

Investing in Minds: An Inter-State Analysis of India's Educational Budget Landscape

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Abstract

Investment in education is essential since it promptly impacts the quality, accessibility, and equality of learning opportunities, consequently propelling social and economic advancement.

The evaluation revealed that the Post- RTE¹ execution prompted a systematic reallocation of planned educational expenditures across states, highlighting a data-driven policy transformation but during the Pre- RTE period many states has only focus to spend more on elementary education rather than university and higher education. At the elementary level, most states experienced a resource compression, indicating a strategic pivot driven by saturation or optimization algorithms. In contrast, secondary or higher secondary education saw budget amplification, aligning with scalability models targeting learning continuity. Meanwhile, university/higher education allocations showed heterogeneous distribution, reflecting decentralized planning frameworks and state-specific fiscal algorithms. This temporal fiscal shift signifies an adaptive governance model utilizing predictive analytics to re-channel resources, enhancing educational throughput at higher levels, and embodying a digitally informed investment strategy for long-term human capital development.

Keywords: Investment, Education, RTE, Elementary, Secondary, University and Higher

Motivation of the Study

"Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family." (Kofi Annan)

Education is essential in the contemporary rapid changing world because it ensure quality learning, instilling knowledge, values, and moral habits, improving living conditions, and raising social and economic status. The great Nelson Mandela emphasized a point about the importance of education is that "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Education is a foundation for society, bringing economic wealth, social prosperity, and political stability. In India, the structure of education is diversified in terms of various state but in collectively it has been divided into pre-primary (before 6 years of age), primary (6-10 years of age), upper primary (10-13 years of age), secondary (14-15 years of age), and senior secondary levels (15-17 years of age).

Elementary education is the initial stage of child's formal learning in school which stated from class I to the end of class VIII or from the age between 6 to 14 years learning period of a student is known as

¹ Right to Education

elementary learning in India. This is the most crucial learning period for a child because from this stage the shape of the child's career begins and in which direction it moves that can be generate. It is crucial for cognitive and social development, teaching critical thinking, communication, and collaboration among the students and society. It also instils values, discipline, and responsibility which uplift the moral and structural development of the student. Therefore, the access to quality elementary education plays a vital place in the society to build an efficient knowledgeable upcoming future generation.

Theoretical Framework

Public spending on education is critical for promoting human capital development since it improves individuals' skills and knowledge, resulting in a more productive workforce. It plays an important role in achieving social fairness by ensuring that everyone has access to high-quality education, which helps to break the cycle of poverty and fosters social mobility. Furthermore, a well-educated population promotes economic growth, as greater education levels are associated with better wages and consumption. Furthermore, investing in education promotes technical innovation and global competitiveness, preparing countries to prosper in an ever-changing world. Public expenditure on education is an important investment in the futures of individuals and society, encouraging sustainability and long-term well-being. Education is delivered by both public and private organisations; nonetheless, public funding in education is essential for several reasons (UNESCO). It is seen as a worldwide public good, providing both direct and indirect advantages for people, families, economies, society, and the planet. The benefits of lifelong learning span generations, enhancing the present generation while preserving opportunities for future ones. Education is interconnected with other human rights and freedoms; hence, nations are obligated to uphold the right to education. Providing free education reduces educational expenses and removes obstacles, facilitating a prosperous future for both kids and adults. To provide these advantages, governments must dedicate themselves to steady and predictable financing, collecting public resources, and efficiently administering educational spending. Regrettably, several nations have substantial finance deficits, which may adversely affect a whole generation of children, adolescents, and adults.

Review of Literature

India allocates approximately 4% of its GDP to education, with only 1% funded by the central government and 3% by the rest of all states, while the Centre contributes less than 10% of its total budget to education, compared to over 20% from the states, resulting in the Centre covering only 20 to 25% of overall education spending. The data clearly shows that the Central Government spends less than the states, indicating a weaker commitment to public education.

(Anuradha & Tanuka, 2008, Motkuri & Revathi, 2020, Ansari & Khan, 2018). A comparative study by (Balodi & Srivastava, 2021) shows that there is a moderate negative correlation between state GDP and education spending, suggesting that wealthier states invest less in education, whereas poorer states allocate a higher percentage of their GDP to education. India suffers with resource mobilisation, which results in insufficient public expenditure on scientific services and education, so impeding efforts to lower poverty and unemployment; meanwhile, capital expenditure on education has grown less than income, perhaps leading researchers to migrate overseas (Tiwari, 2022). A comprehensive study from (Jana & Maiti, 2019) on higher education expenditure revealed that public spending on higher education in India is relatively low about of 1% of GDP, highlighting considerable state-wise disparities in expenditure across various

parameters such as per capita, per student, plan versus non-plan, and revenue versus capital expenditure. The study indicates a positive correlation between efficient public expenditure on education and economic growth in developing countries like India (Kumar, 2020). The Right to Education Act has increased education spending in the country, while lower enrolment and dropout rates highlight concerns about educational quality, with disparities in state performance attributed to differences in fund utilization and delays (Pahwa & Mahendravada, 2020). The current budgetary allocation for education, ideally 6% of GDP, is only 4%, despite recommendations. This insufficient financial support hinders human resource development, limits access, and makes education a private good (Patel, 2019). Through the application of a stochastic frontier model on 130 countries suggested that there is a positive and significant relationship between the quantity and quality of educational expenditure in per school-age and students learning (Miningou, 2019). The interlink between educational expenditure and economic growth is vary in short and long run. The short- run spending in education becomes an investment in long run to boost the economy (Kushwaha & Tiwari, 2019).

Objectives of the Study

The concern study is based on the following significant objectives to know the changing pattern of elementary education expenditure in India.

1. To find out the trend pattern of government spending on education in India
2. To analyse the proportionate share of government spending on education to GDP in PRE- and POST- RTE period of India
3. To evaluate the proportionate growth in educational expenditure in India
4. To analyse the inter-state comparison on educational expenditure in India

Research Questions

The present work is particularly relied upon the following research questions.

1. What is the evolving pattern of public expenditure on education in India?
2. What is the share of public expenditure on education to GDP in PRE- RTE and POST- RTE period in India?
3. What is the trend annual growth of educational expenditure in India?

Data Sources and Methodology Adopted

The present study is primarily based on secondary source of information from the time series from 1989-90 to 2019-20 in the country in a state level analysis. The data sources have been collected from authentic government publications MHRD Analysis of Budgeted expenditure (Ministry of Education). The study has been employed with annual and compounded growth rate to know about the changing pattern of educational expenditure in the country. The study also used statistical tools like tabulation, average, and histogram to know the growth changes.

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{X}) = \frac{X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_n}{N}$$

Here, $X_i (X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + \dots + X_n)$ = Values undertaken in data set

N= Number of values or observation in the data set

$$\text{AGR} = \frac{Y_t - Y_{t-1}}{Y_{t-1}} \times 100$$

Here, AGR = Annual Growth Rate

$$CAGR = \left[\left(\frac{Y_t}{Y_i} \right)^{\frac{1}{n}} - 1 \right]$$

Here, Y_t = Current or End Year value

Y_i = Initial or Starting Year Value

n = Number of years calculated (Note “n” should be less than a year to the calculated total in the value)

Table 1.1: Government Budgeted Expenditure on Education and Training in India. (In Crores.)

Government Budgeted Expenditure on Education and Training							
States/ UTs	1989-90	1994-95	1999-2000	2004-05	2009-10	2014-15*	2019-20*
Andhra Pradesh	1233.23	2330.69	3495.75	4365.65	11115.12	18543.59	26544.06
Arunachal Pradesh	37.62	72.62	121.98	221.97	586.04	1195.03	1699.47
Assam	433.01	932.04	2272.43*	2624.27	5017.14	16019.12	19634.14
Bihar	1200.05	1692.29	4260.63	2794.10	7692.64	24993.94	26451.24
Chhattisgarh	NA	NA	NA	2111.59	4173.18	9923.22	15671.17
Goa	66.98	110.08	251.72	355.01	870.84	1401.29	2964.83
Gujarat	940.85	1746.14	3653.45	4551.98	9415.83	23183.91	35194.26
Haryana	353.83	625.34	1408.24	1894.48	6256.41	10997.29	16969.85
Himachal Pradesh	189.67	321.71	1739.61	1105.17	2253.07	5316.35	7721.64
Jammu & Kashmir	171.39	363.67	1157.11	777.45	2444.09	4832.99	5987.57
Jharkhand	NA	NA	NA	1399.17	3243.44	6630.47	11609.75
Karnataka	783.04	1571.22	3117.74	4764.15	9617.26	24457.52	33959.71
Kerala	710.99	1472.96	2841.59	3956.49	6753.17	15236.97	25609.22
Madhya Pradesh	956.56	1946.88	6199.66	3503.48	6834.24	15810.13	30458.81
Maharashtra	1840.98	3519.09	8008.76	11541.69	26117.68	46399.68	82294.26
Manipur	69.34	141.70	354.88	332.19	484.17	1399.76	2146.20
Meghalaya	58.25	94.92	206.32	289.58	528.14	1224.16	2179.71
Mizoram	38.55	84.08	159.25	206.99	643.76	961.77	1563.26
Nagaland	50.23	112.76	162.75	234.59	492.20	1336.79	1428.84
Odisha	477.88	957.89	2038.82	2189.34	5921.51	12504.52	18784.93
Punjab	557.97	832.74	1870.44	2338.06	3982.22	9556.82	13914.73
Rajasthan	738.36	1579.89	3217.58	4123.76	9674.59	22225.70	35280.04
Sikkim	24.84	42.98	114.23	168.62	461.25	744.58	1258.92
Tamil Nadu	1190.90	2243.65	4767.39	5506.89	11959.86	26853.33	49101.65
Telangana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	13223.03	17823.48

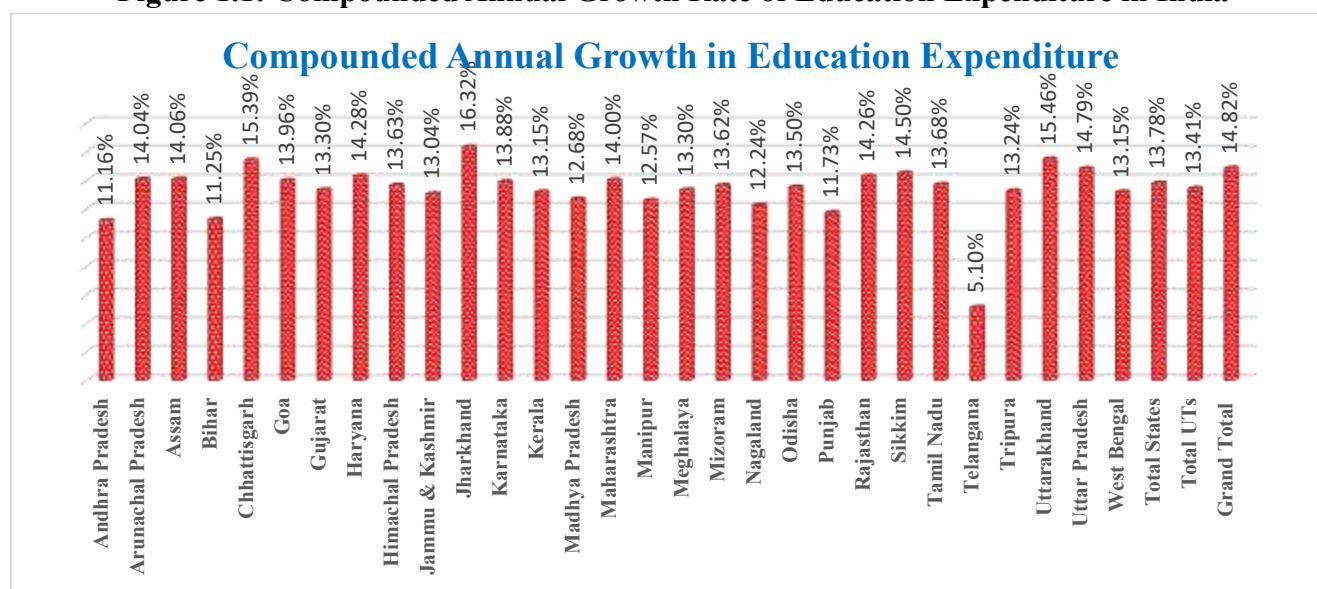
Tripura	98.41	168.44	275.53	490.29	920.37	1493.25	3623.84
Uttarakhand	NA	NA	NA	1112.66	3236.85	5456.10	8325.01
Uttar Pradesh	2017.72	3302.88	5939.01	8313.44	18484.75	31827.33	110256.92
West Bengal	1072.29	1863.33	5202.77	5184.63	12411.19	22288.20	38621.19
Total States	15312.91	28129.99	62369.52	76457.71	171591.00	376036.84	647078.71
Total UTs	371.11	649.48	153.97	2210.47	5641.79	10761.34	14284.12
Grand Total	15684.02	32606.21	74816.10	96694.15	241256.02	500128.34	863117.55

Source: Compiled from Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure, MHRD

*- Revised Estimates

The above explained budgeted spending on education and training by the Indian government across all states and union territories has risen sharply from 1989–90 to 2019–20. Spending on the education sector has increased from over ₹15684 crores in 1989–90 to almost ₹8.63 lakh crores in 2019–20, indicating that it is being given more and more emphasis. Several states' budgets have grown significantly in recent years. In 2019–20, the largest increase was in Uttar Pradesh, which reached ₹1.1 lakh crores, followed by Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. Spending has gone up because more people are becoming educated and more people are realizing that education is the key to economic and social progress. The overall national growth was aided by a minor but noticeable increase in expenditure for Union Territories. Nationally, the government is investing more in schools and training programs, as shown by the rising trend in education expenditure.

Figure 1.1: Compounded Annual Growth Rate of Education Expenditure in India



Source: Author's Calculation

The above figure finds out that the compounded annual growth in education expenditure is highest in Jharkhand that is 16.32 percent whereas lowest in Telangana of 5.10 percent. States whose growth is more than 15 percent are Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand. The national average expressed that at an compounded average of 14.82 percent the educational expenditure has growth in last thirty years.

Table 1.2: Percentage share of budgeted expenditure on different sub- heads of education in India with respect to their state budgeted education expenditure in PRE- RTE period (1989-90 to 2008-09).

Budgeted Expenditure on Education in PRE- RTE period (1989-90 to 2008-09)				
STATES/ UTs	Primary/ Elementary Education	Secondary Education	University & Higher Education	Others
Andhra Pradesh	45.10	30.00	20.28	4.63
Arunachal Pradesh	58.54	25.51	6.34	9.61
Assam	55.73	29.91	10.52	3.84
Bihar	63.29	19.81	12.92	3.98
Chhattisgarh	69.50	18.17	9.86	2.47
Goa	24.29	51.18	16.48	8.05
Gujarat	52.14	32.31	10.10	5.45
Haryana	45.41	35.59	13.56	5.44
Himachal Pradesh	55.34	34.37	7.21	8.08
Jammu & Kashmir	47.40	34.46	11.67	6.47
Jharkhand	68.08	13.43	13.55	4.94
Karnataka	53.03	29.50	13.33	4.14
Kerala	48.08	32.15	14.24	5.53
Madhya Pradesh	61.92	20.48	12.87	4.73
Maharashtra	40.71	43.37	9.64	6.28
Manipur	46.66	28.77	20.04	3.53
Meghalaya	57.24	25.69	10.50	6.57
Mizoram	54.61	24.22	11.24	9.53
Nagaland	64.11	21.25	7.96	6.68
Odisha	58.35	23.74	14.68	3.23
Punjab	30.01	54.90	12.32	2.77
Rajasthan	55.59	33.32	7.76	3.35
Sikkim	57.44	36.34	2.59	3.63
Tamil Nadu	45.78	36.34	12.25	5.63
Telangana	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tripura	45.96	39.71	5.61	8.72
Uttarakhand	44.26	43.67	7.63	4.44
Uttar Pradesh	55.18	32.56	8.64	3.62
West Bengal	34.14	46.35	12.30	7.21
Total States	49.58	30.93	10.90	5.26
Total UTs	26.11	55.49	7.55	10.85
All India	48.80	31.75	10.79	8.66

Source: Author's Calculation from ABE, MHRD

The table outlines the budgeted expenditure on education in Indian states and Union Territories (UTs) from 1989-90 to 2008-09, with allocations for Primary/Elementary, Secondary, University & Higher Education, and Others. Key trends show a strong focus on Primary/Elementary Education in states like Chhattisgarh (69.50%) and Bihar (63.29%), reflecting a priority on foundational education. Goa and Punjab allocate significant funds to Secondary Education (51.18% and 54.90%, respectively), while Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh prioritize Primary Education (55.18% and 61.92%). States like Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh allocate higher portions to University & Higher Education, with Goa spending notably more (16.48%). UTs focus heavily on Secondary Education (55.49%), while States allocate more to Primary/Elementary Education (49.58%).

Table 1.3: Percentage share of budgeted expenditure on different sub- heads of education in India with respect to their state budgeted education expenditure in POST- RTE period (2009-10 to 2019-20).

Budgeted Expenditure on Education in POST- RTE period (2009-10 to 2019-20)				
STATES/ UTs	Primary/ Elementary Education	Secondary Education	University & Higher Education	Others
Andhra Pradesh	43.66	38.27	13.02	5.05
Arunachal Pradesh	64.64	23.42	7.44	4.50
Assam	50.83	30.71	14.64	3.82
Bihar	52.71	20.35	21.87	5.08
Chhattisgarh	57.15	34.00	6.89	1.96
Goa	22.93	53.75	15.97	7.36
Gujarat	61.76	26.40	7.05	4.80
Haryana	54.97	28.62	12.90	3.51
Himachal Pradesh	55.66	35.06	7.43	1.85
Jammu & Kashmir	39.21	44.26	13.85	2.68
Jharkhand	66.50	13.48	14.18	5.85
Karnataka	52.71	29.36	12.59	5.34
Kerala	41.10	36.69	16.31	5.91
Madhya Pradesh	56.27	32.44	8.50	2.80
Maharashtra	44.87	39.33	11.23	4.58
Manipur	44.00	31.08	20.50	4.42
Meghalaya	57.56	24.34	12.13	5.97
Mizoram	49.29	24.27	12.90	13.55
Nagaland	43.28	44.46	10.46	1.80
Odisha	51.35	30.86	15.66	2.13
Punjab	31.22	59.05	7.53	2.21
Rajasthan	42.38	49.98	5.48	2.17
Sikkim	32.73	56.39	3.46	7.43
Tamil Nadu	41.06	42.17	9.09	7.69

Telangana	39.04	44.96	12.15	3.85
Tripura	37.18	48.33	5.32	9.18
Uttarakhand	47.74	42.90	5.71	3.65
Uttar Pradesh	67.92	23.63	6.84	1.62
West Bengal	34.01	49.55	12.28	4.17
Total States	49.36	35.71	10.92	4.01
Total UTs	27.15	59.77	5.77	7.32
All India	48.49	32.30	12.69	6.53

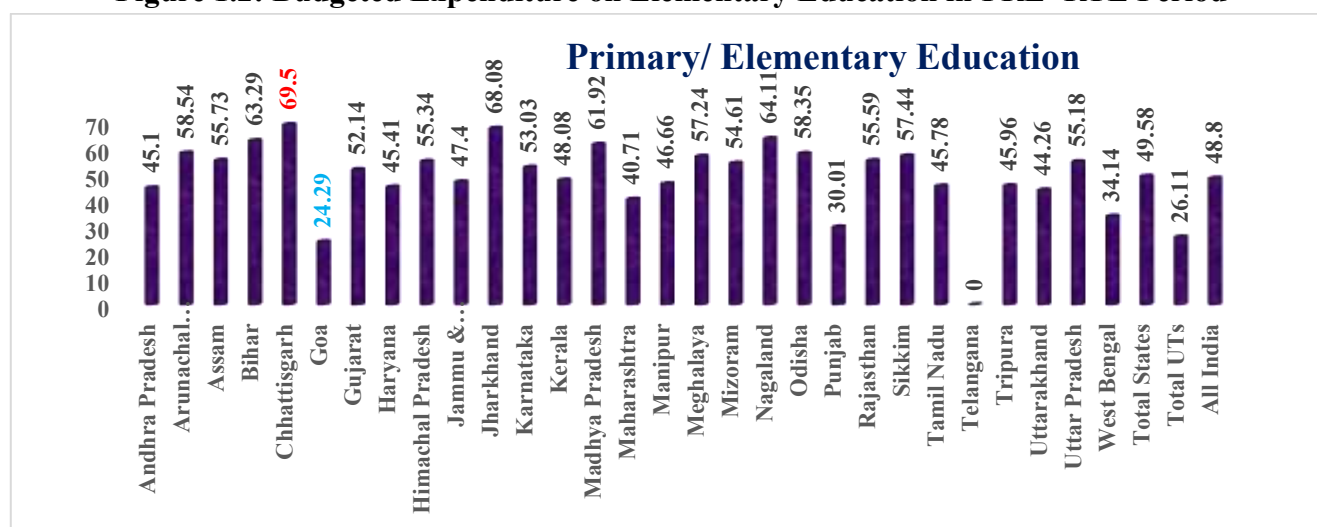
Source: Author's Calculation from ABE, MHRD

The table provides data on the budgeted expenditure on education across Indian states and Union Territories (UTs) from 2009-10 to 2019-20, broken down by Primary/Elementary Education, Secondary Education, University & Higher Education, and Others.

Key trends in the post-RTE (Right to Education) period show that Chhattisgarh (57.15%) and Uttar Pradesh (67.92%) allocate a significant portion of their budgets to Primary/Elementary Education, reflecting their continued focus on foundational education. Goa and Sikkim, on the other hand, allocate a larger share to Secondary Education (53.75% and 56.39%, respectively), indicating a shift toward enhancing higher education levels. Bihar has the highest expenditure on University & Higher Education at 21.87%, followed by Manipur (20.50%), highlighting the importance of higher education in these states. Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan allocate a smaller share of their budgets to University & Higher Education (8.50% and 5.48%, respectively), while Total States spend 10.92% in this category.

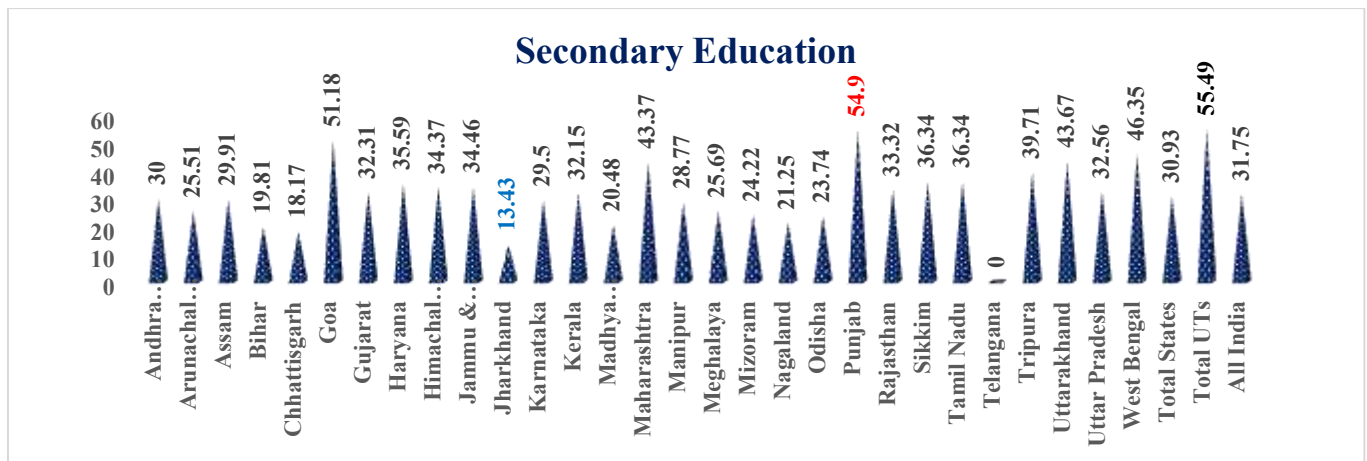
In comparison to the States, Uts allocate a notably larger portion to Secondary Education (59.77%) and less to Primary/Elementary Education (27.15%). The national averages for each category are 48.49% for Primary Education, 32.30% for Secondary Education, and 12.69% for University & Higher Education.

Figure 1.2: Budgeted Expenditure on Elementary Education in PRE- RTE Period



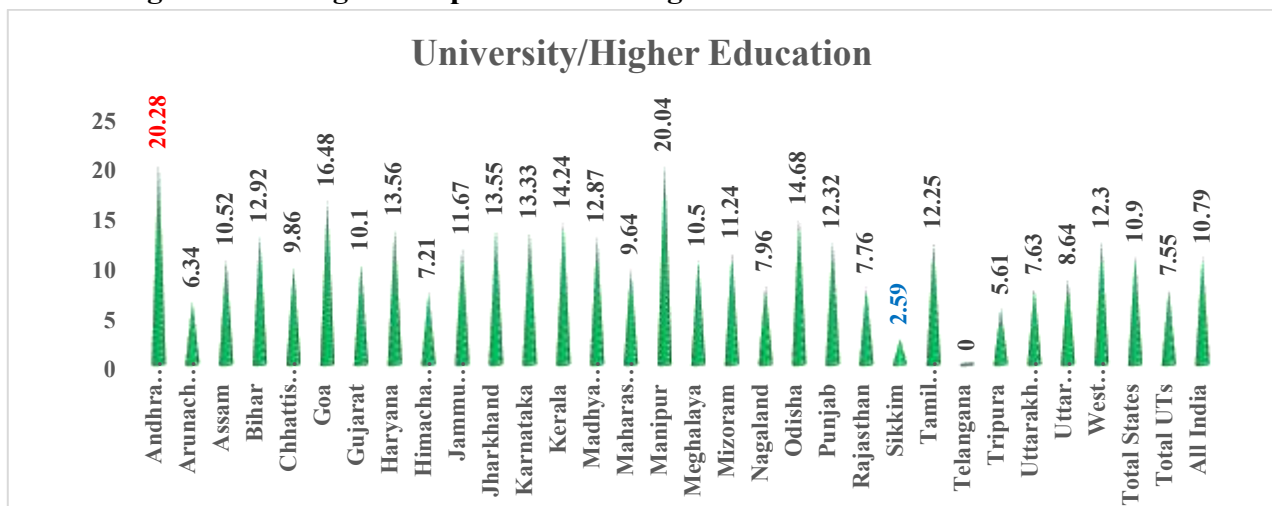
Source: Author's Calculation

Figure 1.3: Budgeted Expenditure on Secondary Education in PRE- RTE Period



Source: Author's Calculation

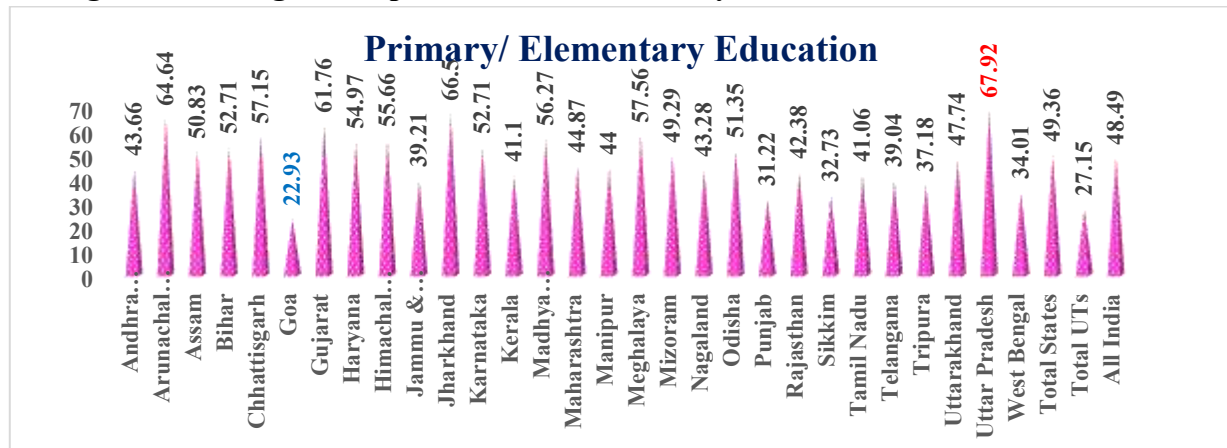
Figure 1.4: Budgeted Expenditure on Higher Education in PRE- RTE Period



Source: Author's Calculation

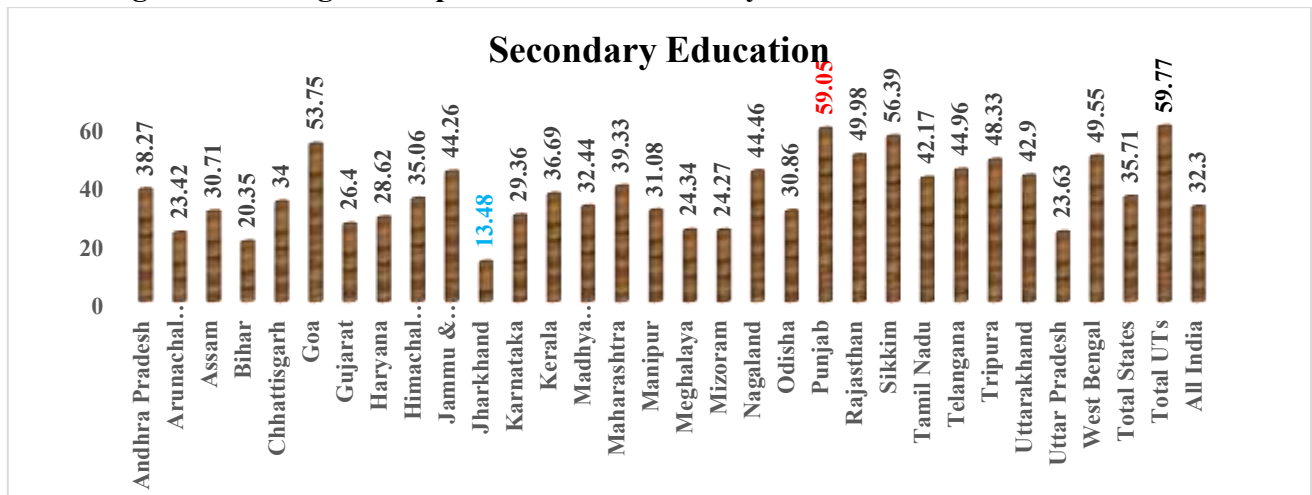
In the above figure during the pre- RTE period the budgeted expenditure on elementary, secondary and higher education has increases in all the states in current prices. The state Chhattisgarh has highest percentage expenditure on elementary education 69.5 percent whereas state Goa has lowest of 24.29 percent and the national average spending is 48.8 percent. In case of secondary education Punjab spent higher percentage of 54.9 whereas Jharkhand has lowest 13.43 percent and the national average is 31.75 percent. In case of university and higher education the highest budgeted expenditure led by state Andhra Pradesh of 20.28 percent whereas Sikkim has the lowest 2.59 percent and the national average spending is of 10.79 percent.

Figure 1.5: Budgeted Expenditure on Elementary Education in POST- RTE Period



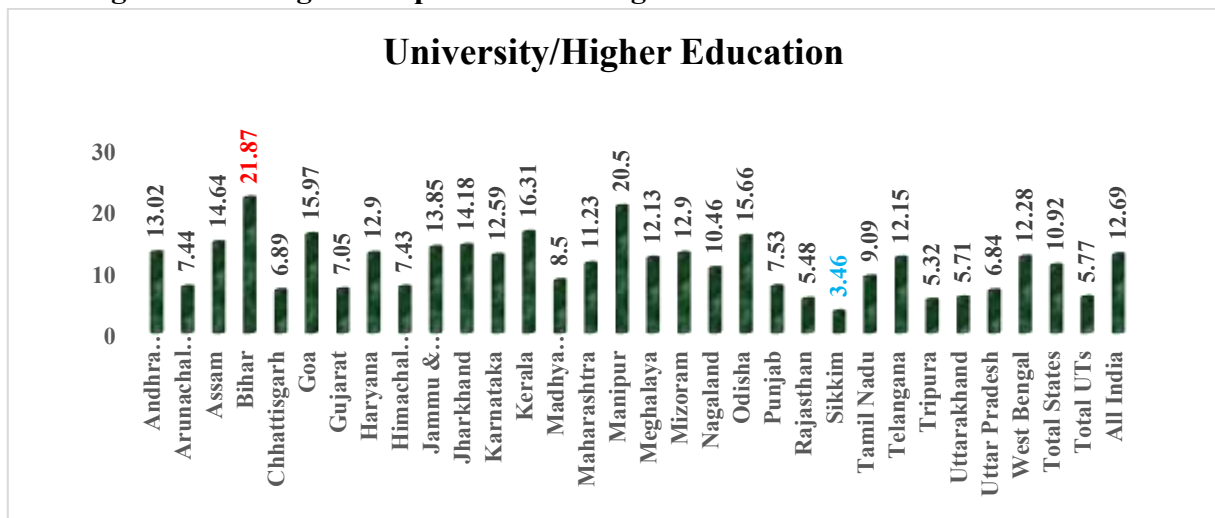
Source: Author's Calculation

Figure 1.6: Budgeted Expenditure on Secondary Education in POST- RTE Period



Source: Author's Calculation

Figure 1.5: Budgeted Expenditure on Higher Education in POST- RTE Period



Source: Author's Calculation

In the above figure during the post- RTE period the budgeted expenditure on elementary, secondary and higher education has increases in all the states in current prices. The state Uttar Pradesh has highest percentage expenditure on elementary education 67.92 percent whereas state Goa has lowest of 22.93 percent and the national average spending is 48.49 percent. In case of secondary education Punjab spent higher percentage of 59.05 whereas Jharkhand has lowest 13.48 percent and the national average is 32.30 percent. In case of university and higher education the highest budgeted expenditure led by state Bihar of 21.87 percent whereas Sikkim has the lowest 3.46 percent and the national average spending is of 12.69 percent.

Table 1.4: Budgeted Expenditure on education from PRE- RTE to POST- RTE

States	Primary	Secondary	University/ HE
Andhra Pradesh	Decline	Increase	Decline
Arunachal Pradesh	Increase	Decline	Increase
Assam	Decline	Increase	Increase
Bihar	Decline	Increase	Increase
Chhattisgarh	Decline	Increase	Decline
Goa	Decline	Increase	Decline
Gujarat	Increase	Decline	Decline
Haryana	Increase	Decline	Decline
Himachal Pradesh	Constant	Constant	Constant
Jammu & Kashmir	Decline	Increase	Increase
Jharkhand	Constant	Constant	Constant
Karnataka	Constant	Constant	Constant
Kerala	Decline	Increase	Increase
Madhya Pradesh	Decline	Increase	Decline
Maharashtra	Increase	Decline	Increase
Manipur	Decline	Increase	Constant
Meghalaya	Constant	Decline	Increase
Mizoram	Decline	Constant	Increase
Nagaland	Decline	Increase	Increase
Odisha	Decline	Increase	Increase
Punjab	Constant	Increase	Decline
Rajasthan	Decline	Increase	Decline
Sikkim	Decline	Increase	Increase
Tamil Nadu	Decline	Increase	Decline
Telangana	Constant	Constant	Constant
Tripura	Decline	Increase	Constant
Uttarakhand	Increase	Decline	Decline
Uttar Pradesh	Increase	Decline	Decline
West Bengal	Constant	Increase	Decline
All India	Decline	Increase	Increase

Source: Author's Calculation

The above table highlights the computation of changes in education expenditure from PRE- RTE period to POST-RTE period in the country. It is found that there is a mixed nature among different states which clearly mentioned below.

Table 1.6: Change in Education Expenditure from PRE- RTE to POST- RTE (States)

Shift in Budgeted Expenditure on Education from PRE- RTE to POST-RTE								
PRIMARY/ ELEMENTARY			SECONDARY/ SECONDARY			UNIVERSITY/ HIGHER EDUCATION		
Decrease	Increase	Constant	Decrease	Increase	Constant	Decrease	Increase	Constant
AP, Assam, Bihar, CGH, Goa, J&K, Kerala, MP, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, OD, Rajasthan, Sikkim, TN, Tripura	ARP, Gujarat, Haryana, MH, Punjab, Telangana, WB	HP, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Punjab, Telangana, WB	ARP, Gujarat, Haryana, MH, Meghalaya, UT, UP	AP, Assam, Bihar, CGH, Goa, J&K, Kerala, MP, Manipur, Nagaland, OD, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, TN	HP, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Mizoram, Telangana	AP, CGH, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, MP, Punjab, Rajasthan, TN, UT, UP, WB	ARP, Assam, Bihar, J&K, Kerala, MH, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, OD, Sikkim	HP, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Manipur, Telangana, Tripura

Source: Author's Calculation

NB: AP- Andhra Pradesh, ARP- Arunachal Pradesh, CGH- Chhattisgarh, J&K- Jammu and Kashmir, MP- Madhya Pradesh, OD- Odisha, TN- Tamil Nadu, MH- Maharashtra, UT- Uttarakhand, UP- Uttar Pradesh, WB- West Bengal

Concluding Thoughts

The importance of education in the modern era increasing day by day for the innovation and transformation of human society with efficiency. For this the upliftment of educational attainment in each and every states' plays a vital role for the respective government and the ministry of education. The study came to the numerous points that how respective states government expending in their educational institutions in the country as follows. A noticeable restructuring of educational budget allocations across Indian states was observed in the aftermath of the RTE Act's implementation, suggesting a transition to data-informed policymaking. Many states experienced decreased funding at the elementary level, which implies a

deliberate redirection of resources that was likely influenced by efficiency models or saturation points. In contrast, secondary and higher secondary education received increased investments, which is in line with expansion strategies that are designed to guarantee educational advancement. University and higher education funding patterns continued to be varied, influenced by decentralised planning and localised fiscal decisions. This change exemplifies a changing governance approach that employs data analytics to enhance long-term educational outcomes and optimise expenditure.

The annual growth in public expenditure on education has been increases in all states and union territories in the past 30 years. In the Pre- RTE period many states educational expenditure has increases more in elementary level but in case of higher education expenditure is negligible which plays a significant impact towards innovation and research. Which shows that a diversified spending pattern found in the country for different levels of education. In the Post- RTE period the level of elementary, secondary and higher educational expenditure has changes a lot in the country. There is a significant improvement found in university and higher education level from major states. But still many states have been found backward towards there spending in higher education.

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