primary sections had shown negative relationship, although of a very low magnitude with budgetary allocations while its relationship with secondary education was a high positive. Per-pupil cost of education for various levels of school education also did not show positive relationship with school enrolment.

While poverty ratio did not exhibit significant relationship with enrolment ratio, per capita income had negative relationship with enrolment of boys in primary sections. It was positively related with boys enrolment in middle sections. This indicated that a lower per capita income restricted enrolment of boys significantly to the very elementary stage of school education while a higher per capita income positively affected educational attainment of children. In the case of girls the relationship was 'weak' or 'poor negative'.

It was intriguing to observe the relationship between enrolment in school education with per capita central and
assistance and per capita statutory grants. The former showed a sufficiently high negative relationship with all stages of school education while the latter a significantly high positive relationship. This only corroborated the point made in chapter V with reference to centre-state fiscal relationship in education.

In the context of relationship of expenditure in education with central assistance and statutory grants one observed that it had been negative. That is to say that contribution of the central government to school education was not there or that states had to meet their requirements themselves.

The indicators of educational infrastructure namely population served by schools, pupil-teacher ratio, female teachers showed a wide range of relationships with enrolment levels in school education. Significantly, it was the location of primary schools within the habitations that had positive relationship with enrolment in primary sections lending support to the contention that each and every village, small or large must have a primary school to raise enrolment levels in primary schools. For other two stages the correlation was though positive but weak.

A high teacher-pupil ratio reflected poor enrolment or the vice-versa. This has been amply suggested by the correlation coefficient which showed negative relationship with school enrolment, particularly with primary sections.
Rural literacy showed positive correlation with school enrolment and particularly with high level of school education. Apparently, a highly literate society promotes education and the vice-versa. The high positive correlation between rural literacy and female enrolment was an example of stepped up motivation for learning in a literate society. However, contrary to one's expectation the correlation between enrolment and cultivators showed negative relationship. Did it indicate that agriculture impedes enrolment? To some extent it may be true. The education system as it developed in India has been independent of the process of production in rural economy.

While child labour was negatively correlated with educational enrolment, particularly it was pronounced in the case of boys and for higher levels of school education. It has been noted that earlier that the 'opportunity cost' increased with higher stages of education and also as the child attained age and he becomes economically helpful for the family. However, female child labour did not show a strong negative relationship with educational enrolment.

The crucial problem was posed by the correlation coefficient obtained between enrolment in school education and population growth. In the previous chapters one may recall having stated that the relationship between these two was far from clear. However, one often believed that since the rate of population growth far exceeded the rate
at which enrolment effectively increased, population growth negatively affected educational enrolment. In this exercise, various shades of relationship between two variable may be discernible. Firstly, that it was positively related with primary education and particularly enrolment of boys and, secondly, that it was negatively related with budgetary expenditure on education at the same time being positively related with per cent share of SNDP that is spent on education.

This relationship indicated that the bulk of enrolment in schools were those of boys, and that while population increase added to the financial burden it also helped demand greater share of the SNDP leading to rise in the per capita cost of elementary education which was also positively related with population growth.

Finally, in chapter II it has been clearly brought about that the underdeveloped education and wide educational disparities in the country has been the product of the roots of social and regional disparities that were sown by the colonial rulers. It has also been suggested that the present structure of school education system was unable to help India obtain her cherished goal of universal elementary education.