

# Government versus Private Primary Schools in India: An Assessment of Physical Infrastructure, Schooling Costs and Performance

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## Abstract

"Education" describes the process of learning. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, education is "the training and growing of one's knowledge, abilities, intellect, character, etc. by means of formal schooling, teaching, training," and earning a college degree is one example of this. Examining values at the primary school level in both public and private schools is the study's primary goal. Using information from the India Human Development Survey, the physical facilities, educational expenses, and academic achievement of students in public and private schools across India were assessed (IHDS, 2020). The purpose of this study was to fill a significant gap in the literature on Indian education.

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## I. Introduction

"Education" describes the process of learning. Since college is a structured approach to learning and developing one's knowledge, abilities, intelligence, character, etc., it serves as an example of education. Early Education: In India, a guru or prabhu keeps an eye on a child's first education. Prior to moksha, or enlightenment, everyone had free access to education. Due to a decentralized social structure, education was distributed throughout time based on a person's varna and the associated obligations. While the Brahmins studied the scriptures and religion, the Vaishya caste was educated in business and other specialized disciplines. Shudras, or men from the lower caste, received education in the trade skills required for their jobs. Ashrams were the traditional setting for early Indian schooling, and students were expected to avoid urban areas and adhere strictly to the guru's monastic guidelines. Traditional and religious knowledge were formerly the primary focus of education in ancient India, and the country's reputation for strict orderliness in the classroom has only grown since then. Much knowledge was passed down orally from sages and academics and recorded on palm leaves and tree barks. The Gurukul method of education, which traditionally included students and instructors living and studying together, has helped keep Indian education at the forefront of society. It was also unusual since anybody may get this education for free; nevertheless, at the conclusion of each course, participants were expected to make a voluntary payment to the teacher, known as "Guru Dakshina," which was only feasible for a small number of wealthy families.

## TYPES OF SCHOOLS

### Government schools

Most students attend government schools in rural areas, where the cost of education is subsidized by the government and children as young as 14 may enroll for free. In 2017, 65.2% of pupils enrolled in a public school, according to statistics from the Ministry of Education. Each level of government—federal, state, and local—operates its own set of public schools. Students in metropolitan areas have access to the prestigious Kendriya vidyalaya and Jawahar Navodaya vidyalaya schools. India has several public schools, including the SC/ST/OBC-serving Kasturba Gandhi Balika vidyalaya, the Indian army public schools regulated by the Indian army, and the kendriya vidyalaya project conducted for central government workers in India.

### **Government aided private schools**

These schools are governed by charity trusts, with the government providing a portion of their funding. The D.A.V. College administration is well-liked by several academic institutions.

### **Private schools (unaided)**

Non-public or independent schools are another name for private schools. It is not subject to government oversight and may require payment for use of its facilities and educational services. The cost of private education far exceeds that of public education. Current estimates suggest that 29% of youngsters in India attend private schools. More over half of city kids apply to private schools, but only around a fifth of country kids do in 2019–20.

### **Understanding the Role of Private Institutions in Indian Education: Insights from Data and Trends**

The implications of this divide between private and public education are not just academic. Education is a critical factor in social and economic mobility, and a lack of access to high-quality education can perpetuate poverty and social inequality. This can have broader implications for the economy as a whole, as a lack of skilled workers can hinder economic growth and development.

Several policy implications need to be considered in order to address the issue of the divide. One potential solution is to invest more in public education to improve its quality and make it accessible to all students. This can be done by increasing school funding, hiring better-trained teachers, and providing better infrastructure. Another potential solution is to provide more scholarships or subsidies to lower-income families so that they can also afford and send their children to private schools.

In conclusion, the impact of private vs. public education on student outcomes in India is a complex issue that has implications for social and economic inequality. While private schools often offer better quality education, they are often more expensive and may exacerbate existing inequalities. To help bridge this gap, educational apps such as Promova can play a key role in supplementing learning and making quality language education more accessible to students from all backgrounds. Policymakers need to consider investing more in public education and providing more support to lower-income families to address the issue of the divide. By doing so, we can ensure that all students have access to high-quality education and succeed academically and professionally, regardless of their background or socio-economic status.

The impact of Private vs. Public education on student outcomes in India is a complex issue with various factors at play. Here are some statistics that shed light on the topic:

**Student achievement:** A study by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) found that students in private schools in India perform better than those in government schools regarding learning outcomes. The study found that the average test scores of students in private schools were higher than those in government schools across all levels of education.

**Enrollment rates:** According to the District Information System for Education (DISE) 2019-20, the proportion of students enrolled in private schools in elementary education in India was 31.4%, up from 28.7% in 2014-15. The enrollment rate in private schools is higher in urban areas (43.5%) than in rural areas (25.2%).

**Quality of infrastructure:** Private schools in India generally have better infrastructure than government schools, with amenities such as libraries, computer labs, and playgrounds. According to the DISE 2019-20, the proportion of schools with a functional library in government schools was 55.4%, compared to 80.4% in private schools.

**Teacher qualifications:** Private schools in India often have teachers with better qualifications and experience than government schools. According to the DISE 2019-20, the percentage of teachers with a graduate degree in government schools was 59.5%, compared to 80.6% in private schools.

**Cost of education:** Private schools in India are often more expensive than government schools, making them unaffordable for many families. According to the Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER) 2019, the average monthly fee for private schools in rural India was Rs. 672, compared to Rs. 112 for government schools.

The implications of private vs. public education on social and economic inequality are significant. Private schools cater to students from more affluent families who can afford the higher fees, while government schools often serve low-income families. This creates a gap in access to quality education, which can perpetuate social and economic inequality. Additionally, private schools often prioritize profit over educational outcomes, leading to disparities in access to education and exacerbating inequality.

**Maharashtra:** Private schools have better infrastructure and higher student-teacher ratios than government schools in Maharashtra. As a result, private school students in Maharashtra perform better in board exams and are more likely to pursue higher education than government school students. However, private schools in Maharashtra also have significantly higher tuition fees, which may exclude students from economically weaker sections.

**Delhi:** In Delhi, private schools outperform government schools regarding student outcomes, including test scores, attendance, and graduation rates. Private schools in Delhi also have higher student-teacher ratios and better infrastructure than government schools. However, private schools in Delhi are also more expensive, which may exclude students from economically weaker sections.

**Uttar Pradesh:** In Uttar Pradesh, government schools are the primary source of education for students from economically weaker sections. Private schools in Uttar Pradesh are generally unaffordable for these students, as they have significantly higher tuition fees than government schools. However, private schools in Uttar Pradesh also have better infrastructure and higher student-teacher ratios than government schools, which may result in better student outcomes for students who can afford to attend them.

**Tamil Nadu:** In Tamil Nadu, private schools perform better than government schools regarding student outcomes, including test scores and graduation rates. Private schools in Tamil Nadu also have higher student-teacher ratios and better infrastructure than government schools. However, private schools in Tamil Nadu are also more expensive than government schools, which may exclude students from economically weaker sections.

**Rajasthan:** In Rajasthan, private schools perform better than government schools regarding student outcomes, including test scores and attendance. Private schools in Rajasthan also have better infrastructure and higher student-teacher ratios than government schools. However, private schools in Rajasthan are also more expensive than government schools, which may exclude students from economically weaker sections.

Overall, the data suggests that private schools perform better than government schools in terms of student outcomes in India. However, private schools are also significantly more expensive than government schools, which may exclude students from economically weaker sections and contribute to social and economic inequality.

#### **Challenges India faces concerning school education:**

**Teacher Shortage:** India faces a severe shortage of qualified and trained teachers, particularly in government schools. This shortage of teachers negatively impacts the quality of education provided to students and undermines the efforts to improve student outcomes.

**Unequal Access to Education:** Despite government efforts to improve access to education, there are still significant gaps in education access between urban and rural areas and between students from economically weaker and more affluent sections of society. This contributes to social and economic inequality.

**Poor Infrastructure:** Many government schools lack basic infrastructure, such as classrooms, furniture, and sanitation facilities. This lack of infrastructure undermines the quality of education and negatively impacts student outcomes.

**Low Education Quality:** While efforts have been made to improve education quality in India, there are still significant challenges regarding outdated teaching methods, a lack of innovative teaching practices, and inadequate use of technology in the classroom.

**Funding and Budgetary Constraints:** India's education sector faces significant funding and budgetary constraints, particularly in the government education system. This limits the resources available to improve education quality and access and hampers efforts to bridge the gap between private and public education.

The concerted effort by the government, civil society, and other stakeholders to prioritize education and invest in improving education quality, access, and infrastructure. Improving the quality of education in public schools in India requires a multi-pronged approach. Here are some steps that India could take:

**Address the teacher shortage:** India should address the shortage of qualified and trained teachers in public schools. This could include recruiting and training more teachers, incentives to teachers to work in rural and remote areas, and improving teacher retention rates.

**Invest in infrastructure:** India should invest in improving the infrastructure of public schools, including classrooms, furniture, sanitation facilities, and access to technology. This will help create a conducive learning environment for students and improve their educational experience.

**Update curriculum and teaching methods:** India should update public schools' curriculum and teaching methods to make them more relevant, engaging, and student-centric. This could include introducing more hands-on learning, project-based learning, and digital resources in the classroom.

**Increase accountability:** India should increase accountability in public schools by regularly monitoring and evaluating teacher and student performance and providing resources and support to underperforming schools.

**Increase funding:** India should increase funding for public education, particularly for schools in rural and remote areas. This will help ensure that public schools have adequate resources to provide quality education to students.

**Promote community involvement:** India should encourage community involvement in public schools by creating parent-teacher associations and involving local community members in school governance. This will help build a sense of ownership and accountability among stakeholders and improve the overall quality of education in public schools.

Overall, improving the quality of education in public schools in India requires a sustained effort by all stakeholders, including the government, civil society, teachers, parents, and students. It is unlikely that India

will achieve a 100% Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) in school education without improving the quality of public schools.

While private schools have played an essential role in improving access to education in India, particularly in urban areas, they are often unaffordable for students from economically weaker sections of society. This means that public schools remain the primary source of education for a large segment of the population. Therefore, to achieve a 100% GER, India may like to improve the quality of education in general and government schools in particular, particularly in rural and remote areas. This will require significant investment in public schools, including improving infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum development. Additionally, efforts must be made to bridge the gap in educational outcomes to ensure that all students have access to high-quality education regardless of their socio & economic background.

### **Percentage of Schools: Public & Private**

Looking at the completed table of state-wise percentages of private and public schools by educational level in India for the academic year 2019-20, we can make several observations:

Across all states, there are more government schools than private schools at all levels of education. In most states, the percentage of private schools increases as the level of education increases. This is especially true for higher secondary education, where many states have a much higher percentage of private schools.

Some states have a higher percentage of private schools at all levels of education, such as Delhi, Chandigarh, and Gujarat.

Some states have a higher percentage of government schools at all levels of education, such as Andaman & Nicobar, Arunachal Pradesh, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli.

There is a lot of variation across states, with some having a fairly balanced mix of private and government schools while others have a much more skewed distribution towards one type of school. This likely reflects a range of factors, including historical, political, economic, and cultural factors.

Overall, one sees the diverse landscape of school education in India, with significant variation in the types of schools available across different states and levels of education.

### **Infrastructure**

As per the Unified District Information System for Education (UDISE) 2019-20 report, only 60% of schools in India have basic facilities like electricity, drinking water, and toilets. The report also indicates that only 29% of schools have a computer, and 11% have internet facilities.

### **Teacher Quality**

According to the National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2017, only 37% of teachers in India are fully qualified, while 63% are either underqualified or untrained.

The same survey found that only 48% of teachers in government schools and 63% of teachers in private schools were found to have pedagogical content knowledge.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The NAS 2017 survey found that the learning levels of students in government schools were much lower than those in private schools. For example, only 28% of Class 3 students in government schools could read and understand a Class 2 level text, while the figure was 55% for private schools.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2018 survey found that the percentage of Class 5 students who could read a Class 2 level text ranged from 32.5% in Uttar Pradesh to 79.3% in Kerala.

### **Educational Policies**

The Right to Education (RTE) Act has been implemented in all states. However, its implementation has been uneven, and many challenges remain. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which aims to bring about comprehensive reforms in the education system, was launched recently. Its impact is yet to be seen. These are just a few examples, and many other factors need to be considered when analysing the education system in different states.

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