

Demand for Grants 2018-19 Analysis

Human Resource Development

The Ministry of Human Resource Development consists of two departments: (i) school education and literacy, and (ii) higher education. In 2018-19, the Ministry has been allocated Rs 85,010 crore, the fifth highest allocation among all Ministries. The allocation constitutes 3% of the central government’s estimated expenditure for 2018-19. This note presents the trends in expenditure, and discusses some of the issues related to the education sector.

The Department of School Education and Literacy under the Ministry is broadly responsible for education imparted between the ages of 6 to 18 years, i.e., school education.

- Elementary education is a fundamental right imparted up to class 8 for children between 6-14 years of age. The government is mandated to provide elementary education to all children under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.
- Secondary education is imparted between classes 9 to 12 for children between 14-18 years of age.

In 2018-19, the Department has been allocated Rs 50,000 crore, accounting for 59% of the Ministry’s total allocation.

The Department of Higher Education is responsible for higher and technical education, and training for students over 18 years of age.

- Higher education includes undergraduate and postgraduate courses, doctoral degrees, and certificates following the completion of 12 years of schooling or equivalent.

In 2018-19, the Department has been allocated Rs 35,010 crore, accounting for 41% of the Ministry’s total allocation.

Overview of finances

Budget Estimates 2018-19

The Ministry has been allocated Rs 85,010 crore in 2018-19. This is a 3.8% increase over the revised estimate of 2017-18.¹

Expenditure on education by the centre and the states as a proportion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been around 2% between 2014-15 and 2017-18.² Further, the expenditure on education (centre and states) as a percentage of the overall expenditure has been between 9% to 10%.² The Committee constituted to examine the New

Education Policy has proposed 6% of GDP as the minimum expenditure on education.³

Table 1 provides the budget related figures for the Ministry. For further details on the budgetary allocations, refer to the Annexure.

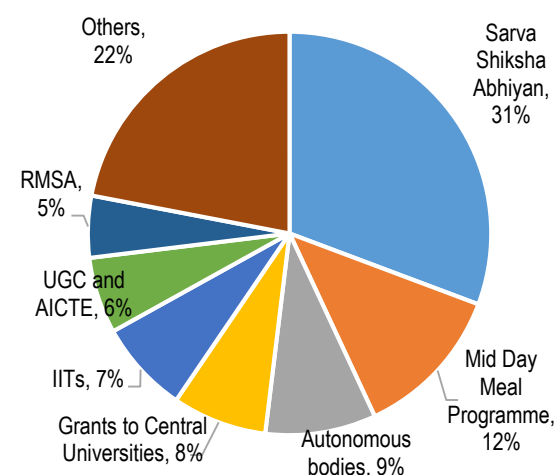
Table 1: Budget allocations for the MHRD (2018-19) (in Rs crore)

Department	Actuals 2016-17	RE 2017-18	BE 2018-19	% change (RE to BE)
School Education & Literacy	42,989	47,006	50,000	6.4%
Higher Education	29,026	34,862	35,010	0.4%
Total	72,016	81,869	85,010	3.8%

Note: BE – Budget Estimate; RE – Revised Estimates. Sources: Expenditure Budget, Vol. 2, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2018-19; PRS.

Figure 1 depicts the major heads under which the Ministry spends its funds (as a percentage of its total allocation). The Department of School Education and Literacy has seen a 6.4% increase in its allocation (Rs 50,000 crore) over the revised estimates of 2017-18 (Rs 47,006 crore). For the Department of Higher Education, it was a 0.4% increase at Rs 35,010 crore over the revised estimate (Rs 34,862 crore).

Figure 1: Top expenditure heads under the Ministry (2018-19)



Note: The category ‘Others’ includes other schemes and programmes under the Ministry which have an allocation of less than 5% of the total expenditure. Sources: Expenditure Budget, Vol. 2, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2018-19; PRS.

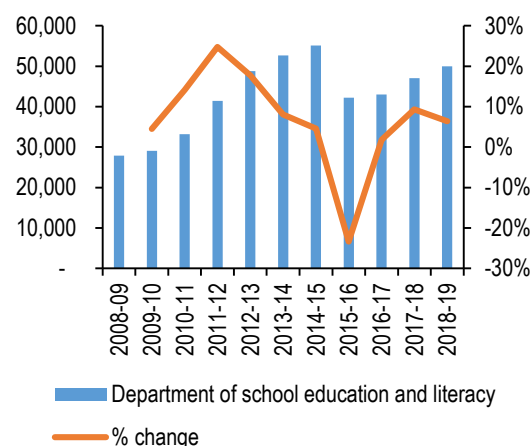
Budget speech highlights 2018-19

- An integrated B.Ed. programme for teachers. Technology will also be used to upgrade the skills of teachers through the recently launched digital portal “DIKSHA”.
- Increase in the digital intensity in education and moving gradually from “black board” to “digital board”.
- By the year 2022, every block with more than 50% ST population and at least 20,000 tribal persons, will have an Ekalavya Model Residential School. Ekalavya schools will be on par with Navodaya Vidyalayas. They will have facilities for preserving local art and culture, and providing training in sports and skill development.
- Launch of “Revitalising Infrastructure and Systems in Education (RISE) by 2022” to increase investments in research and related infrastructure in premier educational institutions. It will have an investment of Rs 1,00,000 crore in the next four years. Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) would be structured for funding this initiative.
- Two new Schools of Planning and Architecture, to be selected on challenge mode. Additionally, 18 new Schools of Planning and Architecture will be established in IITs and NITs as autonomous schools.
- Prime Minister’s Research Fellows Scheme to identify 1,000 best B.Tech students each year from premier institutions and provide them facilities to do Ph.D in IITs and IISc.

Department of School Education and Literacy

In 2018-19, the Department of School Education and Literacy has been allocated Rs 50,000 crore, a 6.4% increase over the revised estimates of 2017-18.¹ In 2017-18, the Department spent Rs 650 crore over the budgeted amount (Rs 46,356 crore). Figure 2 shows the allocation of the Department of School Education and Literacy over the past 10 years (2008-18).

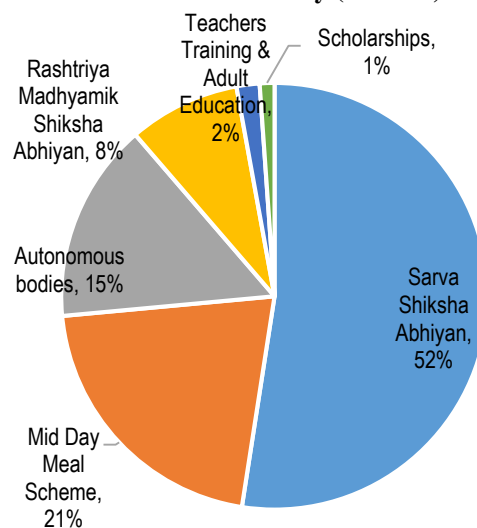
In the past 10 years, the highest allocation was given in 2014-15 at Rs 55,115 crore. Note that in 2015-16, the allocation was reduced by 25%. This may be on account of a greater devolution of funds to the states in pursuance of the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission. The allocation has been on an upwards trajectory since then but this year the annual increase in allocation has fallen in comparison to the last two years. The Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) following the 14th Finance Commission until now has been 4%. CAGR is the annual growth rate over a certain period of time.

Figure 2: Allocation to Department of School Education and Literacy (2008-18) (in Rs crore)

Note: Revised estimates have been used for 2017-18 and budget estimates for 2018-19.

Sources: Union Budgets, 2008-18; PRS.

Figure 3 provides the major heads of financial allocation under this Department for 2018-19. In 2018-19, expenditure on centrally sponsored schemes (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Mid-Day Meal Programme in Schools (MDMS), and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)) constitute 81% of the estimated spending of the Department of School Education and Literacy. Note that the programmes of SSA and MDMS focus on school education while RMSA focusses on secondary education.

Figure 3: Major allocations for Department of School Education & Literacy (2018-19)

Sources: Expenditure Budget, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Budget, 2018-19; PRS.

Table 2 indicates the actual allocation of the Department compared with the budget estimates of that year. The utilisation in the last three years has been over 98% of the budget estimates as seen in the Table.

Table 2: Comparison of budget estimates and the actual expenditure (2010-17) (in Rs crore)

Year	Budget estimate	Actuals	Actuals/BE (%)
2010-11	33,214	36,433	110%
2011-12	41,451	40,641	98%
2012-13	48,781	45,631	94%
2013-14	52,701	46,856	89%
2014-15	55,115	45,722	83%
2015-16	42,220	41,800	99%
2016-17	43,554	42,989	99%
2017-18	46,356	47,006*	101%

Note: BE – Budget Estimate. *Revised Estimate
Sources: Union Budgets, 2015-18; PRS.

Table 3 presents the details of the Department's allocation in 2018-19.

Table 3: Allocation to the Department of School Education and Literacy in 2018-19 (in Rs crore)

Major Head	Actuals 2016-17	RE 2017-18	BE 2018-19	% change (RE to BE)
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	21,685	23,500	26,129	11.2%
National Programme of Mid-Day Meal in Schools	9,475	10,000	10,500	5.0%
Autonomous bodies	6,902	7,952	7,548	-5.1%
Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan	3,698	3,915	4,213	7.6%
Teachers Training and Adult Education	817	841	871	3.6%
Scholarships	84	602	556	-7.7%
Others	328	196	183	-6.4%
Total	42,989	47,006	50,000	6.4%

Note: BE – Budget Estimate; RE – Revised Estimates.
Sources: Expenditure Budget, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Budget 2018-19; PRS.

- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):** Allocation to SSA in 2018-19 has increased by 11.2% (as compared with revised estimates of 2017-18) to Rs 26,129 crore. SSA has been implemented since 2000 to universalise elementary education and promote retention of children in the school system. After the RTE Act, 2009 was enacted, SSA was subsumed

under it. RTE guarantees the right to free and compulsory elementary education for children between the ages of 6 and 14 years in a neighbourhood school.⁴

There exists gaps between demand and actual allocation for the SSA and RTE.⁵ For example, the allocation of Rs 23,500 crores as budget estimate for 2017-18 is against a demand of Rs 55,000 crore.⁶ Further, Standing Committees have recommended increased funding for the SSA and sufficient allocations for states requiring additional resources.^{7,8}

Further, the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development (2017) noted that states have not earmarked funds for priority areas in education like SSA out of the increased fund devolution to states post the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission.⁹ It recommended that the states must proportionately adjust the increased devolution of funds for education.⁹

- **Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS):** Expenditure on Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) increased by about 5% from the revised estimates of 2017-18. The MDMS targets children in the same age group as covered by the SSA (6 to 14 years). In addition to promoting enrolment, retention and attendance by incentivising the children to come to school for meals, the scheme also aims to improve nutritional levels among children. It covers children in government and government-aided schools.
Most states did not follow the central government's guidelines on delivering food grains at the school.¹⁰ There were also instances where due to the existence of a long supply chain, the supplied food grains got adulterated and pilfered.¹⁰
- **Autonomous bodies:** Autonomous bodies like the National Council of Educational Research and Training, and Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan saw a decrease in their allocation by 5.1% and were allocated Rs 7,548 crore in 2018-19.
- **Scholarships:** Scholarships saw a decrease of 7.7% in its allocation in 2018-19. Note that last year, allocation to scholarships increased by 611% (2017-18) to an allocation of Rs 602 crore from revised estimates of 2016-17.
- **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA):** The RMSA is aimed at secondary education (classes 9-12). It aims to enable universal access to secondary education by 2017 and universal retention by 2020.¹¹ It has been recommended that RMSA should be in step with SSA and ensure 100% transition of

every child from the upper primary to secondary stage.¹² Note that under RMSA, during 2015-16, an amount of Rs 3,562 crore out of a budgeted amount of Rs 3,565 crore was utilised, which implies an almost complete utilisation. Table 4 captures the expenditure for SSA and RMSA. The difference in the amount of funds being spent on elementary education (class 1-8) and secondary education (class 9-12) is evident.

Further, the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development noted that the varying regional attendance levels at the secondary education level reflects a regional imbalance in the coverage of RMSA.⁶

Table 4: Expenditure under SSA and RMSA (in Rs crore)

	SSA	RMSA
2014-15		
Expenditure*	41,910	5,407
2015-16		
Expenditure*	44,227	6,879
2016-17		
Expenditure*	48,858	7,713

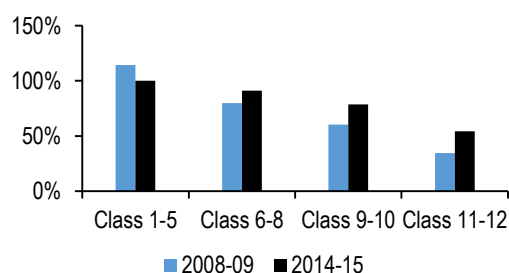
Source: Starred Question no.115, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Rajya Sabha, Answered on December 28, 2017; PRS. *: Expenditure shown above is against receipts from central release, state share release, and unspent balance of previous year, if any.

Issues in school education

Enrolment, transition and dropout rates

Enrolment: The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is the student enrolment as a proportion of the corresponding eligible age group in a given year. GER in classes 1-5 reduced from 114% in 2008-09 to 100% in 2014-15. The above-100% enrolment rate in 2008-09 indicates that students enrolled in classes 1-5 included those younger than six or older than 10 years. In 2014-15, enrolment in classes 1-5 was about 100%, which signals a more age appropriate (six to 10 years) class composition (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: GER in school education

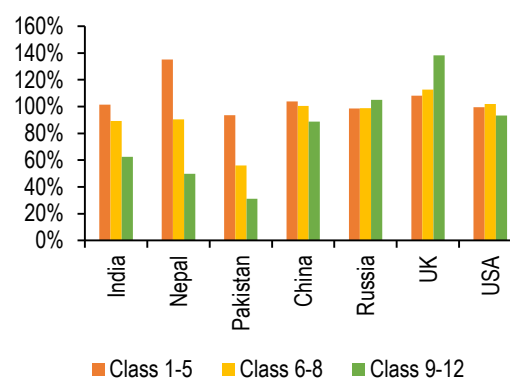


Sources: Education statistics at a glance, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; PRS.

India's enrolment rate in primary education (class 1-5) is comparable to that of developed countries. However, it falls behind these countries after class 6 (see Figure 5).

Between 2008-09 and 2014-15, the proportion of students enrolled in class 1-8 in government schools declined from 71% to 62%, implying an increasing preference for private schools.¹³

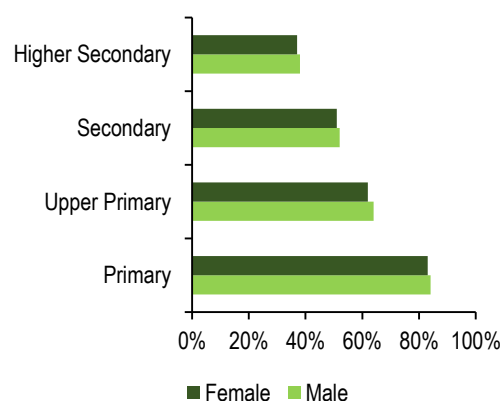
Figure 5: International comparison of GER (2014) (in %)



Sources: Education statistics at a glance, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; PRS.

Attendance: Attendance is the ratio of the number of persons in the official age group attending a particular class-group to the total number persons enrolled in school in that age-group. The attendance for both boys and girls falls as the level of education rises in school education. There is hardly any difference between the attendance of boys and girls (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Attendance in school education

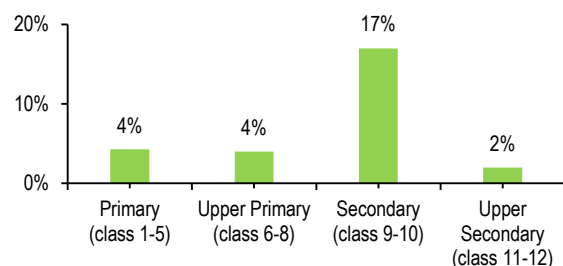


Sources: Key Indicators of Social Consumption in India: Education, NSSO, 2014; PRS.

Transition and dropouts: The dropout rate peaks at the secondary level (class 9-10) at 17% as compared to 4% in elementary school (class 1-8) and 2% in upper secondary school (class 11-12) (see Figure 7). This is also reflected in the transition rates in school education where the lowest transition rate is at the secondary level

(class 10 to 11) at 69%. Note that a transition rate below 100% indicates that the students are held back or have dropped out of school.

Figure 7: Dropout rate in school education (2014-15) (%)



Sources: Education statistics at a glance, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; PRS.

Under the RTE Act, a child cannot be expelled or detained until the completion of elementary education (until class 8). This may explain the differential trends between the enrolment, dropout, and transition rates for elementary education and secondary education. Further, with regard to access to secondary school, for every three upper primary schools there is one secondary school.¹⁴ According to RMSA statistics, four states where the ratio of upper primary school to secondary school is a cause of concern are Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Meghalaya.¹⁴

Further, while 73% allocation of the Department on School Education has been made on SSA and MDMS (focussed on elementary education), only 8% has been allocated to RMSA (focussed on secondary education).

According to NSSO data (71st round) on reasons for dropping out (for the age group 5-29 years), the key reasons for females dropping out is to engage in domestic activities (30%), lack of interest in education (16%), and marriage (14%). On the other hand, the key reasons for males dropping out is to engage in economic activities (31%), lack of interest in education (24%), and financial constraints (24%).¹³

Quality of learning

Elementary education: Based on the high enrolment and low dropout rates in elementary education, it can be inferred that children are being retained in schools for longer. However, there have been some adverse observations regarding the learning outcomes of such children. The Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE, 2014), National Achievement Survey (2012), and the Economic Survey (2016-17) observed declining learning levels in elementary education even after the implementation of the RTE Act.^{15,16,17}

As per the National Achievement Survey, the performance of students in 2015 was poorer than in 2012. In 2015, on average, Class 5 students in 34

states/ UTs obtained 45% marks in reading comprehension, and 46% in mathematics.¹⁸ For reading comprehension, 19 states have scores in 2015 that are lower than the scores in 2012. Only in two UTs, the average achievement scores in 2015 were significantly above those of 2012 (see Annexure).

For mathematics, 20 states have scores in 2015 that are lower than 2012. Only in 3 states/UTs, the average achievement scores in 2015 were significantly above those of 2012 (for more details, see Annexure).

Reconsidering the No Detention Policy

In recent years, two expert committees reviewed the no-detention provision in the RTE Act and recommended it be removed or be discontinued in a phased manner.^{15,3} The RTE (Second Amendment) Bill, 2017 was introduced in Lok Sabha on August 11, 2017 to amend the RTE Act to remove the provision related to no-detention in the Act to address the low learning outcomes. It is currently pending in Parliament.

The RTE Act, 2009 prohibits detention of children till they complete elementary education i.e., class 8. The Bill amends this provision to state that a regular examination will be held in class 5 and class 8 at the end of every academic year. If a child fails the exam, he will be given additional instruction, and take a re-examination. If he fails in the re-examination, the relevant central or state government may decide to allow schools to detain him.

Under the RTE Act, children are enrolled in the class that corresponds to their age, irrespective of their learning levels. This results in a situation where in the same class, depending on when they are enrolled in school, children may have different learning requirements. It has been recommended that special training be organised and is of flexible duration to enable the child to be at par with other children and ensure his integration with the class.¹⁹

Secondary education: In the National Achievement Survey (2015) for class 10, in the English subject, 24% students were in the range of 0-35% score and 61% students were in the range of 36-50% score. Further, 35% students were in 0-35% scores, 49% students were in the range of 36-50% scores in Mathematics.²⁰

Other issues

Teachers related issues: Experts have identified various issues with regard to the role of teachers to address the challenges confronting elementary education.^{21,19,3} These include: (i) low teacher accountability and appraisal, (ii) poor quality of the content of teacher-education and changes required in the curriculum of B. Ed and D. Ed courses, (iii) need for continuous in-service teacher training and upgradation of skill set, (iv) inadequate pupil teacher ratio and deployment of teachers for non-

educational purposes, (v) teacher vacancies, and (vi) excessive recruitment of contract/para teachers.

Some states have done exceedingly well in maintaining its teachers' workforce, some states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Punjab, Assam are lagging behind.²²

In 2016, 3,48,314 posts of teachers were vacant under the SSA and 1,06,906 posts under RMSA.^{23,9} Further, it has been observed that there are 13,64,553 untrained in-service teachers.²⁴ Teacher training institutes such as DIETs are also experiencing many teacher vacancies.²⁵ The presence of para/temporary teachers instead of permanent teachers contributes to the deterioration of quality of education. The CABE Committee (2005) recommended that to ensure quality secondary education, para/temporary teachers must be done away with. Instead, fully qualified teachers with a complete salary and benefits must be hired.²⁶

Teacher related Bills

- **The National Council for Teacher Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017:** The Bill is currently pending in Parliament. It amends the National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1993. The Act establishes the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). The NCTE plans and co-ordinates the development of the teacher education system throughout the country. The Bill seeks to grant retrospective recognition of certain teacher education institutions and permission to start new courses.
- **The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2017:** The Bill was passed by Parliament in 2017. It amends the RTE Act, 2009 by extending the deadline for teachers to acquire the prescribed minimum qualifications for appointment. Those teachers who do not possess the minimum qualifications as on March 31, 2015 will acquire the minimum qualifications within a period of four years i.e. by March 31, 2019.

School accountability: In 2014, CABE recommended introducing a performance management system for all teachers, school leaders, and department officials, with performance measures linked with student learning outcomes.¹⁵ Such measures of school accountability exist in other countries. For example, in the United States, under the No Child Left Behind Act, schools are required to do annual assessment of learning outcomes in reading and mathematics for students from classes 3 to 8. If the school fails to achieve minimum test scores then the consequences include removal from service of teachers or the headmaster, school restructuring or closure, and an option for students to transfer to another school.²⁷

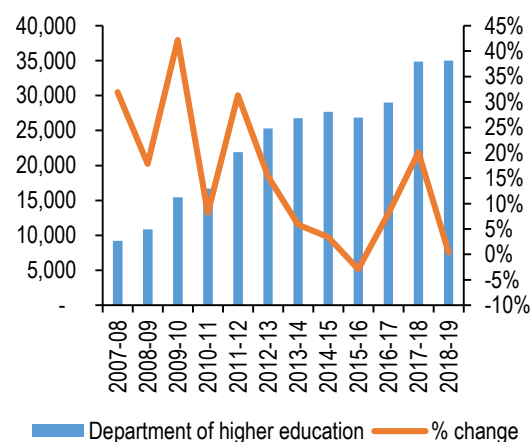
Nature of assessment: Under the RTE Act, the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) is the evaluation mechanism for elementary

education. CCE (e.g., paper-pencil test, drawing and reading pictures, and expressing orally) does not mean absence of evaluation, but it means an evaluation of a different kind from the traditional system of examinations. CCE has not been adequately implemented or monitored.¹⁵ It has been recommended that proper design of assessment and using this information can help improve the quality and innovation in terms of teaching and learning.²⁸

Department of Higher Education

The Department of Higher Education has been allocated Rs 35,010 crore in 2018-19, a 0.4% increase over the revised estimate of 2017-19. This is an increase of Rs 148 crore over the revised estimates of 2017-18. Figure 8 depicts the allocation to the Department of Higher Education since 2007-08. In terms of year on year increase, 2015-16 saw the highest dip in the allocation to the Department of Higher Education. This may be on account of a greater devolution of funds to the states in 2015-16 in pursuance of the recommendations of the 14th Finance Commission.

Figure 8: Allocation to the Department of Higher Education (2006-18) (in Rs crore)



Note: Revised estimates have been used for 2017-18 and budget estimates for 2018-19.

Sources: Union Budgets, 2006-18; PRS.

A NITI Aayog report (2017) notes that even after the central transfers, low income states with low revenue capacity spend significant lower amounts on social and economic services.²⁹ It also observed that as a result, despite such transfers, public expenditures in sectors like education are higher in more developed states.

Table 5 indicates the actual allocation of the Department compared to the budget estimates of that year. The utilisation has been over 90% of the budget estimates in the last three years as seen in

the table. In 2016-17 and 2017-18, it even crossed 100% utilisation.

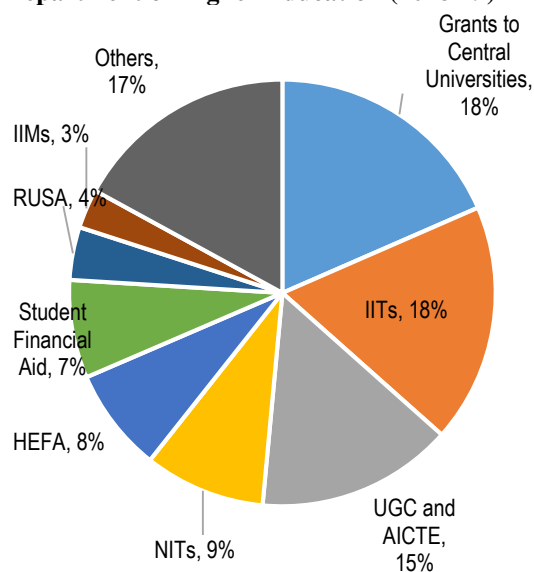
Table 5: Comparison of budget estimates and the actual expenditure (2010-17) (in Rs crore)

Year	Budget Estimate	Actuals	Actuals/BE (%)
2010-11	16,690	15,472	93%
2011-12	21,912	19,505	89%
2012-13	25,275	20,423	81%
2013-14	26,750	24,465	91%
2014-15	27,656	23,152	84%
2015-16	26,855	25,439	95%
2016-17	28,840	29,026	101%
2017-18	33,330	34,862*	105%

Note: BE – Budget Estimate. *Revised Estimate
Sources: Union Budgets, 2010-18; PRS.

Figure 9 provides the major heads of financial allocation under the Department for 2018-19.

Figure 9: Major heads of expenditure for the Department of Higher Education (2018-19)



Sources: Expenditure Budget, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Budget, 2018-19; PRS.

- About 51% of the Department's expenditure has been allocated to central universities (as grants), Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), and statutory and regulatory bodies (University Grants Commission (UGC) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)) (see Table 6). All the three categories have however registered a decrease in their allocation over the revised estimates of 2017-18 by 11%, 23%, and 4% respectively. In 2018-19, they have been allocated Rs 6,445 crore, Rs 6,326 crore, and Rs 5,208 crore respectively.

- The bulk of the enrolment in higher education is handled by state universities and their affiliated colleges. However, these state universities receive very small amounts of grants from the Union Budget. Nearly 65% of the University Grants Commission (UGC) budget is utilised by the central universities and their colleges while state universities and their affiliated colleges get only the remaining 35%.³⁰ The Standing Committee on Human Resource Development has recommended that the mobilisation of funds in state universities should be explored through other means such as endowments, contributions from industry, alumni, etc.³⁰

Table 6: Allocation to the Department of Higher Education in 2018-19 (in Rs crore)

Major Heads	2016-17 Actuals	2017-18 RE	2018-19 BE	% change (RE to BE)
Grants to Central Universities	6,356	7,261	6,445	-11.2%
IITs	5,380	8,245	6,326	-23.3%
UGC and AICTE	4,952	5,408	5,208	-4%
NITs	2,860	3,668	3,203	-12.7%
Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)	-	250	2,750	1000%
Student Financial Aid	2,090	2,244	2,600	15.9%
RUSA	1,416	1,300	1,400	7.7%
IIMs	723	1,068	1,036	-3%
IISERs	1,199	715	689	-3.6%
Digital India-e-learning	452	518	456	-12%
IITs	176	369	364	-1.5%
Research and Innovation	215	319	350	9.7%
Others	3,208	3,496	4,182	20%
Grand Total	29,026	34,862	35,010	0.4%

Sources: Expenditure Budget, Vol. 2, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Budget 2018-19; PRS.

- Student Financial Aid has seen an increase and has been allocated Rs 2,600 crore, a 16% increase over the revised estimates of 2017-18. Research and Innovation have received an increase in allocation by about 10% (over revised estimates) at Rs 350 crore.
- Expenditure on Digital India e-learning has been estimated at Rs 456 crore, which is down by 12% from the revised estimates of 2017-18. Note that it had seen a decline in 2017-18 of 3.8% over the revised estimates of 2016-17.
- The funding allocation for Rashtriya Uchchta Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) has increased by 8% at Rs 1,400 crore (from the 2017-8 revised estimates). Note that about Rs 116 crore was underspent as per the revised estimates for 2017-18 following the budget estimates. As of September, 2017, about 46% of the total

central share was released and 24.7 % of the released fund was utilised.³¹

- The Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) has been allocated Rs 2,750 crore for 2018-19 after an initial allocation of Rs 250 crore in 2017-18. HEFA will promote the creation of high quality infrastructure in premier educational institutions. All the centrally funded higher educational institutions would be eligible for joining as members of the HEFA.³² Note that it was envisaged that HEFA will be jointly promoted by an identified promoter and the Ministry of Human Resource Development with an authorised capital of Rs 2,000 crore. The government equity will be Rs 1,000 crore. The HEFA will be formed as a Special Purpose Vehicle within a public sector bank or a nonbanking financial company.

Expenditure on education as a proportion of GDP has been around 3 per cent during the period 2008-09 to 2014-15.³³ Out of this figure, roughly 1% is spent on higher education in India. However, there is a lack of data available on private sector spending in this sector. Internationally in terms of public expenditure, USA spends about 1% of its GDP on higher education, Canada spends 1.3%, Chile spends 1% and Brazil spends 0.9%.³⁴

There has been underutilisation of funds by central and state universities, including unspent balances lying with central universities.⁵ Committees have stressed on the need to curb delays on the part of the UGC and the MHRD in disbursing budgetary allocations to the various universities.³⁵

Committees have noted that such a consistent trend of unspent balances is leading to lower allocations against the MHRD's demands for funds, resulting in a 'vicious circle'.³⁶ For example, Rs 689 crore was left unspent with the autonomous bodies which got one of the highest allocations under higher education in 2016.³⁷ This leads to a significant gap between the proposed demand and the allocation of budget to MHRD as well.³⁸

Issues in the higher education sector

Enrolment levels

In India, GER in higher education has more than doubled over a period of 11 years, going from 9% in 2002-03 to 24.5% in 2015-16 (see Figure 10).^{39,40}

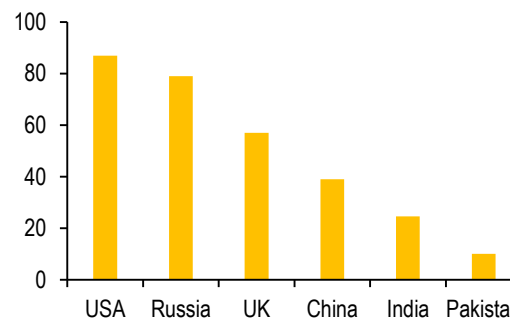
Figure 10: GER in higher education (2010-15)



Sources: All India Survey on Higher Education, 2015-16; PRS.

A GER of 24.5% implies that 24.5% of people in the target age-group are enrolled in universities. The GER for higher education in India is fairly low compared to other countries such as the UK and USA, as seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11: International comparison of GER in higher education



Sources: Education statistics at a glance, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; PRS.

Student enrolment is highest at the UG level (79.3%) followed by PG (11.3%). The recent AISHE 2015-16 report reveals that the student enrolment decreases as one goes further higher from the under graduate level of education.⁴⁰

Regulatory issues in higher education

It has been observed that the Indian higher education is regulated by a multiplicity of regulatory agencies, with overlapping mandates.⁴¹ These bodies are the University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the various professional councils. Citing overregulation and under governance, various committees have highlighted the need for an overarching regulatory body by subsuming the multiple existing regulatory bodies.^{41,42} Such a body would be responsible for monitoring standards and licensing accreditation bodies in the sector.

The TSR Subramanian Committee report (2016) on the New Education Policy also recommended bringing in the National Higher Education Promotion and Management Act which would replace the existing separate laws governing individual regulators in higher education.³ In the Union Budget of 2017-18, the Finance Minister mentioned that reforms would be undertaken concerning the functioning of UGC.⁴³

Autonomy in higher education

The Indian Institutes of Management Bill, 2017 was passed on December 19, 2017 by Parliament. Under the Bill, the autonomy being granted to the IIMs is greater than the autonomy available to institutions like IITs, AIIMS and Delhi University. The role of the central government or the regulator in these other institutions is greater than what has been envisaged under the Bill. This implies unequal levels of autonomy across different institutions of higher education in areas including introduction of new courses and the Director's pay. Recent media reports have quoted the Union Minister of Human Resource Development, Mr. Prakash Javadekar saying that IIMs have been accorded full autonomy and this will be done for IITs too as well as colleges.⁴⁴

In February 2018, the University Grants Commission (UGC) (Categorisation of Universities (only) for Grant of Graded Autonomy) Regulations were released.⁴⁵ The UGC will categorise universities into three categories based on various parameters. Depending on the category of the university, there would be a certain extent of autonomy for the universities on aspects including: (i) starting a new course, (ii) opening constituent units/off-campus centres, (iii) hiring foreign faculty, and (iv) admitting foreign students.

Quality standards in higher education

There are two accrediting institutions in higher education— namely National Board of Accreditation (NBA) established by AICTE, and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) established by UGC. In terms of the quality of universities, out of 323 universities accredited by the NAAC in the most recent cycle, only 23 universities have been given an 'A+' grade.⁴⁶

The Standing Committee (2016) notes that accreditation of higher educational institutions needs to be at core of the regulatory arrangement in higher education.³⁰ Further, quality assurance agencies should guarantee basic minimum standards of technical education to meet the industry demand for quality manpower. Credit rating agencies, reputed industry associations, media houses and professional bodies should be encouraged to carry forward the process of rating of Indian universities and institutions.

Lack of employable skills

Lack of employable skills in students of technical education has been observed by the Standing Committee.³⁰ Identification of skill gaps in different sectors and offering courses for enhancing employability in them has been recommended.

Some strategies in this regard can include: (i) Industry Institute Student Training Support, (ii) Industrial Challenge Open Forum, (iii) Long Term Student Industry Placement Scheme, and (iv) Industrial Finishing Schools.³⁰

Fee Structure and private sector participation in higher education

It has been observed that many private institutions of higher education charge exorbitant fees. In the absence of well-defined norms, fees charged by such universities have remained high.⁴⁷ UGC regulates fees for courses offered in deemed universities, to an extent. They state that the fees charged shall be directly linked to the cost of running the course and the institution shall ensure non-commercialisation of education. In 2002, the Supreme Court ruled that the fees charged by private unaided educational institutes could be regulated.⁴⁸ Also, while banning capitation fee (fees exceeding the tuition fee), it allowed institutes to charge a reasonable surplus.

The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) had constituted a Committee in 2014 under Justice Srikrishna to recommend the fee to be charged by the private technical educational institutes in the country.⁴⁹ The Committee recommended the maximum tuition and development fee to be charged.

A UGC report in 2012 noted that the distribution of public and private institutions in India is skewed. This is because enrolment in public universities is largely concentrated in conventional disciplines (arts and sciences) whereas in private institutions, more students are enrolled in market-driven disciplines (engineering, management, etc.).⁵⁰ Thus, with a rise in private universities, there is a mismatch of the demand and supply of subject disciplines in the private sector education.

It has been noted that while private investment is high in the disciplines of engineering, medicine and management; majority of enrolment is still taking place in the traditional disciplines like arts. However, increasing number of students are opting for technical and professional courses, for future employability purposes. Committees have stated that the private sector should not confine itself to the commercially viable sectors such as management, accountancy, medicine, etc., as this leads to the responsibility of maximising enrolment with the government.⁴¹

Further, committee recommendations have not encouraged for-profit private educational institutions.⁴¹ However, it is essential to stimulate private investment in higher education to extend educational opportunities and private intervention would be key in bridging the gap in investment from the government in the education sector.

Teacher related issues

According to UGC, out of the total teaching posts of 17,006 in various UGC funded Central Universities, 6,141 teaching posts are lying vacant.⁵¹ Further, in 20 Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), out of total sanctioned teaching posts of 1,007, 273 posts are lying vacant; and in 7 IISERs and IISc, Bangalore, the total number of sanctioned teaching posts is 1,117 and 153 are lying vacant.⁵²

The Standing Committee on Human Resource Development reasoned that this could be due to two reasons: (i) young students don't find the teaching profession attractive; or (ii) the recruitment process is long and involves too many procedural

formalities.³⁰ In 2008, the Bhargava Committee observed that the government determined pay of the faculty has been a deterrent in attracting adequate faculty at IIMs.⁵³

The Committee recommended that the recruitment process should start well before a post is vacated.⁵³ In addition, to make the profession of teaching more lucrative, faculty should be encouraged to undertake consultancy projects and be provided financial support for start-ups. The Standing Committee did not consider that raising the age of faculty to 65 is a desired and permanent measure which will help strengthening the faculty position in central universities.³¹

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⁴ The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009.

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¹¹ Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Ministry of Human Resource Development, <http://rmsaindia.gov.in/en/component/rmsastates/?view=rmsastates&Itemid=130&id=india>

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¹³ Key Indicators of Social Consumption in India: Education (2014), NSS (71st Round), <http://mail.mospi.gov.in/index.php/catalog/160>.

¹⁴ Trends under RMSA, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, http://rmsaindia.gov.in/images/Trends_and_Indicators_under_RMSA.pdf

¹⁵ "Report of CAGE Sub Committee on Assessment on implementation of CCE and no detention provision", 2015, Ministry of Human Resource Development, http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/AssmntCCE.pdf.

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¹⁷ Economic Survey, 2016-17, http://indiabudget.nic.in/es2016-17/echapter_vol2.pdf.

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¹⁹ "Report to the People on Education", 2011-12, Ministry of Human Resource Development, http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/document-reports/RPE_2011-12.pdf.

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²⁴ Unstarred question no. 237, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Lok Sabha, December 10, 2017, <http://164.100.47.190/loksabhaquestions/annex/13/AU237.pdf>.

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Annexure

Union Budget, 2018-19

Table 1: Allocations to the Ministry of Human Resource Development for 2018-19 (in Rs crore)

Major Heads	2016-17 Actuals	2017-18 BE	2017-18 RE	% Change RE (2017-18)/Actuals (2016-17)	2018-19 BE	% Change (RE (2017-18) to BE (2018-19))
Department of School Education and Literacy	42,989	46,356	47,006	9.34%	50,000	6.4%
Scholarships	84	602	602	616.67%	556	-7.7%
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan	21,685	23,500	23,500	8.37%	26,129	11.2%
Autonomous bodies	6,902	7,302	7,952	15.21%	7,548	-5.1%
Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan	3,698	3,830	3,915	5.87%	4,213	7.6%
Teachers Training and Adult Education	817	926	841	2.94%	871	3.6%
National Programme of Mid Day Meal in Schools	9,475	10,000	10,000	5.54%	10,500	5.0%
Others	328	197	197	-39.94%	184	-6.4%
Department of Higher Education	29,026	33,330	34,862	20.11%	35,010	0.4%
Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA)		250	250		2,750	1000.0%
Student Financial Aid	2,090	2,380	2,244	7.37%	2,600	15.9%
Digital India-e-learning	452	497	518	14.60%	456	-12.0%
Research and Innovation	215	315	319	48.37%	350	9.7%
Statutory and regulatory bodies (UGC and AICTE)	4,952	5,177	5,408	9.21%	5,208	-3.7%
Grants to Central Universities	6,356	6,486	7,261	14.24%	6,445	-11.2%
Indian Institutes of Technology	5,380	7,856	8,245	53.25%	6,326	-23.3%
Indian Institutes of Management	723	1,030	1,068	47.72%	1,036	-3.0%
National Institutes of Technology	2,860	3,440	3,668	28.25%	3,203	-12.7%
Indian Institute of Science, Education and Research (IISERs)	1,198	650	715	-40.34%	689	-3.6%
Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs)	176	379	369	109.66%	364	-1.5%
Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)	1,416	1,300	1300	-8.19%	1400	7.7%
Others	3,208	3,819	3,747	16.80%	6,933	85.0%
Total	72,016	79,686	81,869	13.68%	85,010	3.8%

Sources: Demand for Grants, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Union Budget, 2018-19; PRS.

Indicators on school and higher education

Table 2: State wise key indicators on school education

State/UT	Private schools (%)	Government schools (%)	Elementary GER	Secondary GER	Senior Secondary GER	PTR	GPI (Secondary)
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	16.91	83.1	98.82	86.64	73.96	15	0.95
Andhra Pradesh	27.55	71.61	93.79	84.28	-	19	1.03
Arunachal Pradesh	12.97	86.29	90	81.64	78.9	22	0.97
Assam	13.18	74.63	85.92	66.11	-	14	1.18
Bihar	5.04	88.66	98.23	73.37	-	57	1.14
Chandigarh	39.8	57.22	-	-	87.09	14	1
Chhattisgarh	11.87	87.73	95.5	67.14	95.29	45	1.02
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	12.68	86.17	96.61	81.82	88.47	27	0.9
Daman & Diu	17.93	82.07	98.16	67.38	59.21	16	1.21
Delhi	50.86	49.14	-	78.38	72.53	28	1.01
Goa	42.47	57.52	99.42	78.62	84.64	25	0.92
Gujarat	33.43	66.56	96.91	74.31	92.64	34	0.81
Haryana	30.65	65.61	93.97	80.97	93.66	17	0.93

State/UT	Private schools (%)	Government schools (%)	Elementary GER	Secondary GER	Senior Secondary GER	PTR	GPI (Secondary)
Himachal Pradesh	14.7	85.29	99.01	87.43	89.1	25	0.97
Jammu & Kashmir	18.07	81.93	93.38	80.08	86.06	15	0.94
Jharkhand	5.96	84.81	92.24	74.63	95.45	68	1.05
Karnataka	33.17	66.79	96.76	72.89	95.67	15	1.02
Kerala	62.29	27.97	99.99	87.09	99.37	17	0.99
Lakshadweep	0	100	99.2	85.43	96.88	2	1.13
Madhya Pradesh	17.98	80.9	91.57	62.06	98.25	36	0.98
Maharashtra	36.62	62.83	98.49	86.3	97.75	22	0.95
Manipur	30.77	66.74	91.57	85.1	-	13	0.99
Meghalaya	45.11	53.57	87.28	70.29	-	13	1.18
Mizoram	32.16	67.74	91.31	69.64	91.49	9	1.01
Nagaland	25.65	74.35	92.89	72.74	87.71	19	1.06
Odisha	13.55	83.55	96.73	70.34	-	23	0.99
Puducherry	41.17	58.82	99.56	84.51	93.24	14	1.01
Punjab	25.16	70.83	96.76	88.52	93.48	17	0.99
Rajasthan	32.34	65.44	94.66	82.41	-	25	0.83
Sikkim	31.97	68.03	97.75	78.59	85.3	19	1.18
Tamil Nadu	33.34	66.35	-	91.41	96.12	21	1.04
Telangana	30.27	68.32	97.84	84.47	99.23	19	1.07
Tripura	6.91	89.23	97.62	51.05	86.62	33	1.01
Uttar Pradesh	34.82	63.54	92.87	88.3	97.14	41	0.99
Uttarakhand	24.58	73.88	96.32	82.59	94.77	17	0.97
West Bengal	10.19	86.43	96.47	77.98	90.8	28	1.19
All India	24.88	72.57	95.44	79.91	98.88	27	1.01

Note: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): GER for a class-group is the ratio of the number of persons in the class-group to the number of persons in the corresponding official age-group; Gender Parity Index (GPI): It is the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at a certain level of education to the corresponding number of male students at such a level; Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR): It is the number of pupils per teacher.

Sources: Educations Statistics at a glance, 2016, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; Flash Statistics, District Information System for Education, 2015-16; PRS.

Table 3: State wise key indicators on higher education (2015-16)

State	Private Colleges	Government Colleges	No. of universities	GPI	GER	PTR
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	-	7	-	1.11	23.5	20
Andhra Pradesh	2,129	295	28	0.77	30.8	13
Arunachal Pradesh	6	13	9	0.99	28.7	31
Assam	62	411	21	0.90	15.4	22
Bihar	163	489	22	0.80	14.3	50
Chandigarh	9	16	3	1.45	57.6	22
Chhattisgarh	370	329	22	0.93	15.1	20
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	4	3	-	1.45	9.1	27
Daman & Diu	4	4	-	2.01	5.7	16
Delhi	75	92	26	1.12	45.4	19
Goa	32	23	2	1.23	27.6	15
Gujarat	1,745	258	57	0.80	20.7	25
Haryana	701	169	39	1.02	26.1	17
Himachal Pradesh	153	147	25	1.20	32.5	19

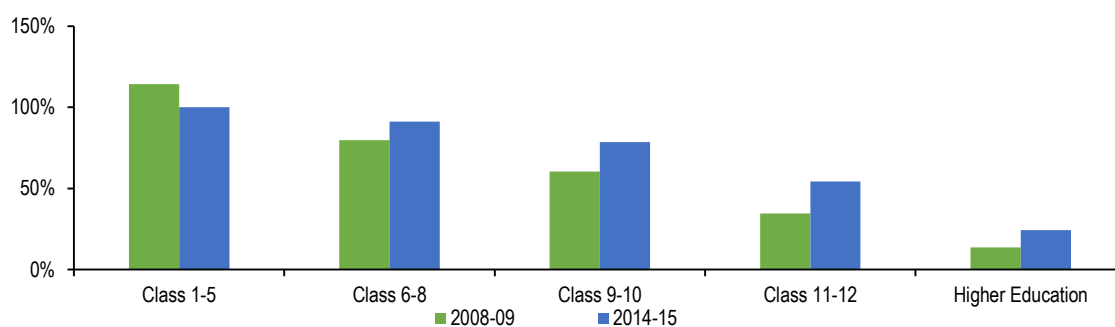
State	Private Colleges	Government Colleges	No. of universities	GPI	GER	PTR
Jammu and Kashmir	162	142	11	1.12	24.8	21
Jharkhand	134	147	14	0.92	15.5	48
Karnataka	2,628	636	52	0.99	26.1	13
Kerala	1,001	215	20	1.32	30.8	13
Lakshadweep	-	-	-	2.48	7.1	13
Madhya Pradesh	1,411	639	43	0.85	19.6	21
Maharashtra	3,599	830	45	0.86	29.9	20
Manipur	35	48	4	0.94	34.2	19
Meghalaya	28	20	10	1.04	20.8	21
Mizoram	1	28	3	0.91	24.1	15
Nagaland	44	21	4	1.10	14.9	14
Odisha	713	353	21	0.83	19.6	20
Puducherry	50	27	4	0.95	43.2	9
Punjab	762	198	26	1.10	27	15
Rajasthan	1,908	484	70	0.85	20.2	24
Sikkim	5	9	7	1.05	37.6	12
Tamil Nadu	2,029	315	58	0.92	44.3	13
Telangana	1,814	218	21	0.85	36.3	14
Tripura	8	42	3	0.70	16.9	26
Uttar Pradesh	5,048	794	67	1.03	24.5	34
Uttarakhand	214	119	28	0.98	33.3	20
West Bengal	632	447	34	0.85	17.7	32
All India	27,679	7,988	799	0.92	24.5	23

Note: Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER): GER for a class-group is the ratio of the number of persons in the class-group to the number of persons in the corresponding official age-group; Gender Parity Index (GPI): It is the ratio of the number of female students enrolled at a certain level of education to the corresponding number of male students at such a level; Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR): It is the number of pupils per teacher.

Sources: All India Survey on Higher Education, 2015-16; PRS.

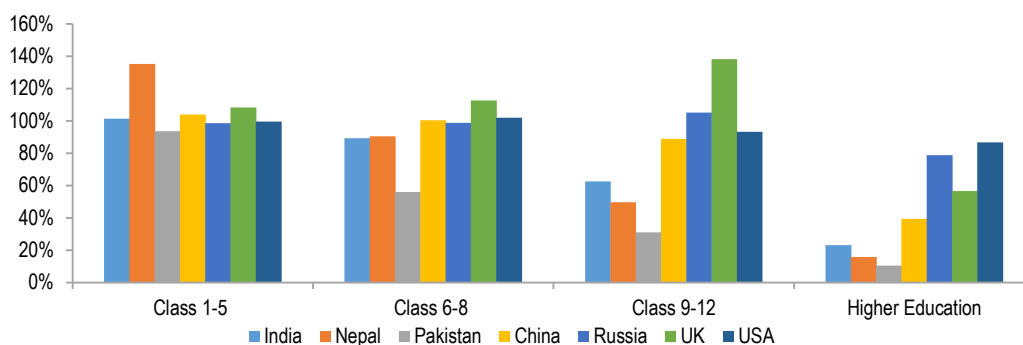
Graphical representation of the status of education

Figure 1: GER across different education levels (2008-2014) (in %)



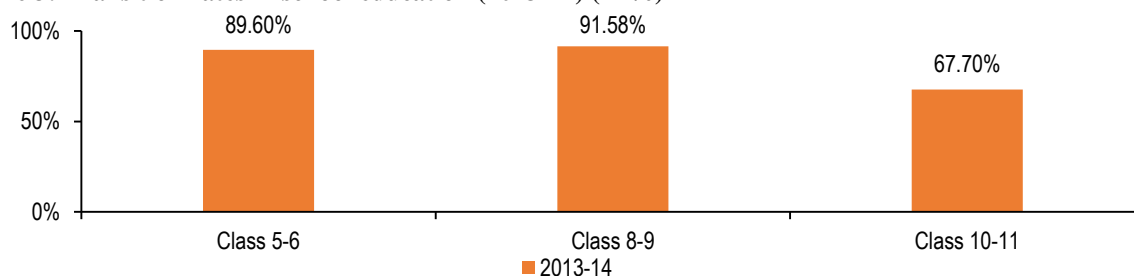
Source: Education statistics at a glance, 2016, Ministry of Human Resource Development; PRS.

Figure 2: GER across education levels: India vs other countries (2014)



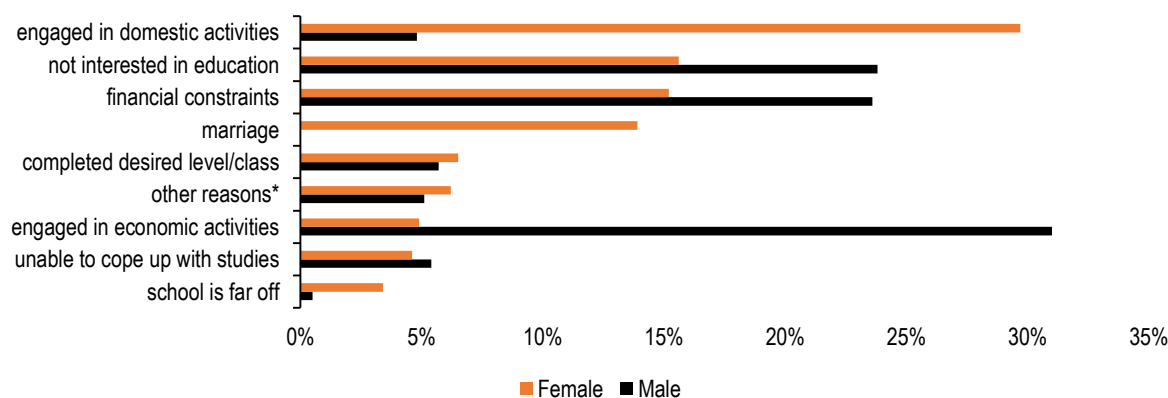
Sources: Education statistics at a glance, Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2016; PRS.

Figure 3: Transition rates in school education (2013-14) (in %)



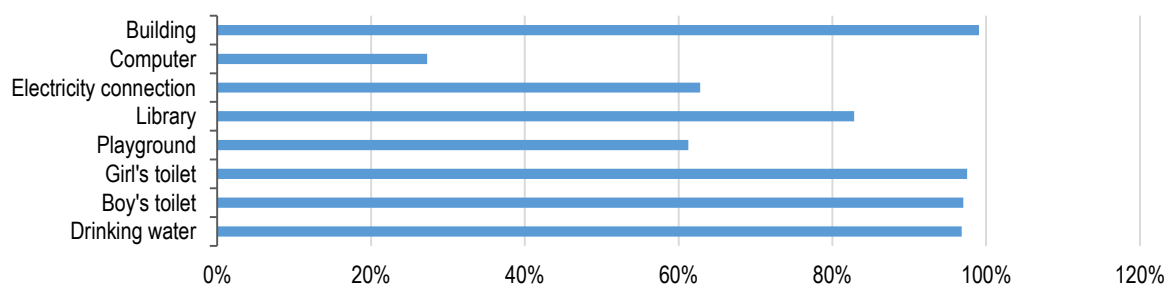
Sources: Flash Statistics, District Information System for Education, 2015-16; PRS.

Figure 4: Reasons for dropping out by gender (for persons aged 5- 29 years) (2014) (in %)



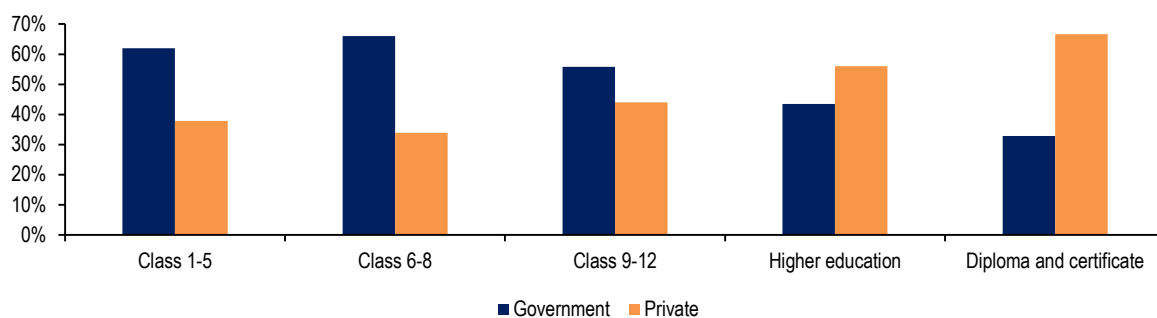
Sources: Key Indicators of Social Consumption in India: Education, NSS (71st Round); PRS.

Figure 5: % of schools having certain infrastructure



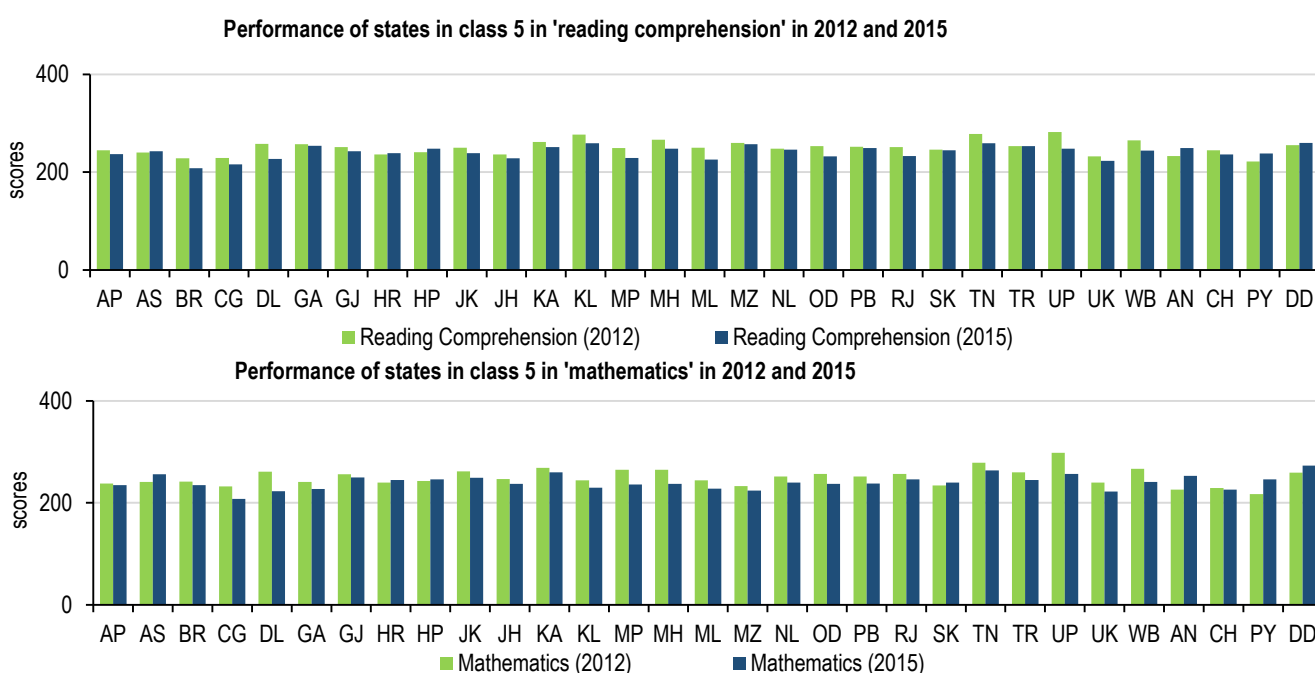
Sources: School Education in India: Flash Statistics, 2015-16, District Information System for Education; PRS.

Figure 6: Distribution of students by type of institution attended (2014-15)



Sources: Educational Statistics at a glance, 2016, Ministry of Human Resource Development; PRS.

Figure 7: State wise learning outcomes (2012 and 2015)



Sources: National Achievement Survey, 2012 and 2015, National Council of Educational Research and Training; PRS.

Note: 1. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) is carried out by National Council of Educational Research and Training every three years to ascertain the learning achievement of students during elementary education in government and government-aided schools.

2. Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Lakshadweep, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli did not participate in NAS, 2012 and NAS, 2015.

3. The scores range between 0 and 400. They are scaled for consistency and comparability across states by adjusting for difficulty of tests and ability of students.