



Education System Brief:

India



OPPORTUNITY
EduFinance

Education System Brief: India (Haryana, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Tamil Nadu)

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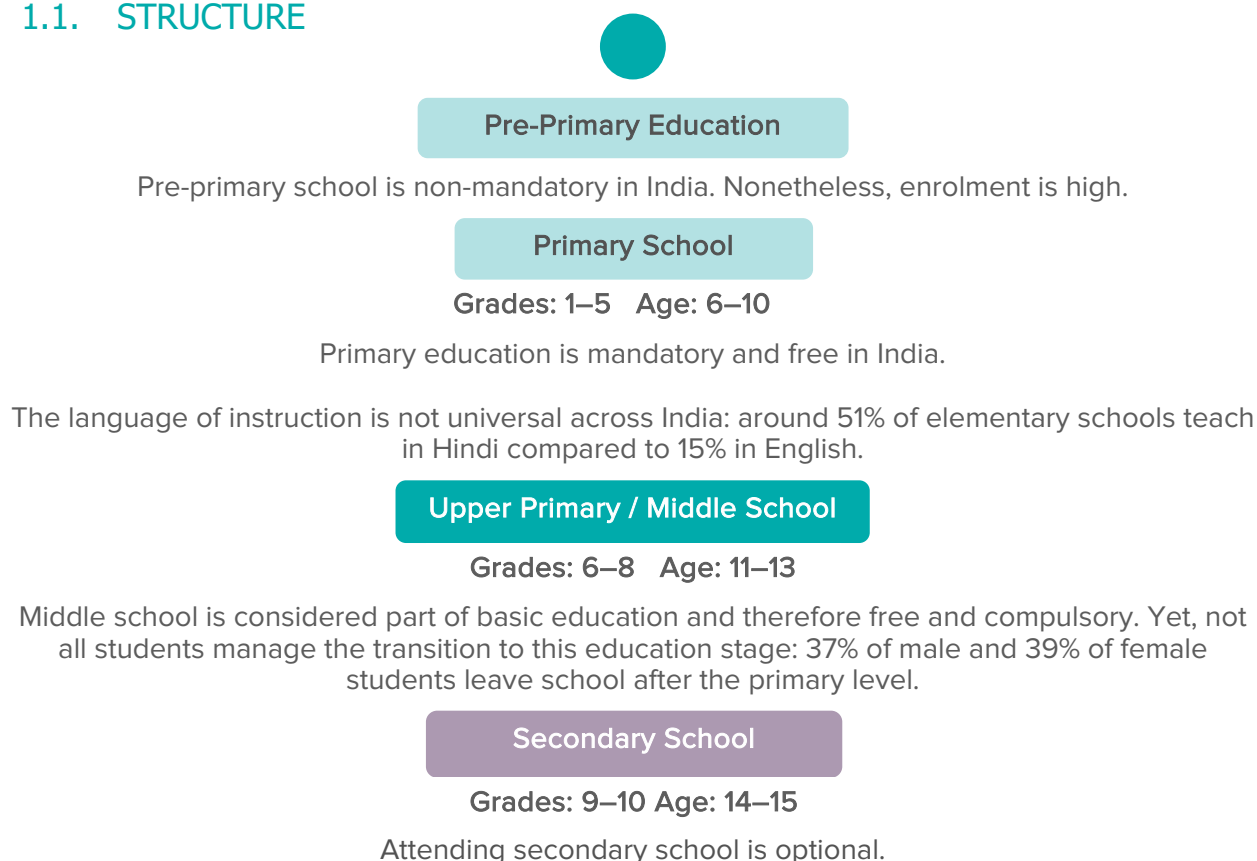
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1. EDUCATION SYSTEM: OVERVIEW

India has the **largest youth population** in the world with 600 million people under 25 and 28% of its total population being younger than 14. The Indian government recognizes education as the “... **key catalyst for promoting socio-economic mobility in building an equitable and just society.**”

Over the past years, India has made significant progress in enrolment, for instance, through the introduction of **compulsory and free** schooling for children from 6 to 14. However, challenges remain with about **6.1 million children** out of school and around 50% of primary school students not achieving grade-appropriate learning levels.

1.1. STRUCTURE



Secondary School Certificate

**Senior Secondary School –
general academic**

Grades: 11–12 | Age: 16–17

Senior Secondary Education is non-compulsory.

Students can choose between specializing in commerce, humanities, or science.

**Senior Secondary School –
vocational / technical**

In most cases 3 years

The vocational track allows students to gain a diploma that qualifies them to transfer to the second year of related bachelor programmes.

Higher Secondary School Certificate

Higher Education

In recent years, the private higher education sector has been booming because of scarce places in public institutions. Admissions criteria vary strongly between institutions ranging from open access policies at some universities, to demanding multiple-stage selection processes at others.

Vocational Training

Alternatively, students can pursue vocational training at a polytechnic to attain a **technical diploma**. Admissions to polytechnics are based on AISSE results and thus do not require completion of senior secondary school.

1.1. EXAMINATIONS

Assessment at the primary level includes regular class tests, decentralized assessments, and an annual exam at the end of the academic year.

Public board examinations are held after year 10 (i.e., upon completion of Secondary school) and after year 12 (i.e., upon completion of Senior Secondary School).

Examinations vary by board affiliation: every federal state has at least one education board that provides a distinct curriculum and exams respectively. Further, three nationwide boards exist that offer the benefit of easy transfers between schools across India. Among the national boards, the **Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE)** which has a network of over 25, 000 affiliated schools and runs the All India examinations is the most established.

Recent focus has been put on promoting continuous learning and reducing the importance of assessment. In this spirit, the federal CBSE introduced a school-based continuous and comprehensive evaluation system making external examinations optional for students. However, the reform was reversed in 2016.

1.2. CURRICULUM

The **National Curriculum framework** aims to harmonize education across India by setting out the structure of the education system and providing recommendations for **syllabus and textbooks**. However, the last responsibility lies with the respective educational board. This implies a significant degree of variation between schools.

The National Curriculum Framework will undergo substantial review in line with **the 2020 National Education Policy**. The education system will be restructured towards a 5+3+3+4 model which aims to serve developmental needs. The new Framework will contain:

Foundational stage (5 years)

Format: 3 years of Pre-school + Grades 1-2 of Primary School.

Mode of learning: play and activity-based learning.

Learning content: alphabets, languages, numbers, counting, colors, shapes, logical thinking.

Development areas: physical and motor development, cognitive development, socio-emotional-ethical development, cultural/artistic development, communication and early language, literacy, and numeracy.

Preparatory stage (3 years)

Format: Grades 3-5 of Primary School.

Mode of learning: play and activity-based learning beginning to incorporate more formal classroom learning.

Learning content: foundations of reading, writing, speaking, physical education, art, languages, science, and mathematics.

Middle Stage (3 years)

Format: Grades 6-8 (Middle School).

Mode of learning: subject-based learning with specialized subject teachers; emphasis on experiential learning and links between subjects.

Learning content: more abstract concepts of sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities.

Secondary Stage (4 years)

Format: Grades 9-12 (Secondary School and Senior Secondary School).

Mode of learning: subject-based learning, encourage critical thinking and allow freedom in choosing education paths.

Learning content:

- Grade 9 and Grade 10: General track including languages, Sciences, Maths, ...
- Grade 11 and Grade 12: Students can choose between remaining on the general track which prepares learners for university or select the vocational track that allows students to specialize in one of several vocational areas (e.g., agriculture, business, home science, etc.) alongside general education subjects

2. EDUCATION SYSTEM. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK & PROVISION

2.1. GOVERNANCE

India is a decentralized country consisting of strong autonomous federal states with elected governments. Education is declared a concurrent policy area, i.e., it is the shared responsibility of the union and the federated states. Thus, the central government provides guidelines (national education policies) that are implemented and administered at the state level.

At a central level, education is managed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) headed by the Cabinet Minister of the Union Government. The ministry comprises **two departments**: the Department of School Education and Literacy trusted with elementary, secondary, and adult education, and the Department of Higher Education which concentrates on University and technical education, book promotion, scholarships, languages, and minority education. Further, several government institutions, some of which are listed below, function on a national level.

Centre Level

Institution: Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) – subdivided in the Department of School Education and Literacy the Department of Higher Education.

Responsibility:

- planning and overall strategic direction and supervising the implementation of education programs.
- financial contributions through grants given to states or institutions.
- assist educational development of states and level the playing field between them.

Institution: National Council for Teacher Education.

Responsibility: setting standards for teacher training.

Institution: National Council of Educational Research and Training.

Responsibility: Federal examinations board under supervision of MHRD with the aim to universalize education throughout India.

Institution: All India Council for Technical Education.

Responsibility: Statutory body under MHRD that regulates TVET through provision of quality standards and accreditation authority.

State Level

Institution: Ministries of Education in state government headed by Minister of Education.

Responsibility:

- establish and maintain educational institutions.
- recognize schools.
- provide school grants.
- supervise schools through local level institutions.
- teacher recruitment and allocation.
- provision of a syllabus and guidelines for books.
- establish school boards.

Local Level (District, Block and Village)

Institution: District Education Office (district level).

Responsibility: management of secondary education at the local level.

Institution: School Education Department (block level i.e., sub-district level).

Responsibility: management of elementary primary education at the local level.

2.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE

School inspections typically lie in the responsibility of District Education Offices. Most states prescribe an annual surprise visit alongside as many regular visits as possible with a focus on school infrastructure and sanity.

The National Council for Teacher Education is partially responsible for **pre-service teacher education**. Training takes place at colleges of teacher education and training institutes.

Qualified teachers at the primary and early childhood level typically have completed a diploma course while teaching in secondary education and above requires a Bachelor's or Master of Education including a supervised teaching internship. However, the exact requirements depend on the respective education board and teacher shortages result in the hiring of underqualified teachers.

In 2011, the Teacher Eligibility test was introduced as a measure to standardize teacher qualifications and identify underqualified teachers who are already practising. The test must be passed by teachers to qualify for grade 1-8 teaching. However, pass rates have been concerningly low.

The National Education Policy suggests an annual total of 50 hours of professional development through in-service teacher training which is offered at a state and local level. However, surveys indicate that this goal is far from current practices.

2.3. PRIVATE SECTOR

There are three different types of schools: Government-owned schools are run by the central or state government and are fully publicly financed. Private-aided schools are owned by private individuals or organizations but run on regular public grants. These schools charge low fees if any and are largely similar to government-owned schools in terms of syllabus, books, examinations, recruiting policies, etc. Fee-charging private schools are also privately owned; however, they rely on tuition fees as a main source of finance. The amount of fees vary significantly between schools. Frustration with public schools leads to inflating the popularity of low-cost private schools, especially in urban areas.

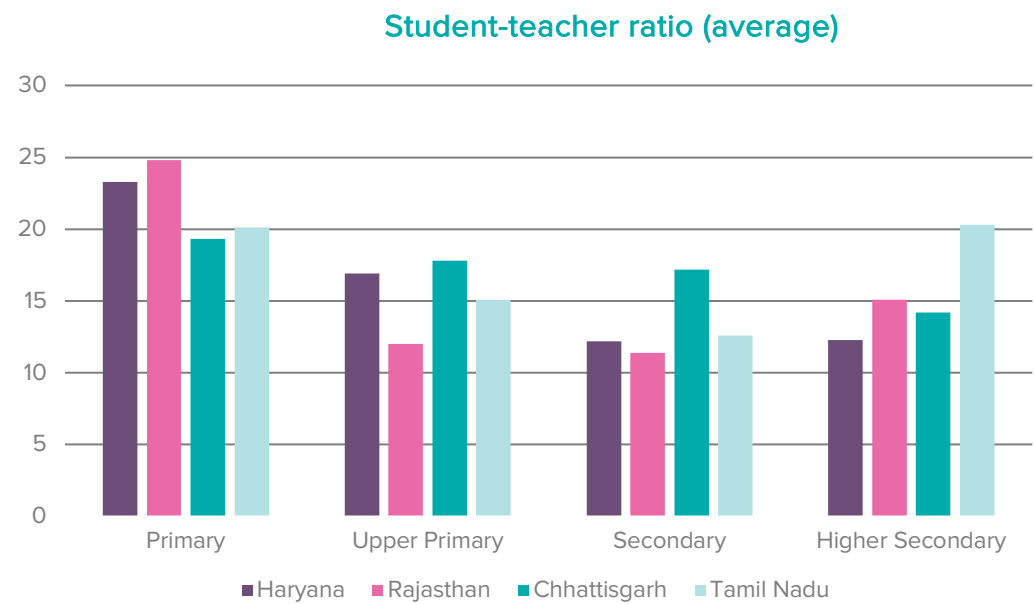
3. EDUCATION SYSTEM: PERFORMANCE AND CHALLENGES

3.1. EFFICIENCY

According to government data, drop-out rates at primary and middle school levels lie below 2% while secondary schools have a 17% rate. The highest proportion of drop-outs occurs at a secondary level (19.8% of total drop-outs) followed by middle school.

3.2. TEACHING AND RESOURCES

Teaching



Resources & Infrastructure

Access to electricity



Access to electricity is lowest in Chhattisgarh where only 85.33% of schools have electricity and the highest in Tamil Nadu with 100%.

Access to drinking water



Access to drinking water is lowest in Rajasthan with 97.39% of schools having access to clean water and the highest in Tamil Nadu with 100%.

3.3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

National Comparison: National Achievement Survey - 2017

Reading



Haranya, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh performed significantly below national average in reading while Tamil Nadu scored 11% above the national benchmark.

Mathematics



Haranya, Rajasthan, and performed 7% and 8.5% below national average respectively. Chhattisgarh performed worst out of all Indian states. Tamil Nadu outperformed the national average by 12%.

Annual Status of Education Report (Rural) - 2018



49.7% of Grade 5 and 27% of Grade 8 students in public schools cannot read Grade 2 level texts.



72.2% of Grade 5 students and 56% of Grade 8 students are unable to solve 3-digit by 1-digit division problems.

PISA – 2009/2010

Two Indian States – Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu - participated in the 2009+ PISA assessment. Poor student performance resulted in the ranking of India as 72nd out of 74 countries including nations like Brazil, Indonesia and Argentina. India opted out of PISA assessment after the 2009 cycle but decided to re-join for the 2021 test.

3.4. EQUITY

Gender



8.77



9.96

Mean years of schooling

In line with most Indian states, there is no significant performance difference between genders in maths/language skills on the National Achievement Survey in the target states.

Rural vs Urban



8.56



10.81

Mean years of schooling

Significant performance differences between rural and urban students were only found in Reading scores in Haryana where rural students perform on average 7% worse than urban students. Out of the states considered, Chhattisgarh has the lowest mean years of schooling with 8.75 years and Tamil Nadu the highest with 11.9 years.

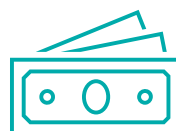
Socio-economic

Poorest



5.18

Richest



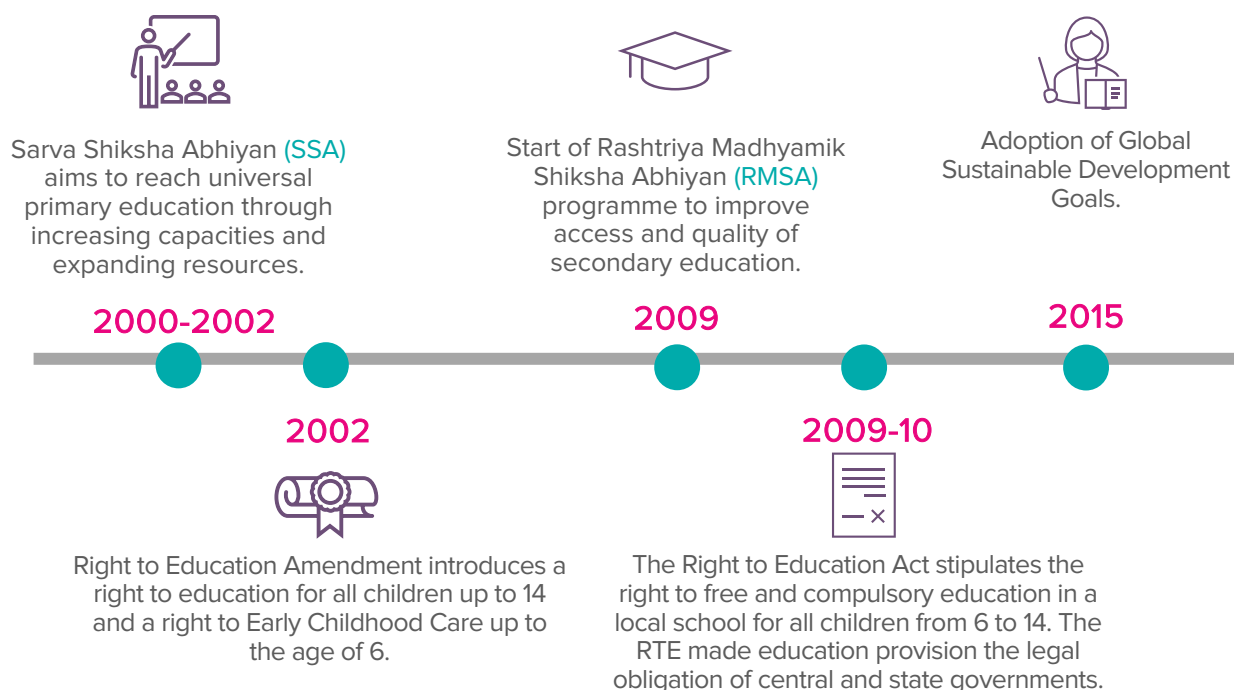
10.75

Mean years of schooling

According to a recent [panel-data study](#), household wealth also impacts student performance. The effect is strong and significant for male performance in language and math tests and for female performance in language tests.

4. EDUCATION SYSTEM: TRENDS AND DIRECTION

4.1. PAST TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS



4.2. POLICY DIRECTION

The [2020 National Education Policy](#) has set out the direction for future education policymaking that will also feed into the revised National Curriculum framework and Right to Education Act. The most important [policy goals](#) include:

- Universal education from preschool to secondary school reaching a 100% GER in school education by 2030.
- Replace the 10+2 curriculum model with a 5+3+3+4 structure to conform to development stages.
- Redesign year 10 and 12 board examinations to test core competencies rather than memorization of facts.
- Undertake a holistic assessment of learner development rather than one-time summative examinations through 360-degree progress cards.
- Achieve foundational literacy and numeracy for all school children.
- Promote early vocational experience through Class 6 with Internships.
- Usage of regional languages for instruction up to at least Grade 5 to foster linguistic development and literacy among school children.
- Revision of the current National Curriculum Framework and introduction of a new comprehensive Framework covering education on all levels from Early Childhood Education to Teacher and Adult Education.
- Alter teaching standards by introducing a 4-year integrated Bachelor of Education as the new minimum qualification for teaching.

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