

**CHAPTER XI**  
**EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, POPULATION AND LITERACY**

*- Tirth Bahadur Manandhar*

**1. Features of the Education System in Nepal**

The educational structure in Nepal broadly consists of primary (grades I-V), lower secondary (grades VI-VIII), secondary (grades IX-X) and higher education (beyond the School Leaving Certificate). The Education Act and related regulations, 1992, (MOEC/SW, 1992a) had specified the normal age of admission to various grades of school education as follows: ages 6 to 10 for grades I-V, ages 11-13 for grades VI-VIII and ages 14-15 for grades IX-X (MOEC/SW, 1992). The government enacted the Council for Higher Secondary Education Act in 1989 paving the way for establishment of higher secondary schools. The National Education Commission (NEC, 1992), also recommended starting of higher secondary education. Accordingly the government has introduced a new structure - the higher secondary education level of two years duration in the school education system. In 1992, the government for the first time gave permission to start higher secondary classes in 37 secondary schools spread in different parts of the country. Since then, permission has been given to several other secondary schools. By 1994, the number of higher secondary schools reached 89. The recommendation of the NEC is that the Proficiency Certificate level of the higher education system should be gradually absorbed into the higher secondary education level over a period of time. As of now, campuses already established are conducting the Proficiency Certificate level courses as usual.

School level education is provided mainly by the public schools aided by the government. However, there is an emerging private sector in school education, which is very active in the urban areas. The higher secondary classes being run in the public schools and private schools are not supported by government grants in aid as yet. Higher education is provided mainly by Tribhuvan University through the University's own campuses and private campuses affiliated with the University. A fully government funded Mahendra Sanskrit University and a private University, the Kathmandu University account for a small number of total higher education enrolment in the country.

The National Education System Plan, introduced in 1971 brought schools of all levels and institutions of higher education under the public sector. This measure proved to be quite expensive and unmanageable. In 1981, the government changed the educational regulations allowing private

sector schools to operate under the condition that they will implement the national curriculum. The schools were allowed to introduce supplementary reading materials as well. Similarly, the government opened up higher education system to the private sector.

The Education Act and related regulations, 1992, specifies that the government will be responsible to meet specified proportions of salary and allowances of the teachers who are occupying approved teacher posts in the public schools. The proportion of teachers' salary to be met by the government is as follows: 100 per cent of teacher salaries / allowances in the public primary schools, maximum of 80 per cent of teacher salaries in public lower secondary schools and maximum of 65 per cent of teacher's salaries in the public secondary schools (MOEC/SW, 1994). The Regulations require that schools of all levels should mobilize community resources for provision of physical facilities (building, furniture), and for other needs. Further, no grants in aid are to be given to the private schools.

The government is committed to the policy of making basic and primary education available to all children in the age group 6-10 yrs. by the year 2000. At the same time, the government has decided to implement gradually the policy of making secondary education free of tuition fees in the public secondary schools. Accordingly, tuition fees were waived for grade VI in the public schools in 1991/92 and for grade VII in 1993/94. The government budget for 1994/95 has provided for waiving of fees in grade VIII<sup>1</sup>.

In 1991/92, the government budget allocation (Regular and Development together) for the Education Sector amounted to Rs. 3205.6 millions<sup>2</sup>. This constituted 2.2 per cent of the GDP for that year and 12 per cent of the total government budget for that year. Public expenditure for education as per cent of GDP is lower in Nepal as compared with the average for several Asian countries, which was 4.4 per cent in 1989 (UNESCO, Statistical Year Book, 1989).

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<sup>1</sup> Note: What the waiving of fees means in terms of impact for government finance is that the government takes responsibility for financing 100 per cent of salaries of approved teacher posts in the public (government aided) secondary schools.

<sup>2</sup> A sum of Rs. 5,420 millions has been allocated for the Education Sector, taking development and regular budgets together in the Budget for the year 1994/95. This constitutes 13.5 per cent of the total budget (Development and Regular together) for the year.

## 2. Progress in Education

Primary education has developed significantly since 1971, when the National Education System Plan which laid emphasis on promotion of primary education, was introduced. Primary education received further impetus with the declaration of free primary education in 1975 and with the provision of free primary textbooks since 1978. According to the Educational Statistics Report of 1992, the number of public primary schools reached 19,498 in 1992. The number of primary schools was 11,869 in 1985. Thus, there has been a 64.3 per cent increase in the number of primary schools during 1985-92. Primary enrolment reached 3,034,710 in 1992, up from 1,812,098 in 1985. This denotes an increase of 67.5 per cent during 1985-92. The proportion of girls in primary enrolment was 38.3 per cent in 1992 up from 30 per cent in 1985. There has been an increase in proportion of girls by 8.3 percentage points during 1985-92 (Table 1A).

Secondary education consists of two levels - lower secondary (grades VI-VII) and secondary (grade VIII to grade X). The Education Act and related regulations, 1992, specified a readjustment of grades constituting the two levels. The adjusted structure provides for lower secondary level to cover the grades VI-VIII and the secondary level to cover the grades IX and X. Instruction in the final two grades will prepare students for the SLC examination.

Most of the lower secondary schools are either integrated with the primary schools or with the secondary schools. The number of lower secondary schools increased from 3,578 in 1985 to 4,230 in 1992, denoting an increase of 18.2 per cent during 1985-92. The lower secondary enrolment rose from 254,354 in 1985 to 433,428 in 1992, denoting an increase of 70.4 per cent during 1985-92. Relatively, the increase of enrolment has been higher than that of the schools at this level. The proportion of females in lower secondary enrolment increased from 26 per cent in 1985 to 33 per cent in 1992. (Table 1 B).

Secondary schools increased from 1,321 in 1985 to 2,307 in 1992, signifying an increase of 74.6 per cent during 1985-92. Enrolment at the secondary level went up from 242,467 in 1985 to 421,700 in 1992, denoting an increase of 73.9 per cent during 1985-92. The proportion of girls in secondary enrolment increased from 23 per cent in 1985 to 30 per cent in 1992. (Table 1c).

It is seen that there has been significant increase in number of schools and enrolments at all levels of school-education during 1985-92. Participation of females (as proportion of enrolment at different

levels) has increased modestly over the period. Details of year wise increase in schools and enrolments are given in Tables 1A-1C.

Table 1: Growth in Number of Schools and Enrolment at the Primary and Secondary Levels of Education, Nepal, 1985-1992.

Table 1A: Primary Schools and Enrolment

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Schools Enrolment	11869	12186	12491	13488	15834	17842	18694	19498
(in '000)	1812	1857	1952	2108	2526	2788	2884	3034
Female (%)	30	30	31	32	35	36	37	38

Table 1B: Lower Secondary Schools and Enrolment

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Schools Enrolment	3578	3724	3854	3857	3941	3964	4045	4230
(in '000)	254	271	289	305	325	344	378	433
Female (%)	26	26	26	27	29	30	31	33

Table 1C: Secondary Schools and Enrolment

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
Schools Enrolment	1321	1411	1501	1638	1791	1953	2079	2307
(in '000)	242	268	289	307	338	364	395	421
Female (%)	23	23	24	26	27	28	29	30

Source: MOEC/SW, 1965-1992.

Note: Per cent females in enrolment of different levels have been rounded.

The situation with regard to the number of teachers in school level education is presented in Table 1 D. Along with increase in number of schools and enrollments, the number of teachers has been increasing at all three levels of school education. At the primary level the number of teachers increased from 51,266 in 1985 to 77,948 in 1992, denoting an increase of 52 per cent over the 1985-92 period. At the lower secondary level, the number of teachers went up from 11,120 in 1985 to 13,225 in 1992, implying an increase of 18.9 per cent over the 1985-92 period. Similarly at the secondary level, the number of teachers grew from 7,242 in 1985 to 12,132 in 1992, showing an increase of 67.5 per cent over the 1985-92 period.

The proportion of trained teachers among the total teachers is regarded as an indicator of quality of education. In Nepal, the category of trained teachers includes teachers who have got training of various duration's, varying from one month to 10 months; further university educated persons (in teacher training) are also included in this category. In 1992 the proportion of trained teachers at the primary level was 46.6 per cent; at lower secondary level it was 34 per cent, and at the secondary level, 44 per cent. Over the 1985-92 period, the proportion of trained teachers at the primary level has increased significantly; but at the lower secondary and secondary level, the proportion of trained teachers has actually gone down. The decline in the proportion of trained teachers at lower secondary and secondary levels is believed to be the consequence of entry by a number of untrained teachers into the teaching profession at these levels, resulting from a lack of training facilities for teachers of these levels.

The proportion of female teachers was 15 per cent at primary level, 13.0 per cent at lower secondary level, and 10.3 per cent at secondary level in 1992. The proportion of female teachers is growing slowly at all levels. The low proportion of female teachers in teacher stock is mainly due to low participation of females in secondary and higher education in the past. The government's declared policy of having at least one female teacher in each primary school is expected to lead to an increase in the proportion of female teachers at the primary level in future.

Table 1 D: Total Number of School Teachers, Proportions of Trained Teachers and Female Teachers, 1985-92.

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
<u>Primary</u>								
a. Total Teachers	51266	53405	55207	57204	63945	71213	74495	77948
b. % of Trained Teachers	31.9	33.7	35.8	35.2	39.6	37.6	42.8	46.6
c. % of Female Teachers	9.5	10.3	10.5	10.8	12.5	12.9	13.7	15.0
<u>Lower Secondary</u>								
a. Total Teachers	11120	12529	11744	11989	12245	12399	13005	13225
b. % of Trained Teachers	41.9	40.3	40.4	35.3	37.3	34.7	34.0	34.0
c. % of Female Teachers	10.4	9.6	8.9	8.8	11.3	11.3	11.4	13.0
<u>Secondary</u>								
a. Total Teachers	7242	9256	8918	9145	10207	10421	11627	12132
b. % of Trained Teachers	53.0	49.5	50.9	48.0	49.5	45.8	44.0	44.0
c. % of Female Teachers	7.9	8.9	10.3	7.6	8.6	8.6	8.1	10.3

Source: MOEC/SW, 1992.

### 3. Growth in School Enrolment

Impressive growth in enrolments in school education during the recent past has been observed in the preceding section. It is worthwhile to analyze the trends in enrolment growth. The growth rates of enrolment at these school levels during 1965-92 period are given in Table 2.

At the primary level, the growth rate in enrolment was particularly high during 1974-80 period. The high growth rate during 1974-80 was particularly due to implementation of free primary education and distribution of free primary text- books. The implementation of the Basic Needs Programme, which included expansion of primary education facilities, in 1987 had helped in the attainment of high growth rate during 1987-92. Nepal has been committed to the policy of making basic education available for all children, youth and adults in line with the call for action made by the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien in 1990 (MOEC/SW, 1992). This commitment has been backed by actions such as implementation of the Primary Education Project (1985-92) and the Basic and Primary Education Project (1992-97). Both projects aim at bringing about qualitative improvement in primary education and at supporting expansion activities.

At the Secondary level, the rate of growth of enrolment has been high during the entire period 1965-84. The rate of growth has come down slightly after 1984. The rate of growth of enrolment at secondary level has been high partly due to growth of primary education in the earlier periods. Secondary education is now sought by increased number of students as most urban jobs require at least completion of secondary education.

Table 2: Average Annual Rate of Growth of Total Enrolments at Various Levels of School Education (in Percentage)

Period	Primary Level (Grades I-V)	Lower Secondary (Grades VI-VII)	Secondary Level (Grades VIII-X)	Total (All levels)
1965-74	5.5	11.8	13.3	6.0
1974-80	16.2	13.6	11.3	15.5
1980-84	7.0	12.9	14.5	8.3
1984-87	3.9	7.1	11.3	5.0
1987-92	11.1	9.9	9.1	10.7

Source: CBS, 1987, Table 6.12 MOEC/SW, 1965-1992.

Note: Arithmetic Growth Rate, averaged over the number of years.

#### 4. Enrolment Ratio

Increasing the access to and participation in education has been one of the goals of the educational policy in the country. Progress in the participation of school age population in school education is generally measured in terms of enrolment ratio. Enrolment ratio is the proportion of children of a particular age group enrolled in education of the corresponding level. The officially specified age - grade relationships are: Primary, 6-10 years; Lower Secondary, 11-12 years and Secondary, 13-15 years. From 1993, lower secondary level has been made of three years 11-13 years and secondary of two years 14-15 years, as mentioned earlier.

The Educational Statistics Reports of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Social Welfare (MOEC/SW) are the main source of educational statistics in the country. These Annual Reports give information on gross enrolment ratios of various levels of school education. **Gross enrolment ratio** presents the number of students, regardless of age, enrolled at a particular level of education, per 100 persons in the appropriate age group. Net enrolment ratio restricts enrolment strictly to students of the appropriate age group. The net enrolment ratios have been reported in Educational Statistics Reports for some years only.

Impressive gains have been made in the gross enrolment ratios at all levels of education during the past two decades. More recently, the gross enrolment ratio especially at the primary education level has exceeded 100 per cent. The trend in enrolment ratios from 1987 to 1992 is presented in Table 3. It is seen that the total gross enrolment ratio at primary level has gone up from 84 per cent in 1987 to 107 per cent in 1992, the total gross enrolment ratio at lower secondary level has gone up from 37 per cent in 1987 to 44 per cent in 1992. Similarly the total gross enrolment ratio at secondary level has gone up from 26 per cent in 1987 to 34 per cent in 1992.

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) specific to females has gone up significantly at the primary level as was the case for males over the 1987-92 period. However, there is still a big difference in enrolment ratios of males and females. In 1992, the GER for males was 129 per cent and for females it was 84 per cent at the primary level.

At lower secondary and secondary levels, the enrolment ratios both for males and females have exhibited impressive growth. The female enrolment ratios however have been found to be increasing at a relatively faster pace than the male ratios. Yet at these levels also, the male specific GERs are twice as high as those for the females in 1992.

The enrolment ratios at various levels of school education indicate that the participation in primary education has increased tremendously both for boys and girls. Participation of secondary school age persons (11 to 15 years) in secondary education is relatively low. This could be due to low completion rate (percentage of grade I students completing full cycle of primary education) at the primary level.

The differences between male and female gross enrolment ratios are significant at all the three levels of school education. In 1992 the ratio was 129 per cent for males and 84 per cent for females at the primary level. At the lower secondary and secondary levels, the male enrolment ratios were about twice as high as the ratios for the females. However, recent trends in enrolment ratios indicate that female enrolment ratios have been increasing at a faster pace than the male ratios for all the three levels of school education. (Table 3).

Table 3: Gross Enrolment Ratios for Different Levels of School Education, Nepal, 1987-1992

	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1987	110	53	84	52	20	37	38	13	26
1988	113	58	87	52	22	38	38	15	27
1989	126	73	101	54	24	39	40	16	28
1990	131	81	107	54	26	41	41	17	29
1991	126	83	106	52	27	40	44	20	32
1992	129	84	107	57	31	44	47	21	34

Source: MOEC/SW, 1965-1992  
MOEC/SW, 1992.

## 5. Gross Enrolment Ratio by Development Regions

The gross enrolment ratios for school level education by the development regions for 1991 are presented in Table 4.

At the primary level, the Western Region has the highest gross enrolment ratio (133.4%). The Eastern Region and the Mid-Western Regions have second and third positions, the corresponding enrolment ratios being 107.7 per cent and 99.8 per cent respectively. Enrolment ratios in the Central and Far-Western Regions also exceed 90 per cent. These ratios do indicate that considerable progress has been made towards attaining universal access to primary education in all the five development regions. However, in terms of net enrolment ratios, there is a lot of ground to be covered as will be discussed later.



The male enrolment ratios at the primary level exceed 100 per cent in all the development regions; in the Western Region it is particularly high. Except for the Western Region, the female enrolment ratio is below 100 per cent in all regions. The female enrolment ratio is particularly low in the Mid Western region and the Far-Western Region. It may be noted that while there are regional variations in the enrolment ratio at the primary level for both males and females, the variation for females is seen to be substantially greater than for males.

At the lower secondary level, the highest enrolment ratio is found in the Western Region, followed by the Eastern and Central Regions. The ratio in the Western Region is 51.9 per cent, followed by 43.4 per cent in the Eastern and 37.5 per cent in the Central Region. The ratios are low in the Mid Western and Far-Western Regions. The male enrolment ratios at the lower secondary level are higher than the female ratios in all the Regions. Once again the variation of the male ratio is much less than that of the female ratio.

At the secondary level, the Eastern region has the highest gross enrolment ratio (40.0%) followed closely by the Western Region (39.5%). The Central, The Mid-Western and the Far-Western Region have the third, fourth and fifth positions respectively. The Far-Western Region has the lowest enrolment ratio of all the five regions. As in the case of other levels, the male enrolment ratios are higher than the female enrolment ratios in all the five regions at the secondary level. Further the variation in the case of the female enrolment ratio is greater than that exhibited by the male ratio.

It is interesting to note that regional variations in the enrolment ratio at all the three levels of education for both males and females do exhibit a pattern. With the exception of the male ratio at the primary level, the highest ratio was always in the Western region followed by the Eastern, Central, Mid-Western and Far-Western region, in that order.

Table 4: Gross Enrolment Ratios by Development Regions, 1991

Development Regions	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Eastern	122.2	91.6	107.7	53.3	32.1	43.4	50.8	24.8	40.0
Central	112.3	73.0	94.0	47.5	25.8	37.5	41.6	20.4	31.7
Western	151.7	114.3	133.4	65.4	37.7	51.9	53.9	24.7	39.5
Mid-Western	132.1	64.7	99.8	46.3	15.0	31.5	32.6	9.3	21.5
Far-Western	127.4	50.4	90.3	45.1	9.3	27.9	29.7	4.8	17.6
NEPAL	126.4	82.9	105.7	52.1	26.9	40.2	44.3	19.5	32.4

Source: Based on MOEC/SW; Educational Statistics Report, 1991, Table 18.  
Manpower and Statistics Section, Planning Division, MOEC.

## **6. Gross Enrolment Ratio by Ecological Zones**

The status of gross enrolment ratios by ecological zones in 1991 is presented in Table 5.

At the primary level, the Hills and the Mountains have higher enrolment ratios compared with that of the Terai. The Hills and the Mountain regions of the Eastern, Central and Western Development Regions have enrolment ratios exceeding 100 per cent, while the ratios for the Terai region in the three development regions are below 100 per cent. Although female enrolment ratios are in general lower than those of males, they are particularly low in Terai. Various social and economic reasons are seen to have caused lower girls' participation in the Terai. All the ecological zones in the MidWestern and Far-Western Development Regions have enrolment ratios lower than the corresponding ratios in other development regions. An exception is the Terai region in Mid Western Region, which has quite a high enrolment ratio, higher than that of Mountain region.

At lower secondary level, the three ecological zones in the Eastern Region, Hills region in the Western Region and Kathmandu Valley in the Central Region have relatively high enrolment ratios. All the ecological zones in the Mid-Western and Far-Western Region have relatively lower enrolment ratios compared to the ecological zones in other development regions. The male ratios are consistently higher than female ratios in all the ecological-development regions except the Western Mountain Region.

At the secondary level, the highest enrolment ratio is attained by Kathmandu Valley in the Central Region. Relatively higher enrolment ratios are found in the Hills region of the Western Region and in all the ecological zones of the Eastern Region. The Mountain and Terai in the Central and Eastern Regions as well as all ecological zones of the Mid-Western and Far-Western Regions have lower enrolment ratios. The female enrolment at the secondary level is markedly lower than that of males, particularly in the Terai everywhere.

Thus the male and female enrolment ratios at various levels of education are seen to vary not only among the development regions but also among ecological zones within the development regions.

Table 5: Gross Enrolment Ratios by Ecological Zones, 1991

Development Regions	Primary			Lower Secondary			Secondary		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>Eastern</b>									
Mountains	153	118	136	60	33	46	49	21	35
Hills	146	112	130	56	29	43	51	20	36
Terai	106	77	92	53	34	43	53	28	41
<b>Central</b>									
Mountains	147	82	116	39	13	26	26	7	17
Hills	132	86	110	40	18	30	32	12	22
Terai	95	49	74	44	17	30	35	13	25
Kathmandu Valley	120	117	118	80	67	74	81	61	72
<b>Western</b>									
Mountains	145	146	145	31	36	33	24	16	20
Hills	177	140	158	78	45	62	69	30	50
Terai	93	64	87	44	22	34	28	13	21
<b>Mid-Western</b>									
Mountains	120	40	83	37	4	22	24	2	14
Hills	149	70	110	46	12	29	32	8	20
Terai	113	65	91	50	23	37	36	14	26
<b>Far-Western</b>									
Mountains	140	53	97	52	6	30	34	2	14
Hills	143	43	94	43	4	24	29	2	16
Terai	106	57	83	44	16	31	28	8	19

Source: Based on MOEC, Educational Statistics Report, 1991, Table 18.

Note: The figures have been rounded.

## 7. Net Enrolment Ratio

A start was made with fixing primary enrolment targets in terms of Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) in the Eighth Plan (1992-97) document<sup>3</sup>. Educational progress in Nepal has generally been reported in terms of achievement of higher levels of gross enrolment ratios. The gross enrolment ratios represent participation of children of varying ages in a particular level of education. For various reasons, it is not possible to have children of particular age to be admitted in a grade corresponding to the age of the child. Children of 6 years of age are expected to enter grade I and of 7 years to enter grade II and so on. In actual practice, there are considerable differences between the expected admission age of students and the actual age of students admitted in different grades. Students outside of the officially prescribed ages for particular grade level are either 'under aged' (below the officially prescribed age levels), or 'over aged' (above the officially prescribed age levels).

<sup>3</sup> The Plan document states that the net enrolment ratio will be raised to 90 per cent over the plan period. NPC, 1992, The Eighth Plan, (English Translation), p.475.

The gross enrolment ratios do not provide an exact indication of participation of children of specific age groups in schooling of different levels. In order to arrive at the exact proportion of specific eligible (officially prescribed) age group population in different levels of education, it is necessary to calculate the net enrolment ratio. The **Net Enrolment Ratio** is derived by dividing the number of enrolments of students at officially prescribed ages for a particular level of education, by the population at those ages.

The age data of the students in different grades and levels of education are quite deficient, as schools do not keep proper records of ages of the enrolled students. However, a start has been made recently in this direction by requiring the schools to fill up age levels of students in the annual statistics forms.

In order to derive net enrolment ratio from the gross enrolment ratios, the gross ratios are deflated by the proportion of 'overaged' and 'underaged' students. The Educational Statistics Report of 1988 has presented estimates of these proportions<sup>4</sup>. For some years, the Educational Statistics Report, such as the Report for 1988 have presented the net ratios. The following are the estimates of net enrolment ratios for the year 1988.

It is seen that there is a wide divergence between the gross and net ratios. For the year, 1988, the gross ratio at primary level is deflated by 25 per cent, the gross ratio at lower secondary level by 57 per cent, and the gross ratio at secondary level by 40 per cent to get the net ratios for the respective levels.

In 1988, the net ratios were 65.2 per cent at the primary level, 16.2 per cent at the lower secondary level, and 16 per cent at the secondary level. These figures indicate that a lot of effort in educational development needs to be made in increasing student participation especially at the lower secondary and secondary levels.

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<sup>4</sup> Data on 'overaged' and 'underaged' children in the primary school grades are sketchy. Available data show wide variation in proportion of the 'overaged' and 'underaged' in different years. Annual variations make it difficult to work out consistent net enrolment ratios over the years.

## Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios at Various Levels of School Education, 1988

Enrolment Ratio	Primary	Lower Secondary	Secondary
Net Ratio	65.2	16.2	16.0
Gross Ratio	87.0	37.7	26.7

Source: MOEC, Educational Statistic Report, 1988.

## Per cent 'Overaged' and 'Underaged' among the School Enrolment, 1988<sup>5</sup>

Level	Underaged	Overaged	Exact age
Primary	5	20	75
Lower Secondary	3	54	43
Secondary	2	38	60

Source: MOEC, Educational Statistic Report, 1988.

## 8. Retention Status

Enrolment in the school education has increased significantly during the past three decades. Attention is now being drawn to (i) completion of particular levels of education by the enrolled students (ii) achievement of expected learning by the students (iii) promotion of quality of education provided in the schools. Completion of particular level of education requires the enrolled students to remain and actively engage in their studies throughout the full cycle of that level of education. The achievement of expected learning and quality of education are affected mainly by the teaching, and learning facilities in the schools. Unfortunately, the teaching and learning facilities are observed to be quite deficient in the schools.

The school education system as well as higher education system face the problem of high dropout and repetition. As a result of high dropout and repetition, the students take longer than required

<sup>5</sup> A Sample Study conducted by the Basic and Primary Education Project (BPEP) in 14 BPEP districts concludes that at the primary level, 11 per cent of the enrolled children are underaged, 42 per cent of exact age, and 47 per cent are overaged (BPEP, A Sample Study on Base Line Survey, Repetition, Promotion, and Dropout, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, 1993).

Estimates as these show that quite a large proportion of children enrolled in primary schools belong to the 'underaged' and 'overaged' groups. Under such conditions the net ratios would be much lower. Further as long age reporting by schools is not systematized, there will be much uncertainty about level of net enrolment ratio.

number of years of study for completing particular level of education. It is essential that the enrolled students are retained in the school system in order to allow them to complete the particular level of education. The retention situation can be studied by presenting Cohort Survival Rate. The rate refers to the proportion of students who progress through the grades of a particular cycle of education. The rate is concerned with the number of students in successive grades relative to the number when they first entered the school system.

The Cohort Survival Rates at primary education and secondary education levels in the years 1987-91 are presented here based on the grade wise enrolments at these levels during 1987-91. (Tables 6,7).

Table 6: Gradewise Primary Enrolment, 1987-91

Year grade	I	II	III	IV	V	(I to V)
1987	778061	376581	298994	268809	230059	1952504
1988	906190	378405	311656	276950	235538	2108739
1989	1171661	449721	338326	305230	261209	2526147
1990	1256902	531287	390818	329951	279686	2788644
1991	1239578	559707	437637	360331	287022	2884275
1992	1266187	568833	469791	410151	319748	3034710

Source: MOEC/SW, 1965-1992.

Table 7: Gradewise Secondary (Lower Secondary and Secondary) Enrolment, 1987-91

Year\grade	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	(VI to X)
1987	154095	135499	107663	95092	87168	579517
1988	163036	142373	113760	100052	93722	612943
1989	174339	150898	125793	110018	102968	664016
1990	183593	160545	133188	119365	111972	708663
1991	208749	169729	152344	131048	111938	773808
1992	246468	186960	158881	141689	121139	855137

Source: MOEC/SW, 1965-1992.

Table 8: Cohort Survival Rate, Primary Level, 1987-91<sup>6</sup>

Year\grade	I	II	III	IV	V
1987	100				
1988	100	48.6			
1989	100	49.6	43.5		
1990	100	45.3	43.1	42.4	
1991	100	44.5	37.3	39.8	36.8
1992	100	45.9	37.4	35.0	35.3

Source: Based on Table 6.

Table 9: Cohort Survival Rate, Secondary Level, 1987-91

Year grade	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X
1987	100				
1988	100	92.4			
1989	100	92.5	81.6		
1990	100	92.1	81.7	77.4	
1991	100	92.4	87.4	80.4	72.6
1992	100	89.6	86.5	81.3	74.3

Source: Based on Table 7.

Cohort Survival Rates based on grade wise enrolment over the period 1987-92, are presented in Tables 8 and 9. It will be seen that at the primary level, there is a sharp fall in the number of students in transition from grade I to II and that out of 100 students enrolled in grade I in 1987, about 36.8 per cent have reached grade V. In other words, about two thirds of the students have dropped out before they could reach grade V. For the Cohort of 1988, the Cohort Survival Rate is about 35.3 per cent. Most of the dropping out has occurred in grade I; between grade I and II about 52 per cent of the students (of the 1987 cohort) have dropped out or repeated grade I<sup>7</sup>.

6

$$\text{Cohort Survival Rate at grade (g+n) in year (y+n)} = \frac{\text{Enrolment in grade (g+n) in calendar year (y+n)}}{\text{Enrolment in grade I in calendar year (y)}} \times 100$$

<sup>7</sup> The dropout and repetition rates are high particularly at grade I. Various school related, family related causes account for the persistently high dropout and repetition rates. Studies based

At the secondary level the Cohort Survival Rate from grade VI to VII is seen to be about 92 per cent, indicating that a major proportion of grade VI students go on to grade VII. However, there is a small but steady decline in the survival rate over the secondary grades. For the 1987 cohort, out of 100 students enrolled in grade VI, 72.6 per cent reach grade X. Similarly for the 1988 Cohort, the Survival Rate (reaching grade X) is 74.3 per cent. This implies that more than a quarter of students starting their secondary education drop out before reaching grade X.

The movement of students as they progress through the education system can also be studied with grade progression/survival rates. The rates for primary and secondary levels in recent years (1987-92) are presented in Tables 10 and 11. The survival rates refer to number of students in successive grades in relation to the number of students in the immediate preceding grade.

It is seen that at the primary level, there is a significant improvement in student survival after grade II. Highest survival rate is seen at grade IV (97.5 per cent in case of students first enrolled in 1987). The problem of student drop out and repetition is, thus, mainly at grade I. Once students reach grade III, a large majority of students are seen to be going right up to grade V.

Table 10: Grade Progression/Survival Rate, Primary Level, 1987-91<sup>8</sup>

Year\grade	I-II	II-III	III-IV	IV-V
1987-1988	48.6			
1988-1989	49.6	89.4		
1989-1990	45.3	86.9	97.5	
1990-1991	44.5	82.4	92.2	86.9
1991-1992	45.9	83.9	93.7	88.7

Source: Based on Table 6.

on national data indicate the following flow rates.

- a. Promotion rate: 41 per cent at grade I and average of 72 per cent for grades II to V.
- b. Repetition rate: 42 per cent at grade I and average of 15 per cent for grades II to V.
- c. Dropout rate: 17 per cent at grade I, and average of 13 per cent for grades II to V. (CERID, 1987)

8

$$\text{Rate of Grade Progression/Survival} = \frac{\text{Enrolment in grade } g+1 \text{ in year } (y+1)}{\text{Enrolment in grade } g \text{ in year } (y)} \times 100$$



Table: Grade Progression/Survival Rate, Secondary Level, 1987-91

Year\grade	VI-VII	VII-VIII	VIII-IX	IX-X
1987-1988	92.4			
1988-1989	92.5	88.3		
1989-1990	92.1	88.3	94.9	
1990-1991	92.4	94.9	98.4	93.8
1991-1992	89.6	93.5	93.0	92.4

Source: Based on Table 7.

At the secondary level, the survival rates are high at the upper secondary grades. Highest survival rates are observed to be at grade IX, (94.9 per cent in case of students enrolled in grade VI in 1987).

There is a long standing problem of high dropout and repetition rate at the primary education level. The grade progression rates indicate that about 50 per cent of students enrolled in grade I either dropout or repeat classes. Dropout and repetition tendencies are less pronounced in the later grades of the primary cycle. The dropout and repetition tendency has remained chronic for the past several years. Prominent causes of dropout/repetition are poverty of the families, parents' lack of educational background, compulsion on children to assist families in domestic as well as earning activities, taking care of younger children as well as deficiencies in teaching and schools. Repetition at grade I is also due to enrolment of underaged children (below 6 years of age) in grade I in large numbers. Various measures such as restricting admission of underaged children in grade I have recently been announced. More effective measures will be those relating to improvement of quality of instruction in the schools.

## 9. Enrolments at Higher-Education Levels

Higher education is provided in the country mainly by Tribhuvan University and the private campuses (institutions) affiliated to it. The Mahendra Sanskrit University accounts for a small proportion of total higher education students. The Kathmandu University runs a certificate level science campus and conducts M.B.A. courses (as of 1994). In 1993/94, a number of private institutions, associated with Indian academic institutions have been established in the country to provide engineering and medical education.

Higher education enrolments by different institutes/disciplines for the years 1987-92 are presented in Table 12. It is seen that total enrolments have grown from 78,490 in 1987 to 154,528 in 1991, recording an average annual growth rate of 24.2 per cent. The enrolment in higher education (excluding private campuses) was 105,223 in 1992. Enrolments have increased in all institutions/disciplines except in Institutes of Forestry and of Agriculture. The total enrolments in the technical institutes of Engineering, Medicine, Agriculture, and Forestry together increased from 5009 in 1987 to 5306 in 1991 recording an average annual increase of 1.5 per cent during 1987-1991. The growth in the enrolment in technical institutes of Engineering and Medicine is mainly constrained by the capacity of enrolment in these institutes. The demand for seats exceeds the capacity of the institutes to enrol. Largest increases have been recorded in the fields of Education (teacher training), Management and Humanities. Sanskrit enrolment also increased almost three fold over the level in 1987. (Table 13).

The percentage distribution of higher education enrolment by institutions/ disciplines is presented in Table 14. It is seen that in 1991, Humanities and Social Sciences accounted for 44.3 per cent of total enrolments, followed by Management with 30 per cent of total enrollment. Professional Technical higher education (Engineering, Medicine, Agriculture and Forestry) together accounted for 3.5 per cent of total enrolment in 1991. This is lower than the proportion (6.3%) in technical higher education in 1987. This is due to reduced enrolments in Institute of Agriculture and Institute of Forestry over the period 1987-91. Enrolment in Forestry institute was 563 in 1992, which is slightly higher than in 1987.

Table 12: Enrolment in Higher Education, 1987-91<sup>9</sup>

Institute/Faculty	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992*
1. Engineering	1997	1837	1952	1831	2268	2080
2. Medicine	1503	1458	1658	1540	1863	1499
3. Agriculture and Animal Science	956	1151	1252	1318	721	674
4. Forestry	553	541	587	577	454	563
5. Science/Technology	8844	8611	9119	10243	13567	12468
6. Education	4471	4748	6032	6272	9591	9204
7. Management	22196	25223	28736	28091	46335	26424
8. Law	6425	6703	7006	7109	10211	7461
9. Humanities and Social Sciences	31180	32695	38320	45149	68515	43703
10. Sanskrit	365	389	578	696	1003	1147
	78490	83356	95240	102826	154528	105223

Source: MOEC/SW, 1987-1992.

\* Data for 1992 do not include private campuses.

Note: Data for all years 1987-91 include private campus students also.

<sup>9</sup> Enrolments in the institutes and faculties (Serial Nos. 1 to 9) under Tribhuvan University; Enrolment in Sanskrit under Mahendra Sanskrit University.

Table 13: Average Annual Rate of Growth of Enrolment in Higher Education, 1987-91

Institute/Faculty	Growth % (Annual)
1. Engineering	3.4
2. Medicine	6.0
3. Agriculture	-6.1
4. Forestry	-4.4
5. Science/Technology	13.3
6. Education	28.6
7. Management	27.1
8. Law	14.7
9. Humanities and Social Sciences	29.9
10. Sanskrit	43.7
Total	23.3

Source: MOEC/SW, 1987-1993.

- Note:
1. (-) minus denotes declines.
  2. The enrolment declines in Institutes of Agriculture and Animal Sciences have occurred in 1991. Upto 1990, there were steady increases in enrolments in these institutes.

Table 14: Distribution of Higher Education Enrolments by Major Discipline Areas, 1987 and 1991

Discipline Area	Higher Education Enrolment	
	1987	1991
1. Engineering	2.5	1.5
2. Medicine	1.9	1.2
3. Agriculture and Animal Science	1.2	0.5
4. Forestry	0.7	0.3
5. Science/Technology	11.3	8.8
6. Education	5.7	6.2
7. Management	28.3	30.0
8. Law	8.2	6.6
9. Humanities and Social Sciences	39.7	44.3
10. Sanskrit	0.5	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: MOEC/SW, 1987-1993.

In general the structure of higher education enrolment has remained much the same in 1987 and 1991. The predominance of enrolments in Humanities and Social Sciences and in Management is maintained. The proportion of enrolment in these two institutes/disciplines have even increased over the 1987-91 period. The importance of education in Management (Commerce/Business) has increased much in recent years with the growth in demand for persons qualified in finance and management.

## 9.1 Distribution of Higher-Education Enrolments by Level and Discipline Areas

Table 15 presents the levelwise distribution of students in various institutes and faculties of Tribhuvan University and Mahendra Sanskrit University in 1991. It is seen that 70 per cent of the total higher education students were studying at Certificate (Intermediate) level and 23.6 per cent at Bachelors level in 1991. A small proportion (5.0%) were pursuing Masters level studies. Some institutes and faculties conduct under-SLC courses as special programmes to cater to manpower needs of specific sectors. From data on the distribution of enrolment by level, it can be inferred that a large proportion of higher education students terminate their studies at the Certificate levels. Examination pass rates are quite low at the Certificate level. Similarly, only a small proportion of Bachelor level students complete the course and proceed on to the Masters level. Besides the high rates of examination failures, there are various factors affecting progression through higher levels. The main factor is the need to take up employment either on part time or full time basis to support the families.

Table 15: Distribution of Enrolment by levels, 1991

Institution	Lower	Certificate	Bachelor	Master	Total
Tribhuvan University					
1. Engineering	312	1595	361		2268
2. Medicine	367	1110	345	41	1863
3. Agriculture and Animal Science	-	202	519		721
4. Forestry	-	343	111		454
5. Science/Technology	-	9282	2972	1313	13567
6. Education	530	4789	4086	186	9591
7. Management	-	30813	12015	3507	46335
8. Law		7181	3030		10211
9. Humanities and Social Sciences	1040	52216	12727	2532	68515
Mahendra Sanskrit University					
1. Sanskrit	-	636	250	117	1003
Total	2249	108167	36416	7696	154528
% of the total	1.4	70.0	23.6	5.0	100.0

Source: MOEC/SW, Educational Statistics of Nepal 1991.

## **9.2 Proportion of Females in Higher-Education Enrolment**

Female students in higher education numbered 36429 (24 per cent of total higher education enrollments) in 1991. This is quite a high participation rate on the part of females, considering that only about 29 per cent of the students at secondary level are female. More and more female students are completing secondary education each year. Higher education qualifications are now prized for career opportunities as well as for social recognition.

## **10. Literacy**

### **10.1 Definition**

In common interpretation, literacy is the knowledge of reading and writing. Those who can read and write are called literates. A literate person is expected to be conversant with the three R's - reading, writing and arithmetic. Traditionally for census taking purposes in most countries, the ability to read and write has been regarded as the minimal standard of literacy (NPC, 1992).

Now a days, literacy is interpreted in a wide and comprehensive sense. UNESCO came up with the concept of functional literacy in 1965. It defined a person to be functionally literate when he/she could read and write enough to be effective in the normal activities of life. It is difficult to measure the extent of knowledge and skills required to carry on daily responsibilities relating to work, and supporting one self and one's family. For census purposes, the ability to read and write and do simple computation is enough basis for categorizing a person as literate. Even this is difficult to measure precisely; and census-takers have to rely on respondents to declare whether they are literate or not. It is not possible to subject the respondents to tests of literacy in census operations.

### **10.2 Literacy and Development**

Literacy is perhaps the most important single means of attaining social and economic development, and of opening for the individual, the door to innovative ideas and actions. Literacy enhances access to information that may be necessary to conduct various essential activities in daily life and work. It enables a person to improve his knowledge base, acquire education informally and make progress in life.

UNESCO has made a worldwide call for eradicating illiteracy in the member countries by the year 2000 A.D.. The 'Education for All' Conference held in Jomtien, Thailand (1990) called for action by the participating countries to reduce their respective illiteracy rates by half, by the year 2000 A.D. In the context of Nepal, since the illiteracy rate was 60 per cent in 1991, the resolution implies that illiteracy rate should be reduced to 30 per cent, in other words, the literacy rate should be raised to 70 per cent by the year 2000 A.D.

Various measures are being taken in the country to raise the literacy rate. The expansion of primary education is the major contributing factor in raising the literacy rate. Primary education tackles illiteracy at the source. However, there are large number of school dropouts; this adds to the numbers of illiterates.

Adult education activities are being carried out by various governmental and non-governmental agencies. Literacy campaigns have occasionally been launched in a few districts to achieve literacy in a short period of time.

### **10.3 Census Data on Literacy**

Censuses have been the main source of information on literacy situation in the country. Data on literacy have been collected in all the censuses conducted since 1952/54. The concept of literacy used in the censuses has remained almost uniform. The literacy competence was interpreted as ability to read and write in any language in the censuses of 1952/54, 1961 and 1971. The 1981 census made a slight improvement in the definition of literacy. The literacy competence was defined in this census as ability to read and write in any language with understanding. The 1991 census made a further improvement by defining literacy as ability to read and write with understanding and to do simple arithmetic calculations.

### **10.4 Literacy Situation in 1991**

Literacy rates by single ages from 6 years to 14 years and for age groups beyond age 14 years in 1991 are presented in Table 16. Literacy rates for various age groups for 1971 and 1981 are also presented in the same table. The overall literacy rate in 1991 was 39.6 per cent for both sexes, 54.4 per cent for the males and 25.0 per cent for the females.

In absolute numbers, the number of literate persons of both sexes was 5,958,748 and that of illiterates was 9,073,370 in 1991. The non-literate (illiterate) population is still quite high. Despite increase in literacy rates, it has become difficult to sharply bring down the number of illiterate persons; this is due to expanding population. The overall literacy rate for 6-9 year age group population was 47 per cent, for 10-14 years age group population it was 63.2 per cent and 54.7 per cent for 15-19 years age group population. After 15-19 age group, there are sharp declines in literacy rates for each successive five year age group.

The literacy rate for each successive higher age group is lower than that for the preceding age group. Lowest literacy rate (13.6%) is found for 60-64 age group population. The lower literacy rate for population of higher and advanced ages is attributable to lack of access to primary education for these people in their younger ages. On the other hand widespread availability of primary education facilities during the past two decades is mainly responsible for higher literacy rates among the 10-14 years and 15-19 years age group population.

The literacy rates for males are higher than those for females in all age groups. Highest female literacy rate (49.3%) is found in the age group 10-14 years and the lowest rate (3.1%) in the age group 60-64 years. For the males, the highest literacy rate (76.4%) is found in the age group 10-14 and the lowest (24.0%) in the age group 60-64.

The lower literacy rates among females are the result of a variety of historical, economic and social reasons. Social prejudices against female education, restrictions on mobility of females, low social status granted to the females, the system of early marriage and low participation of females in formal education are the main reasons for low female literacy rate. The situation is now rapidly changing. Females have now greater access to primary as well as upper levels of education; and education has become a necessity for social status as well as for economic betterment.

There has been a considerable increase in the literacy rate for the total population aged 6 years and above between 1971 and 1991. The total literacy rate went up from 13.9 per cent in 1971 to 39.6 per cent in 1991<sup>10</sup>. The male literacy rate increased from 23.6 per cent in 1971 to 54.5 per cent

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<sup>10</sup> The adult literacy rate (for population 15 years and above) is found to be 33 per cent in 1991. The number of literates among 15 years and above population was 3,485,930, and that of illiterates (among 15 years and above population) was 7,085,315 in 1991. Of the total literates among population 6 years and above, 41.5 per cent belong to 6 to 14 years age group and 58.5 per cent to 15 years and above age groups.

in 1991. Similarly, the female illiteracy rate went up from 3.9 per cent in 1971 to 25.0 per cent in 1991. The literacy rate was highest in the age group 10-14 followed by the 15-19 age group in each of the census years, 1971, 1981 and 1991. For the 10-14 age group, the literacy rate was 23.8 per cent in 1971, 38.8 per cent in 1981 and 63.2 per cent in 1991. The rapid increase in the literacy rate in this age group is mainly due to the increased participation of children of younger age group in primary education. The government policy of providing free primary education along with distribution of free primary text books has contributed much to the increased participation of younger generations in primary education.

A comparison of literacy status in Nepal with that in neighboring countries would be instructive. In India, literacy rate for population above 6 years of age was 52 per cent in 1990 (UNICEF, Basic Education and National Development, 1991). Literacy rate for population (15-35 yrs.) was 35 per cent in Bangladesh in 1991 (UNICEF, Achieving Child Survival and Development goals 1990-1995, Bangladesh, UNICEF, Dacca, 1992).

Table 16: Literacy Rate by Age and Sex, Nepal 1971-91

Age	Literacy Rate (%)								
	1971			1981			1991		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female
All ages	13.9	23.6	3.9	23.3	34.0	12.0	39.6	54.5	25.0
6 years	-	-	-	14.0	17.5	10.5	34.3	40.1	28.3
7 years	-	-	-	20.3	26.2	14.5	46.1	54.4	37.6
8 years	-	-	-	24.3	31.1	16.8	51.0	61.0	40.4
9 years	-	-	-	29.5	38.3	20.4	58.3	69.3	46.9
6-9 years	11.1	16.4	5.5	21.6	27.8	15.2	47.0	55.7	38.0
10 years	-	-	-	34.4	44.4	22.6	60.0	71.8	46.9
11 years	-	-	-	42.5	54.7	28.5	68.4	80.4	55.3
12 years	-	-	-	38.0	49.8	23.9	61.9	74.7	47.8
13 years	-	-	-	42.2	56.2	26.4	65.5	79.2	51.0
14 years	-	-	-	40.0	53.9	24.0	62.3	76.4	47.5
10-14 years	23.8	35.8	9.6	38.8	50.8	21.2	63.2	76.0	49.3
15-19 years	21.9	35.4	7.1	33.6	48.2	17.5	54.7	71.5	38.6
20-24 years	17.0	30.9	4.1	26.5	41.7	12.6	43.8	64.3	26.3
25-29 years	18.3	24.4	2.5	23.0	36.3	10.1	35.1	54.7	17.6
30-34 years	10.5	20.3	1.6	19.3	31.8	7.8	31.0	49.6	13.9
35-39 years	9.8	17.6	1.4	17.5	27.6	6.7	28.4	45.3	11.2
40-44 years	8.7	16.4	1.1	14.6	23.7	5.5	24.1	41.2	7.9
45-49 years	8.7*	15.7*	1.0*	14.2	22.2	5.0	21.7	36.5	6.3
50-54 years	-	-	-	12.5	19.4	4.6	18.1	30.9	4.7
55-59 years	6.5**	12.6**	0.7**	13.3	20.7	4.5	17.2	28.5	4.2
60-64 years	-	-	-	10.2	16.1	3.8	13.6	24.0	3.1
60+ years	-	-	-	10.5	16.4	3.9	14.3	24.5	3.5

Source: CBS, 1975, Vol. II, Part II, Table 16

CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14

CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30.

Note: \* Age group 45-54, \*\* Age group 55+.



## 10.5 Growth in Literacy Level by Sex

The overall literacy rate for population 6 years and above by sex and their growth over the years is given in Table 17. It is seen that during 1971-91, the total literacy rate has increased three fold, the male literacy more than doubled and the female literacy rate increased six fold. The growth in the literacy rate has been greater for males than females. Further, there has been an acceleration in the growth of literacy both of males and females from 1971-1981 decade to 1981-1991 decade. This in itself is a proof of the efforts made recently towards eradication of illiteracy.

Table 17: Literacy Rate and Intercensal Change by Sex, Nepal 1971-91  
(Population 6 years and above)

Sex	Per cent Literate			Intercensal Change (average annual rate of increase)		
	1971	1981	1991	1971-81	1981-91	1971-91
Both Sexes	13.9	23.3	39.6	0.94	1.63	1.28
Male	23.6	34.0	54.5	1.04	2.05	1.54
Female	3.9	12.0	25.0	0.81	1.30	1.05

Source: Same as in Fable 16.

## 10.6 Age and Sex Patterns of Literacy in Rural and Urban Areas

The status of literacy by age and sex in 1981 and 1991 for the rural and the urban areas are presented in Tables 18 & 19. The total literacy rate in the rural areas in 1991 was 36.8 per cent compared to 66.9 per cent in the urban areas. In the rural areas, 51.9 per cent of the males and 22.0 per cent of the females were literate in 1991. In the urban areas, 78 percent of the males and 54.8 per cent of the females were literate. There is evidently a wide disparity in the literacy rates in the rural and urban areas. The higher literacy rate in the urban areas is attributable to greater necessity of being literate in the urban areas, greater access to educational facilities in the urban areas and the tendency of educated rural people to migrate to the towns. On the other hand, the need to communicate in written form is as yet less marked in the rural areas and the rural areas generally lose their educated persons to the towns.

The literacy rate in the rural areas grew from 21.4 per cent in 1981 to 36.8 per cent in 1991, while the literacy rate in the urban areas grew from 50.5 per cent in 1981 to 66.9 per cent in 1991. Although literacy rate has improved in the rural areas, the rural-urban difference in literacy rates has remained almost the same (a difference of about 30 percentage points). It is likely that the difference will continue to prevail if migration of educated persons from the rural areas to the urban areas continues as is happening at present.

In both rural and urban areas, literacy rate seems to increase with increasing age for males as well as females in the age range of 6-11 years. After age 11 the rate tends to show a steadily declining trend. Among the age groups, the highest literacy rate is found in the 10-14 age group. In 1991, the literacy rate in age group 10-14 was 61.2 per cent in rural areas and 83.4 per cent in the urban areas. At ages 15-19 years, the rate in the rural areas was 51.8 per cent and that in the urban areas was 79.4 per cent. The lowest rural literacy rate was 12.0 per cent in age group 60-64 and the lowest in the urban areas was 31.6 per cent in the age group 65+ years.

The male and female difference in literacy rates are observed in the rural as well as urban areas. Generally there are greater differences in literacy rates by gender in the rural areas compared to the urban areas. For age group 10-14 years, the rural literacy rate for males was 74.8 per cent and for females the rate was 46.6 per cent. In the urban areas, for the same age group, the male literacy rate was 88 per cent and the female literacy rate was 78.2 per cent. Similarly, for age group 15-19 years, the male literacy rate was 69.6 per cent and the female rate was 35.0 per cent in the rural areas; whereas for urban areas in this age group, the male literacy rate was 86.4 per cent and the female rate was 71.8 per cent. The male and female literacy rates are consistently much higher in urban areas compared to the rates in rural areas.

Table 18: Rural Literacy Rate by Age and Sex, Nepal, 1981-91

Age	Rural Literacy Rate (%)					
		1981			1991	
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
All ages	21.4	32.0	10.3	36.8	51.9	22.0
6 years	12.6	16.0	9.1	31.8	37.7	25.7
7 years	18.6	24.4	12.7	43.7	52.3	34.9
8 years	22.4	29.3	14.9	48.8	59.2	37.7
9 years	27.6	36.5	18.3	56.1	67.8	44.3
6-9 years	19.9	20.1	13.5	44.7	53.7	35.3
10 years	32.6	42.8	20.5	58.0	70.5	44.4
11 years	40.4	53.1	26.1	66.6	79.3	52.6
12 years	36.2	48.3	21.6	60.0	73.5	45.1
13 years	40.1	54.6	23.6	63.5	78.1	48.0
14 years	37.8	52.2	21.3	60.1	75.2	44.3
10-14 years	36.8	49.2	22.3	61.2	74.8	46.6
15-19 years	31.2	46.2	14.8	51.8	69.6	35.0
20-24 years	24.0	39.2	10.4	39.8	61.2	22.0
25-29 years	20.7	33.9	8.2	31.1	51.2	13.6
30-34 years	17.3	29.4	6.3	27.3	46.0	10.4
35-39 years	15.7	25.4	5.5	25.0	41.9	8.1
40-44 years	13.2	21.8	4.7	21.1	37.8	5.5
45-49 years	12.8	17.8	4.3	19.0	33.3	4.2
50-54 years	11.3	17.8	4.0	15.9	28.1	3.1
55-59 years	12.2	19.2	4.0	15.3	26.0	2.8
60-64 years	9.4	14.9	3.4	12.0	21.8	2.2
65 + years	9.7	15.2	3.5	12.7	22.3	2.5

Source: CBS 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14  
CBS 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30.

There has been an improvement in rural literacy rate during 1981-1991. The rate increased from 21.4 per cent (all ages) in 1981, to 36.8 per cent in 1991. For the males, there was larger increase in the literacy rate; the male rate went up from 32 per cent in 1981, to 51.9 per cent in 1991. The female rate went up from 10.3 per cent in 1981 to 22 per cent in 1991. This implies that proportionately more males than females became literate in the rural areas during 1981-1991.

The urban literacy rate (all ages) increased from 50.5 per cent in 1981 to 66.9 per cent in 1991; the male literacy rate (all ages) increased by 17 percentage points from 61.1 per cent in 1981 to 78 per cent in 1991. The female literacy rate (all ages) also increased by about 17 percentage points from 38.2 per cent in 1981 to 54.8 per cent in 1991. While the gain in literacy during 1981-1991 was greater for males than females in rural areas, no such gender-bias was observed in urban areas.

**Table 19: Urban Literacy Rate by Age and Sex, Nepal, 1981-91**

Age	Urban Literacy Rate (%)					
	Both Sexes	1981 Male	1981 Female	1991 Both Sexes	1991 Male	1991 Female
All ages	50.5	61.1	38.2	66.9	78.0	54.8
6 years	36.8	40.5	33.0	63.5	67.2	59.6
7 years	48.9	53.6	43.9	72.4	77.4	69.7
8 years	54.5	59.6	48.7	77.1	81.6	72.1
9 years	61.1	66.9	54.7	82.4	86.5	78.0
6-9 years	49.6	54.4	44.4	73.9	77.9	69.6
10 years	63.9	70.1	56.4	81.3	86.2	75.7
11 years	70.0	76.4	62.5	86.5	90.6	81.9
12 years	66.3	72.3	58.7	82.4	87.1	76.9
13 years	70.8	77.1	63.7	84.7	89.3	79.7
14 years	69.2	75.9	61.2	83.0	87.8	77.8
10-14 years	67.6	73.9	60.1	83.4	88.0	78.2
15-19 years	64.1	73.0	53.5	79.4	86.4	71.8
20-24 years	57.5	69.9	44.1	73.8	85.1	62.1
25-29 years	52.9	66.7	37.7	66.7	80.3	52.6
30-34 years	47.7	62.2	31.4	63.1	77.8	46.8
35-39 years	43.1	57.2	26.0	59.0	74.0	41.6
40-44 years	37.4	51.7	20.4	54.0	71.4	33.8
45-49 years	35.7	49.7	17.9	50.2	67.5	29.2
50-54 years	31.8	44.6	15.4	43.9	61.7	23.6
55-59 years	30.8	43.2	13.8	40.1	57.8	19.6
60-64 years	24.5	35.7	10.8	33.3	51.8	14.9
65 + years	23.7	34.3	10.7	31.6	50.2	13.8

Source: CBS, 1984, Vol. I and III, Table 11 and Vol. 1, Part IV Table 14  
CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30  
CBS, 1994, Vol. II, Table 6.

## 10.7 Regional Variations in Literacy Rate

### 10.7.1 Literacy Rate by Development Regions

The status of literacy in 1971, 1981 and 1991 for development regions is presented in Tables 20A and 20B. In 1991, the Eastern Development Region had the highest literacy rate (44.3%), followed by the Western Development Region (44.0%) and Central Development Region (38.6%). The MidWestern Development Region with 31.8 per cent and Far-Western Development Region with 32.2 per cent, are the regions with relatively lower and nearly identical literacy rates.

The growth in literacy rate in different development regions during the two decades (1971-91) is given in Table 20A:

Table 20A: Literacy Rate by Development Regions, 1971 and 1991

Development Regions	1971	1991	Increase in percentage points
Eastern Development Region (EDR)	15.3	44.3	29.0
Central Development Region (CDR)	14.2	38.6	24.4
Western Development Region (WDR)	16.5	44.0	27.5
Mid Western Development Region (MWDR)	8.7	31.8	23.1
Far Western Development Region (FWDR)	9.6	32.2	22.6
NEPAL	13.9	39.6	25.7

Note: Based on;

CBS, 1975, Vol. II, Part II, Table 16

CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14

CBS, 1993, Vol. 1, Part X, Table 30.

During the period 1971-91, the EDR has gained 29 percentage points followed by the WDR gaining 27.5 percentage points and the CDR gaining 24.4 percentage points. The MWDR and FWDR have gained about the same percentage points starting from a relatively low literacy rate.

Table 20B: Literacy Rate in Development Regions by Gender, 1991

Development Regions	Male	Female
Eastern Development Region (EDR)	59.3	29.2
Central Development Region (CDR)	52.0	24.6
Western Development Region (WDR)	58.5	28.9
Mid Western Development Region (MWDR)	47.6	16.3
Far Western Development Region (FWDR)	52.0	13.3
NEPAL	54.5	25.0

Note: CBS, 1993, Vol. 1, Part X, Table 30.

The status of literacy rate by gender in development regions is given in Table 20B. In 1991 the male literacy rates were consistently above 50 per cent in all Development Regions except the MWDR; highest male literacy rate was in the EDR (59.3%). The EDR also had the highest female literacy rate of 29.2 per cent. The MWDR and FWDR had lower rates of female literacy.

### 10.7.2 Literacy Rate by Ecological Zones

The literacy rate by ecological zones is presented in Table 20C and Table 21. Among the ecological zones, the Hills had the highest total as well as male and female literacy rates in 1991. The Terai had slightly higher female literacy rate than the Mountains while the male literacy rate in the two zones was about the same. Over the period 1971-91, the total literacy rate in Mountains increased from 9.9 per cent to 33.2 per cent; the literacy rate in Hills increased from 14.8 per cent to 43.9 per cent; and similarly the literacy rate in the Terai increased from 13.6 per cent to 36.5 per cent. Relatively there has been a larger increase (in percentage points) in literacy rate in the Hills compared to the rates in the other two ecological zones.

Table 20C: Literacy Rate by Ecological Zones, Both Sexes, 1991

Ecological Zones	EDR	CDR	WDR	MWDR	FWDR	Nepal
Mountains	45.1	31.1	47.0	22.0	31.2	33.2
Hills	44.6	48.4	48.0	31.6	30.6	43.9
Terai	44.0	30.8	36.6	35.0	34.4	36.5

Note: Based on Table 2 1.

As may be seen from Table 20C, geographic variations are not identical in all the development regions. The Mountains in the EDR and the WDR have relatively high literacy rate (above the national average), compared to the Mountains in other development regions. The Hills in EDR, CDR, WDR have relatively higher literacy rate (above the national average) compared to the Hills in the other two development regions. The Terai in the EDR has relatively higher literacy rate (also above the national average) compared to the Terai in all other development regions.

In general, the Mountains in CDR, MWDR, FWDR, the Hills in MWDR, FWDR and Terai in CDR have relatively low literacy rates (in 1991).

Table 21: Literacy Rate by Development Regions and Ecological Zones of Nepal, 1971-91

Region/Zone	Literacy Rate (%)									
	1971			1981			1991			
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	
I	EDR	15.3	25.5	4.7	27.4	39.5	14.5	44.3	59.3	29.2
	Mountains	13.3	23.5	3.2	26.5	40.6	12.1	45.1	62.0	29.0
	Hill	13.4	23.9	3.2	25.3	38.7	11.7	44.6	61.4	28.5
	Terai	17.2	27.1	6.3	28.8	39.7	16.8	44.0	57.9	29.7
II	CDR	14.2	23.1	4.8	22.7	32.3	12.5	38.6	52.0	24.6
	Mountains	8.7	15.6	1.7	15.6	23.6	6.9	31.1	46.5	15.7
	Hill	17.6	27.9	6.9	28.6	39.3	28.9	48.4	63.0	33.6
	Terai	11.9	19.9	3.4	18.8	27.5	9.3	30.8	43.0	17.8
III	WDR	16.5	29.5	3.9	25.8	38.3	13.2	44.0	58.5	28.9
	Mountains	16.2	25.2	6.9	22.4	31.4	12.4	47.0	59.2	33.5
	Hill	17.4	31.7	3.8	27.5	41.3	25.9	48.0	63.6	34.7
	Terai	14.5	24.0	4.3	22.1	32.2	11.0	36.6	49.9	23.0
IV	MWDR	8.7	15.4	1.7	16.4	25.2	7.3	31.8	47.6	16.3
	Mountains	6.0	10.8	0.9	12.3	19.3	4.7	22.0	36.9	6.4
	Hill	8.7	16.4	1.1	16.1	25.8	20.6	31.6	49.4	14.6
	Terai	9.9	15.6	3.5	18.3	26.5	9.3	35.0	48.4	21.2
V	FWDR	9.6	17.5	1.5	17.3	26.8	7.6	32.2	52.0	13.3
	Mountains	9.8	17.8	1.4	15.4	24.8	6.2	31.2	53.1	10.5
	Hill	9.9	18.6	1.3	17.0	26.9	7.6	30.6	53.3	10.1
	Terai	8.7	14.3	2.2	19.1	28.0	8.7	34.4	50.4	18.2
	<b>NEPAL</b>	13.9	23.6	3.9	23.3	34.0	12.0	39.6	54.5	25.0
	Mountains	9.9	17.6	2.1	18.0	27.6	7.8	33.2	50.2	16.5
	Hill	14.8	25.8	3.9	24.9	36.9	12.9	43.9	60.2	28.5
	Terai	13.6	22.1	4.4	22.5	32.1	11.9	36.5	49.8	22.7

Source: CBS, 1975, Vol. II, Part II, Table 16  
CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14 and Vol. 11, Table 13  
CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30  
CBS, 1995. Vol. IV.

### 10.7.3 Literacy Rate by Rural-Urban Residence in the Development Regions

Literacy Status by the rural and urban residence in the development regions for 1981 and 1991 is presented in Table 22. It is seen that in 1991, the rural areas in the EDR and WDR had nearly similar literacy rates (42.5% and 42.7% respectively). The rural areas in CDR had literacy rate of 32.7 per cent. This is followed by MWDR and FWDR with literacy rate slightly above 30 per cent. The data indicate greater efforts have been made in providing education in the rural areas of EDR and WDR, compared to the efforts made in the rural areas of other development regions.

The male literacy rates in the rural areas of various development regions are consistently higher than the corresponding female literacy rates.

With regard to 1991 literacy rates in the urban areas in different development regions, the CDR had the highest literacy rate (70.1%) and this is true of both the male and female literacy rates. The second highest urban literacy rate (65.3%) is found in the EDR, followed closely by the WDR with 65.1 per cent. The two other development regions had relatively lower literacy rates.

In 1991, the male literacy rate in the urban areas of all development regions was above 70 per cent. The female literacy rates in the urban areas of EDR, CDR, WDR were above 50 per cent. The MWDR and FWDR had relatively lower female literacy rates.

Both the rural literacy rate and the urban literacy rate for the country showed significant improvement over the period 1981 and 1991. As may be seen from Table 22, the rural literacy rate increased from 21.4 per cent in 1981 to 36.8 per cent in 1991; the urban literacy rate increased from 50.5 per cent in 1981 to 66.9 per cent in 1991 exhibiting identical increment in percentage points.

During the period 1981-91, there has been an increase in literacy rate in the range of 13 to 17 percentage points in the rural areas of the development regions, the greatest increase being in EDR and WDR.

During the same period, increase in literacy rate in urban areas of the different development regions varied between 12 and 26 percentage points. Higher increments (in percentage points) are seen to have occurred in the case of MWDR and FWDR compared to those in other regions.

Table 22: Literacy Rate by Rural-Urban Residence in Development Regions, Nepal, 1981-91

Development Region	1981						1991					
	Rural			Urban			Rural			Urban		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexe	Male	Female
NEPAL	21.4	32.0	10.3	50.5	61.1	38.2	36.8	51.9	22.0	66.	78.0	54.8
EDR	25.9	38.0	13.2	52.8	63.7	40.0	42.5	57.8	27.3	65.	76.5	53.1
CDR	19.1	28.5	9.2	53.6	63.1	42.3	32.7	46.5	18.6	70.	80.4	58.7
WDR	24.8	37.3	12.2	53.0	65.1	39.5	42.7	57.3	29.5	65.	75.8	53.7
MWDR	15.7	24.4	6.7	35.0	47.4	22.1	30.5	46.4	14.9	61.	72.9	48.7
FWDR	16.5	25.8	7.2	31.0	43.9	15.6	30.6	50.5	11.7	53	70.5	35.1

Source: CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14  
 CBS, 1984, Vol. III, Table II  
 CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30  
 CBS, 1994, Vol. II, Table 6.

### 10.7.4 Literacy Rate by Districts

Literacy rates by districts for 1981 and 1991 are presented in Table 23. Among the districts, in 1991, Kathmandu occupied the first position with respect to literacy rate. Kathmandu is followed by Lalitpur and Bhaktapur in the level of literacy rates. The literacy rate in Kathmandu was 70.1 per cent, while in Lalitpur and Bhaktapur it was 62.4 per cent and 58.8 per cent respectively. The lowest literacy rates were in Kalikot and Humla with literacy rate of 19.6 per cent in each case. Thirty one districts have literacy rates above the national average of 39.6 per cent.

Literacy rates have increased in all districts during 1981-91. In 1991 there were no districts with literacy rates of less than 10 per cent, whereas there were three such districts in 1981.

Range of Literacy Rates (1991)	No. of districts
10% - 20%	2
21% - 30%	21
31% - 40%	21
41% - 50%	20
51% - 60%	9
61% - 70%	1
71% & above	1
	75

From the above distribution of districts by literacy rate (range), it is seen that 44 districts have literacy rate below 40 per cent and 31 districts have literacy rate 40 per cent and above.



Table 23: Literacy Rate for Population 6 years and above by Gender

REGION / DISTRICT	Literacy Rate 6 Years and above			
	1981 Total	1991		
		Total	Male	Female
<b>NEPAL</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>54.5</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>EDR</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>44.3</b>	<b>59.3</b>	<b>29.2</b>
1 TAPLEJUNG	28.8	46.1	62.4	30.6
2 PANCHTHAR	24.0	43.9	61.7	26.9
3 ILAM	33.0	52.5	65.9	39.0
4 JHAPA	37.0	56.3	67.8	44.5
5 MORANG	30.5	48.9	62.2	35.2
6 SUNSARI	30.8	44.7	59.1	60.2
7 DHANKUTA	31.2	49.6	66.3	33.5
8 TERHATHUM	33.8	55.7	74.9	37.6
9 SANKHUWASABHA	27.5	48.6	65.4	32.6
10 BHOJPUR	23.7	41.9	58.9	26.3
11 SOLUKHUMBU	21.8	38.9	56.8	21.5
12 OKHALDHUNGA	17.8	39.1	56.2	23.1
13 KHOTANG	22.9	40.3	58.4	23.6
14 UDAYAPUR	19.3	38.2	55.2	21.5
15 SAPTARI 1	25.2	34.8	51.4	17.8
16 SIRAHA	17.6	28.8	43.5	13.3
<b>CDR</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>24.6</b>
17 DHANUSA	18.4	30.1	43.1	16.1
18 MAHOTARI	16.3	26.0	37.3	13.9
19 SARLAHI	15.6	26.2	38.0	13.5
20 SINDHULI	19.4	33.1	48.6	17.7
21 RAMECHHAP	17.8	30.4	49.3	12.9
22 DOLAKHA	17.5	34.9	53.1	17.7
23 SINDHUPALCHOKE	15.1	29.7	44.1	15.0
24 KAVRE	24.3	39.6	56.2	23.7
25 LALITPUR	37.1	62.4	76.5	48.0
26 BHAKTAPUR	32.4	58.8	74.8	42.7
27 KATHMANDU	50.0	70.1	82.2	57.0
28 NUWAKOT	18.3	31.6	45.4	18.0
29 RASUWA	9.2	23.0	33.8	11.3
30 DHADING	15.0	32.2	46.2	18.5
31 MAKWANPUR	24.1	38.6	52.1	24.7
32 RAUTAHAT	12.6	23.7	34.7	11.9
33 BARA	17.9	28.2	41.7	13.7
34 PARS A	21.3	32.5	46.2	17.9
35 CHITAWAN	33.7	53.1	65.7	40.9
<b>WDR</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>30.8</b>
36 GORKHA	18.3	43.8	57.4	31.0
37 LAMJUNG	32.7	47.1	62.0	34.0
38 TANAHU	25.3	50.4	66.5	36.2
39 SYANGJA	28.1	51.3	66.9	38.4

Table 23: (Contd.)

REGION / DISTRICT	Literacy Rate 6 Years and above			
	1981 Total	1991		
		Total	Male	Female
40 KASKI	35.0	57.2	71.0	44.5
41 MANANG	20.5	43.1	54.9	30.1
42 MUSTANG	23.3	48.5	60.8	34.8
43 MYAGDI	22.1	39.6	55.0	26.1
44 PARBAT	31.8	51.9	68.5	38.1
45 BAGLUNG	23.2	41.1	57.3	27.5
46 GULMI	31.8	46.8	64.6	32.7
47 PALPA	28.7	48.2	63.9	34.9
48 NAWALPARASI	22.9	39.2	53.3	25.2
49 RUPANDEHI	27.5	40.0	53.4	26.2
50 KAPILBASTU	13.2	28.8	41.1	15.5
51 ARGHAKHANCHI	25.3	43.3	59.5	29.7
<b>MWDR</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>47.6</b>	<b>16.3</b>
52 PYUTHAN	16.5	32.7	51.4	17.0
53 ROLPA	14.9	27.7	46.6	10.2
54 RUKUM	13.8	28.8	46.8	11.3
55 SALYAN	13.5	29.8	47.5	12.5
56 DANG	21.5	39.9	55.8	24.4
57 BANKE	18.2	34.6	46.4	21.8
58 BARDIYA	13.9	29.4	41.6	16.8
59 SURKHET	21.5	42.6	60.2	25.5
60 DAILEKH	18.6	29.8	48.3	11.3
61 JAJARKOT	11.5	23.6	38.0	9.0
62 DOLPA	12.6	23.3	37.5	8.4
63 JUMLA	18.2	25.4	41.5	8.5
64 KALIKOT	8.5	19.6	33.6	5.1
65 MUGU	9.5	22.0	37.9	5.2
66 HUMLA	13.1	19.6	33.7	4.6
<b>FWDR</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>13.3</b>
67 BAJURA	11.6	25.2	43.4	7.7
68 BAJHANG	12.9	27.6	50.1	7.0
69 ACHHAM	14.9	23.9	45.3	5.5
70 DOTI	12.5	28.6	48.7	9.9
71 KAILALI	16.0	30.3	45.3	15.1
72 KANCHANPUR	23.8	41.0	58.5	23.1
73 DADEL DHURA	21.9	36.6	62.3	13.0
74 BAITADI	20.2	35.7	60.0	13.5
75 DARCHULA	22.5	41.4	65.4	18.0

Source: CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part IV, Table 14  
CBS, 1987, Table 65  
CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 30.

### 10.7.5 Gender Differences in Literacy Rate - Spatial variations

The status of literacy rate in 1991 by gender in the districts is also presented in Table 23. As expected, we can observe wide differences in literacy rates between males and females in all the districts. The differences are particularly marked in the Mountain districts generally, and in the districts in Mid-Western and Far-Western Development Regions. In districts with predominantly urban areas, the differences in male and female literacy rates are much smaller.

### 11. Educational Attainment - by Level and Rural/Urban Residence

Considerable improvement in the level of literacy had been achieved in the country over the years. The literacy level however, does not indicate the level of educational attainment of the people. Among the literates are persons who have been literate without undergoing any formal schooling and there are also those who have completed different levels of formal education. Expansion of educational facilities in the country has aided the enhancement of educational attainment of the people.

Table 24 presents the distribution of population aged 6 and above by level of education and by age and sex for the whole country. In 1991, the proportions of persons with various levels of educational attainment were as follows;

	<u>Level of Educational Attainment</u>	<u>%</u>
a.	Literate but no schooling	8.98
b.	Primary Education	16.15
c.	Secondary Education	8.88
d.	S.L.C./Intermediate	2.88
e.	Graduate/Post graduate	0.64
f.	Level not stated	1.80

Source: Based on Table 24 of the text.

The proportion of people who were literate but had no formal education increased from 4.42 per cent in 1971 to 5.5 per cent in 1981, and to 8.98 per cent in 1991. This indicates increasing trend of people learning to read and write on their own.

The proportion of literate people who had gone through primary education increased from 5.79 per cent in 1971 to 11.33 per cent in 1981, and to 16.15 per cent in 1991. This is evidently due to expansion of primary education facilities in the country.

Table 24: Per cent Population Aged 6 years and over by Level of Education, Age and Sex, Nepal 1971 -1991

Educational Attainment	1971							1981							1991						
	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total
No Schooling																					
Total	1.43	2.21	4.05	5.59	5.91	5.48	4.42	3.70	3.49	4.32	5.62	3.92	7.00	5.50	12.88	6.95	7.06	7.85	8.65	9.48	8.98
Male	1.99	3.12	6.36	10.13	11.11	10.15	7.75	4.44	4.12	5.32	8.06	10.03	11.39	8.13	14.76	7.28	7.33	9.57	12.24	15.60	12.06
Female	0.85	1.14	1.51	1.40	0.82	0.69	1.00	2.42	2.76	3.21	3.39	2.91	2.18	2.75	10.93	6.59	6.80	6.39	5.40	3.19	5.95
Primary(1 -5)																					
Total	9.66	16.84	7.30	3.75	2.39	1.64	5.79	17.92	29.37	12.93	8.35	3.88	4.06	11.33	30.16	44.24	15.09	9.35	7.09	3.45	16.15
Male	14.42	25.75	12.24	6.94	4.53	3.06	9.62	23.32	38.71	18.46	12.47	9.34	5.61	15.65	36.32	53.56	19.37	13.64	11.37	5.76	21.18
Female	4.70	6.29	1.88	0.80	0.39	0.19	1.86	12.32	18.47	6.85	4.59	3.44	2.36	6.80	23.78	34.14	10.99	5.71	3.23	1.09	11.19
Secondary(6-10)																					
Total	-	4.77	9.58	5.79	2.65	0.91	3.10	-	5.87	14.60	8.23	3.16	1.78	4.80	-	10.34	27.64	15.43	8.45	3.18	8.88
Male	-	6.94	15.40	10.65	4.95	1.69	5.24	-	8.17	22.00	14.02	8.86	3.01	7.55	-	13.29	38.33	23.85	13.96	5.32	12.85
Female	-	2.22	3.19	1.30	0.50	0.11	0.90	-	3.44	6.45	2.94	1.61	0.42	1.92	-	7.14	17.38	8.26	3.47	0.99	4.97
SLC & Intermediate																					
Total	-	-	0.84	1.18	0.47	0.12	0.34	-	0.12	1.69	3.57	1.51	0.69	1.23	-	0.02	3.54	8.87	5.72	1.84	2.88
Male	-	-	1.21	2.07	0.89	0.22	0.57	-	0.02	2.33	5.97	4.21	1.19	1.98	-	0.02	4.88	14.16	9.61	3.13	4.48
Female	-	-	0.44	0.36	0.08	0.00	0.11	-	0.01	0.98	1.38	0.78	0.13	0.45	-	0.02	2.26	4.38	2.21	0.52	1.31
Graduate and Post graduate																					
Total	-	-	0.13	0.72	0.55	0.17	0.24	-	-	0.07	0.73	0.65	0.37	0.39	-	-	0.05	0.83	1.62	0.89	0.64
Male	-	-	0.19	1.16	1.02	0.32	0.42	-	-	0.10	1.16	1.83	0.64	0.65	-	-	0.07	1.29	2.70	1.54	1.06
Female	-	-	0.06	0.22	0.11	0.01	0.05	-	-	0.05	0.34	0.33	0.64	0.13	-	-	0.04	0.44	0.63	0.23	0.23
Level Not Stated																					
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.41	1.40	1.06	1.20	1.47	1.92	1.80
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.99	1.63	1.20	1.51	2.17	3.29	2.53
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.80	1.16	0.93	0.94	0.84	0.53	1.09

Source: CBS, 1975, Vol. II, Part II, Tables 16, 17 and 18  
 CBS, 1984, Vol. I, Part I, Table 5 and Vol. I Part IV, Table 15  
 CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Tables 31.

Similarly, proportion of literate people who had secondary education increased from 3.1 per cent in 1971, to 4.8 per cent in 1981, and 8.88 per cent in 1991.

Those who had done S.L.C. and studied up to Intermediate level accounted for 0.34 per cent of the literate population 1971, 1.23 per cent in 1981, and 2.88 per cent in 1991.

Graduates and Post graduate persons constituted a small proportion in all the census years. The proportion was 0.24 per cent in 1971, 0.39 per cent in 1981 and 0.64 per cent in 1991.

There has been considerable improvement in different levels of educational attainment during 1971-91. In all the age groups, the proportions of persons with different educational attainment levels are higher in 1991 compared to those in the preceding censuses. This is true of both males and females. For example, the proportion of population who had completed primary education was 16.1 per cent (21.1 per cent for males and 11.1 per cent for females) in 1991. The corresponding proportions were 5.8 per cent for both sexes (9.6 per cent for males and 1.9 per cent for females) in 1971, and 11.3 per cent for both sexes (15.6 per cent for males and 6.8 per cent for females) in 1981.

Tables 25 and 26 present the proportion of people 6 years and above who had attained specific educational levels in rural and urban areas.

The rural-urban differentials in educational attainment in 1991 are clear when we compare the proportions of population in the rural areas and the urban areas, who have completed various levels of education. In 1991, the proportion of population who had completed primary education in the rural areas was 15.8 per cent, while in the urban areas, the proportion was 18.7 per cent. Similarly, the proportions of urban population who had completed secondary, S.L.C. and intermediate education, and graduate and post graduate levels were respectively 17.9 per cent, 11.6 per cent and 4.3 per cent, while the corresponding proportions for the rural areas were 7.9 per cent, 1.9 per cent and 0.26 per cent.

Attainment of a particular educational level in each age group is also higher in the urban areas than in the rural areas. For example, the proportion of people aged 10-14 years who have attained primary education accounted for 43.5 per cent and 51.2 per cent in the rural areas and the urban areas respectively. This trend is seen to hold in all age groups and at each level of educational attainment.

Table 25: Per cent Population Aged 6 years and over by Level of Education, Age and Sex for Rural, Nepal 1981 –1991

Educational Attainment		1981						1991							
		6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total
No Schooling															
	Total	3.50	3.46	4.23	5.45	6.18	6.67	5.30	12.43	6.96	6.98	7.72	8.40	9.07	8.74
	Male	4.24	4.09	5.27	7.97	9.98	11.07	7.97	14.36	7.31	7.28	9.64	12.34	15.45	11.99
	Female	2.74	2.71	3.09	3.19	2.64	1.88	2.53	10.44	6.57	6.70	6.13	4.91	2.58	5.57
Primary(1 -5)															
	Total	16.36	28.40	12.97	8.25	6.15	3.86	10.88	28.40	43.55	15.51	9.56	7.12	3.29	15.88
	Male	21.82	38.06	18.82	12.61	9.32	5.41	15.35	34.86	53.47	20.21	14.44	11.85	5.67	21.27
	Female	10.73	17.12	6.58	4.33	3.18	2.18	6.23	21.74	32.86	11.06	5.52	2.94	0.86	10.61
Secondary (6-10)															
	Total	-	4.89	12.90	7.37	4.51	1.45	4.15	-	9.04	25.70	14.32	7.48	2.62	7.93
	Male	-	7.00	20.40	13.24	8.17	2.54	6.84	-	12.14	37.09	23.34	13.17	4.63	11.98
	Female	-	2.44	4.70	2.10	1.09	0.25	1.34	-	5.70	14.93	6.85	2.44	0.58	3.97
SLC & Intermediate															
	Total	-	0.02	1.06	2.57	1.79	0.43	0.85	-	0.01	2.29	6.44	4.08	1.15	1.96
	Male	-	0.03	1.64	4.70	3.34	0.79	1.48	-	0.01	3.48	11.37	7.68	2.12	3.35
	Female	-	0.01	0.42	0.64	0.34	0.05	0.20	-	0.01	1.17	2.36	0.88	0.15	0.60
Graduate and Post Graduate															
	Total	-	-	0.04	0.37	0.55	0.16	0.19	-	-	0.03	0.38	0.69	0.32	0.26
	Male	-	-	0.06	0.68	1.04	0.30	0.35	-	-	0.04	0.70	1.32	0.62	0.48
	Female	-	-	9.02	0.09	0.09	0.02	0.03	-	-	0.01	0.11	0.13	0.03	0.04
Level Not Stated															
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.31	1.40	1.03	1.15	1.39	1.79	1.73
	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.92	1.64	1.19	1.49	2.13	3.16	2.48
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.68	1.14	0.88	0.88	0.74	0.39	1.00

Source. CBS, 1984, Vol I, Part IV, Table 15 and Vol. III, Table 12  
CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Tables 31  
CBS, 1994, vol. II, Tables 7.  
CBS, 1994, Vol. II, Tables 7.

Table 26: Per cent Population Aged 6 years and over by Level of Education, Age and Sex for Urban, Nepal 1981 -1991

Educational Attainment	1981							1991						
	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total	6-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35+	Total
<b>No Schooling</b>														
Total	6.78	4.03	5.46	7.72	8.96	12.10	8.37	18.03	6.85	7.72	8.86	10.71	13.79	11.27
Male	7.60	4.49	6.01	9.12	10.72	16.11	10.37	19.32	6.90	7.73	9.11	11.48	17.28	12.63
Female	5.88	3.49	4.80	6.19	7.00	7.13	6.04	16.64	6.78	7.71	8.59	9.88	9.86	9.80
<b>Primary(1 -5)</b>														
Total	42.82	43.43	12.41	9.55	8.51	7.19	17.83	50.50	51.19	11.58	7.77	6.85	5.19	18.74
Male	46.82	47.70	14.13	10.84	9.60	8.55	19.84	52.97	54.45	12.70	8.30	7.75	6.64	20.36
Female	38.47	38.31	10.36	8.14	7.29	5.50	15.50	47.86	47.51	10.36	7.23	5.89	3.55	16.97
<b>Secondary(6-10)</b>														
Total	-	20.05	36.07	18.89	13.63	6.96	14.24	-	23.51	44.02	23.75	16.47	9.10	17.97
Male	-	21.58	41.53	22.93	17.48	9.97	17.27	-	24.75	48.02	27.33	19.91	12.23	20.66
Female	-	18.21	29.61	14.52	9.36	3.22	10.72	-	22.10	39.63	20.05	12.79	5.59	15.02
<b>SLC &amp; Intermediate</b>														
Total	-	0.12	9.65	16.08	11.44	4.68	6.75	-	0.08	14.10	27.13	19.25	9.11	11.62
Male	-	0.13	10.74	20.36	15.12	7.22	8.81	-	0.07	15.93	32.85	24.01	13.16	14.56
Female	-	0.10	8.35	11.44	7.34	1.54	4.36	-	0.09	12.10	21.21	14.15	4.56	8.41
<b>Graduate and Post Graduate</b>														
Total	-	-	0.50	5.26	8.02	3.57	3.29	-	-	0.27	4.26	9.23	6.79	4.28
Male	-	-	0.56	6.64	11.72	5.74	4.79	-	-	0.29	5.29	13.02	10.72	6.26
Female	-	-	0.42	3.76	3.92	0.88	1.54	-	-	0.25	3.19	5.19	2.39	2.13
<b>Level Not Stated</b>														
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.56	1.44	1.33	1.58	2.14	3.35	2.49
Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.85	1.53	1.29	1.68	2.46	4.54	2.96
Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.25	1.33	1.38	1.46	1.80	2.01	1.99

Source: CBS, 1984, Vol. III, Table 12 CBS, 1994, Vol. II, Table 7.

The rural-urban differences in educational attainment is also noted in 1981, with higher proportions of population completing different levels of education in the urban areas compared to those in the rural areas.

## **12. School Attendance Status of 6-25 Years Age Population**

Data on educational attainment serves an important purpose, but such data does not fully reflect the total effort both on behalf of the providers as well as seekers. Data on school attendance, however, provides a more complete picture in this respect. Data on current status of school attendance for population 6-25 years of age up to SLC level was collected for the first time in the census of 1991. This type of data is useful in knowing what percentages of people of 6-25 years of age are attending or had attended schools at different levels.

Table 27 presents the census (1991) data on the proportion of 6-25 years age population attending schools (below SLC level). It also shows proportion of 6-25 years olds who had been through various levels of school education but are not currently attending schools.

The overall current attendance of persons, 6 to 25 years of age in educational institutions (below SLC level) was 30.58 per cent (39.45 per cent for males and 21.85 per cent for females). Of these, 3.73 per cent were in beginners (pre-primary) classes, 19.38 per cent in primary (grades I-V) classes and 7.47 per cent in the secondary level (grades VI-X) classes. Among males, 4.42 per cent were in the beginners classes, 24.56 per cent in the primary classes, and 10.47 per cent in the secondary classes. For females, 3.04 per cent were in beginners classes, 14.29 per cent were in primary classes and 4.52 per cent in the secondary classes. The male attendance rate is seen to be considerably higher than the female attendance rate at all the three levels of education.

It is further seen that 31.87 per cent of the 6-9 years old population were in the beginners and primary classes category. Also about 45 per cent of the 10-14 years age group population were in the beginners and primary classes category. It is seen that 9.77 per cent of 10-14 years population were at the secondary level. It is further seen that of the 27.44 per cent of 15-19 years population 8.14 per cent were in beginners and primary classes and 19.3 per cent in the secondary level. The attendance of persons of differing age groups in primary and secondary education is indicated by the data. For instance, primary schools are being attended by 25.2 per cent of 6-9 year persons, 40.7 per cent of 10-14 year persons and 6 per cent of 15-19 year persons. This is natural since there is



no strict age-grade correspondence in school attendance, though there are official guidelines in this respect. The school attendance rate for persons of different age groups are 31.87 for 6-9 years old, 55.45 per cent for 10-14 years old, 27.44 per cent for 15-19 years old and 4.25 per cent for 20-24 years old. A high proportion (19.3%) of 15-19 years old are in secondary schools.

Table 27 presents data on those who were in school some time ago but are no longer attending school now. Such persons constituted 8.61 per cent of the 6-25 years age group population. Of such persons, 11.05 per cent were males, and 6.2 per cent were females. Further 1.41 per cent had been out of school after attending beginner classes 3.68 per cent after attending primary schools and 3.52 per cent after attending secondary schools.

Table 27: Proportion of 6-25 years age population with below SLC Level of education by Current Status of School Attendance, Level of Education, Sex and age, 1991

Sex and Age	Attending School (%)				Total	Not Attending School but attended earlier (%)			Attendance Not stated (%)
	Total	Begin- ing	Pri- mary (I-V gra.)	Secun- dary (VI-X gra.)		Begin- ing	Pri- mary (I-V gra.)	Secun- dary (VI-X gra.)	
Both Sexes	30.58	3.73	19.38	7.47	8.61	1.41	3.68	3.52	7.44
6-9 years	31.87	6.66	25.21	0.00	0.63	0.23	0.40	0.00	10.54
10-14 years	55.45	4.96	40.72	9.77	3.38	0.63	2.38	0.37	2.69
15-19 years	27.44	2.11	6.03	19.30	15.16	2.07	6.81	6.28	7.18
20-24 years	4.25	0.69	0.67	2.89	18.40	3.04	6.27	9.09	9.99
25 years	1.31	0.34	0.31	0.66	13.39	2.79	4.57	6.03	8.99
Male	39.45	4.42	24.56	10.47	11.05	1.48	4.72	4.85	8.85
6-9 years	38.06	7.72	30.34	0.00	0.72	0.24	0.48	0.00	12.30
10-14 years	67.72	5.51	49.59	12.62	3.61	0.52	2.65	0.44	2.8
15-19 years	38.38	2.59	8.19	27.60	18.50	1.95	8.43	8.12	8.14
20-24 years	6.70	0.96	0.94	4.80	27.04	3.70	9.32	14.02	13.33
25 years	2.01	0.46	0.41	1.14	21.51	3.88	7.43	10.20	12.94
Female	21.85	3.04	14.29	4.52	6.20	1.34	2.65	2.21	6.05
6-9 years	25.46	5.57	19.89	0.00	0.54	0.22	0.32	0.00	8.71
10-14 years	42.17	4.37	31.11	6.69	3.12	0.74	2.08	0.30	2.58
15-19 years	16.93	1.64	3.96	11.33	11.97	2.19	5.26	4.52	6.27
20-24 years	2.16	0.47	0.43	1.26	11.05	2.48	3.67	4.90	7.15
25 years	0.71	0.24	0.21	0.26	6.38	1.86	2.10	2.42	5.59

Source: CBS, 1993. Vol. I, Part 1, Table 4 CBS, 1993, Vol. 1, Part X, Table 32.

## 12.1 School Attendance by Rural/Urban Residence

The census also presents data on proportion of population 6 to 25 years of age by current status of school attendance (below SLC level) for the rural and the urban areas. Data for the rural areas are presented in Table 28, and that for urban areas in Table 29.

Table 28: Proportion 6 to 25 years of age and below SLC Level by Current Status of School Attendance, Level of Education, Sex and Age for Rural areas, Census Year 1991.

Sex and Age	Attending School				Not Attending School but attended earlier				Attendance Not Stated (%)
	Total Beginners	(%)			Total Beginners	(%)			
		Primary (I-V grades)	Secondary (VI-X grades)			Primary (I-V grades)	Secondary (VI-X grades)		
<b>Both Sexes</b>	29.55	3.72	19.07	6.76	8.40	1.41	3.74	3.25	7.01
6-9 Years	30.43	6.59	23.84	0.00	0.62	0.23	0.39	0.00	9.79
10-14 Years	53.56	4.99	40.05	8.52	3.37	0.64	2.39	0.34	2.62
15-19 Years	26.18	2.03	6.24	17.91	15.03	2.10	7.02	5.91	6.98
20-24 Years	4.04	0.64	0.67	2.73	18.17	3.09	6.51	8.57	9.40
25 Years	1.23	0.32	0.30	0.61	13.06	2.78	4.67	5.61	8.23
<b>Male</b>	38.96	4.46	24.63	9.87	11.03	1.50	4.87	4.66	8.49
6-9 Years	36.92	7.69	29.23	0.00	0.72	0.24	4.48	0.00	11.58
10-14 Years	66.59	5.58	49.50	11.51	3.63	0.53	2.68	0.42	2.71
15-19 Years	37.84	2.53	8.62	26.69	18.73	1.99	8.81	7.93	8.01
20-24 Years	6.64	0.91	0.97	4.76	27.73	3.86	9.99	13.88	13.04
25 Years	1.94	0.43	0.42	1.09	21.71	3.96	7.78	9.97	12.33
<b>Female</b>	20.38	3.01	13.65	3.72	5.84	1.33	2.63	1.88	5.57
6-9 Years	23.73	5.46	18.27	0.00	0.52	0.22	0.30	0.00	7.93
10-14 Years	39.51	4.35	29.86	5.30	3.10	0.75	2.08	0.27	2.52
15-19 Years	15.16	1.56	3.98	9.62	11.53	2.21	5.32	4.00	6.00
20-24 Years	1.88	0.42	0.41	1.05	10.23	2.44	3.62	4.17	6.38
25 Years	0.62	0.22	0.20	0.20	5.68	1.76	2.01	1.91	4.73

Source: CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part I, Table 4  
CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part X, Table 32.

Table 29: Proportion 6 to 25 years of age and below SLC Level by Current Status of School Attendance, Level of Education, Sex and Age for Urban areas, Census Year 1991.

Sex and Age	Attending School (%)				Not Attending School but attended earlier (%)				Attendance Not Stated (%)
	Total Beginners	Primary (I-V grades)	Secondary (VI-X grades)	Total Beginners	Primary (I-V grades)	Secondary (VI-X grades)	Attendance Not Stated (%)		
<u>Both Sexes</u>	40.23	3.74	22.35	14.14	10.53	1.43	3.15	5.95	11.39
6-9 Years	48.53	7.47	41.06	0.00	0.80	0.28	0.52	0.00	19.19
10-14 Years	74.60	4.67	47.49	22.44	3.45	0.56	2.25	0.64	3.49
15-19 Years	38.04	2.72	4.29	31.03	16.33	1.82	5.08	9.43	8.95
20-24 Years	5.81	1.08	0.69	4.04	20.13	2.69	4.47	12.97	14.45
25 Years	2.03	0.57	0.33	1.13	16.28	2.95	3.72	9.61	15.64
<u>Male</u>	43.80	4.05	23.98	15.77	11.26	1.36	3.38	6.52	11.97
6-9 Years	52.00	8.05	43.05	0.00	0.81	0.28	0.53	0.00	20.39
10-14 Years	78.87	4.81	50.44	23.62	3.55	0.49	2.38	0.68	3.70
15-19 Years	42.64	3.02	4.84	34.78	16.68	1.64	5.43	9.61	9.13
20-24 Years	7.12	1.30	0.77	5.05	22.36	2.65	4.82	14.89	15.27
25 Years	2.51	0.68	0.32	1.51	19.88	3.24	4.52	12.12	17.88
<u>Femal</u>	36.40	3.41	20.59	12.40	9.74	1.50	2.89	5.35	10.76
6-9 Years	45.78	6.86	38.92	0.00	0.80	0.28	0.52	0.00	17.91
10-14 Years	69.81	4.52	44.17	21.12	3.33	0.63	2.10	0.60	3.25
15-19 Years	33.02	2.38	3.70	26.94	15.94	2.01	4.69	9.24	8.75
20-24 Years	4.44	0.85	0.61	2.98	17.82	2.74	4.10	10.98	13.60
25 Years	1.57	0.46	0.33	0.78	12.82	2.68	2.94	7.20	13.50

Source: CBS, 1993, Vol. I, Part I, Table 4

CBS, 1994, Vol. II, Table 8.

The proportion of population in school attendance in rural areas (Table 28) indicate the following. The proportion of population 6 to 25 years of age currently attending schools was 29.55 per cent for both sexes. The attendance rate for the males was 38.96 per cent, and for the females 20.38 per cent. This indicates that in rural areas, the proportion of population currently attending school, was nearly twice as high for males as for females.

Further, 3.72 per cent of the 6-25 years population were in the beginners classes, 19.07 in primary classes, and 6.76 per cent in the secondary education in the rural areas.

Again, the proportion of school attendance for different age groups in the rural areas were 30.43 per cent for 6-9 years population, 53.56 per cent for 10-14 years population, 26.18 per cent for 15-19 years population and 4.04 per cent for 20-24 years population. Highest level of attendance is seen for the 10-14 years age group population.

The male attendance rate (proportion of 6-25 years population) for the three levels of education (beginners, primary and secondary) are higher than those for the females. This is true of all age groups.

The data on proportion of 6-25 years population by current status of school attendance presented in fable 29 (or urban areas, indicate the following.

In the urban areas 40.23 per cent of the 6-25 years population were attending schools. Of these, 3.74 per cent were in beginners classes, 22.35 per cent in primary schools, and 14.14 per cent in secondary schools. The proportion of school attendance was 43.8 per cent for the males, and 36.4 per cent for the females. A small difference is noted in case of male and female school attendance rates.

Further, attendance proportions in different age groups (for both sexes) were 48.53 per cent for tile 6-9 years population, 74.6 per cent for the 10-14 years population, 38.04 per cent for the 15-19 years population and 5.81 per cent for the 20-24 years population.

The differences in male/female proportions of population (6-25 years) by different levels of education, as well as by different age groups exist in the urban areas also, but, there are smaller than in the rural areas. The proportions attending school among 6-9 years population, 10-14 years

population, and 15-19 years population were 52.0 per cent, 78.87 per cent, 42.64 per cent of respectively for males; the corresponding values for the females were 45.78 per cent, 69.81 per cent, and 33.02 per cent.

Among those who are currently attending school, the male-female and rural-urban differentials are as shown in the summary table below. The proportion of 6-25 year population currently attending school is higher in urban than rural areas. The difference is particularly marked at secondary level. In general it may be said that the rural-urban gap in the proportion currently attending school seems to increase with increasing school level and this is more marked for females than for males.

Per cent 6-25 Population Currently Attending Schools

Sex	Total	Beginners	Primary	Secondary
Both Sexes	30.58	3.73	19.38	7.47
Male	39.45	4.42	24.56	10.47
Female	21.85	3.04	14.29	4.52
Rural				
Both Sexes	29.55	3.72	19.07	6.76
Male	38.96	4.46	24.63	9.87
Female	20.38	3.01	13.65	3.72
Urban				
Both Sexes	40.23	3.74	22.35	14.14
Male	43.80	4.05	23.98	15.77
Female	36.40	3.41	20.59	12.40

Source: Table 28 and 29.

## 12.2 Ministry of Education Data on School Attendance

Increasing the participation of children of primary school age group (6-10 years) in primary education has been one of the goals of the educational policy. Significant progress has been made in achieving high participation rates all over the country. The Annual Statistical Reports of the MOEC/SW present data on school enrolment by districts, development regions and for the whole country. The primary source of the data is the schools. All schools have to fill up and submit a statistical information form (of MOEC/SW) every year.

The census data on school attendance are based on responses to the question on school attendance in the census schedule/questionnaire.

The sources of data on school attendance for the MOEC/SW reports and the census are therefore totally different. This makes comparison of the data difficult. However, the census data would provide some indication of the age specific participation rates.

In 1991, according to the MOEC/SW Statistical Report (1991), the gross enrolment in the primary level was 106 per cent. Net enrolment ratio was estimated to be around 80 per cent in the same year, considering that about 25 per cent of the students in the primary schools are either 'overaged, or 'underaged' for the grades concerned.

The census (1991) data indicate that about 32 per cent of the 6-9 years age group population were attending pre-primary (beginners) or primary classes. Further the data indicate that over 40 per cent of the 10-14 years population were also attending primary schools. This would imply involvement of 'overaged' children in the primary schools in large numbers.

### **13. Future Prospects:**

Population growth shows its impact on educational development of the country in a number of ways. The demand for primary education in absolute terms, has increased as a result of high population growth. Provision of more schools, teachers, textbooks and educational materials becomes necessary to meet the increased demand. Secondary education is also affected by population growth. The increase in primary enrolment will have its repercussion on secondary education within a period of five years after the initial increment in enrolment in grade I. Demand for secondary education will grow also due to increased need for attaining secondary education for better job prospects and for getting entry into higher education.

Rapid population growth makes it difficult to attain the goal of universal primary education. Further, it makes the task of raising quality of education more difficult as provision of better physical facilities, more educational materials, and trained teachers can not be made at a fast pace even if the funds were available.

The CBS has in its latest projection of population for Nepal, 1991-2011, estimated that the school age population will increase at a higher rate than the total population, during 1991-1996 (Table 30). The school age population growth rate will decline after 1996. The expected growth rate of primary school age population in 1991-96 period is 3.03 per cent per year; it would go down to 0.81 per cent

per year by 2006-2011 period if the assumptions made in the population projection turn out to be true. Declines are expected in the growth rates of lower secondary age group population as well as of secondary school age population. If these expected declines are realized, the pressure of school enrolment will be greatly reduced in the 1996-2011 period. Currently, there is rapid growth of school age population (of all three levels). To cope with this situation, greater volume of resources have to be devoted to school education. Also necessary is the improvement in the of management of schools, since it is observed that schools are not making full use of currently available resources, both physical and human resources (teaching staff).

Table 30: Growth of School-Age Population According to the (Medium Variant) Projection, Nepal, 1991-2011

	School-age population (Both Sexes)				
	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011
PRIMARY SCHOOL (6-10 Yrs.)	2,550,138	2,966,977	3,287,914	3,437,411	3,579,982
LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL (11-13 Yrs.)	1,306,929	1,569,243	1,809,418	1,997,708	2,066,130
SECONDARY SCHOOL (14-15 Yrs.)	801,039	950,512	1,127,417	1,261,624	1,345,489
	Average Annual Rate of Growth (%)				
	1991-1996	1996-2001	2001-2006	2006-2011	
PRIMARY SCHOOL (6-10 Yrs.)		3.03	2.05	0.88	0.81
LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL (11-13 Yrs.)		3.66	2.85	1.98	0.67
SECONDARY SCHOOL (14-15 Yrs.)		3.42	3.41	2.25	1.29

Source: CBS, 1994a.

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