



“

Public spending on education would be raised to 6% of the GDP.

”

-BJP Manifesto 2014

EDUCATION

PC: Reuters

17 APRIL 2024



All the analysis presented here is based on publicly available government and NGO data. We use data from the Analysis of Budgeted Expenditure of the Ministry of Education, the Unified Digital Information on School Education (UDISE+), the Annual State of Education Report (ASER), etc.



CLAIMS

SPENDING ON EDUCATION

PROMISES BY NARENDRA MODI

7%

of GDP
Each Year
for Education

"China allocates 20 percent of its GDP for education. India aimed to allot **7 percent of our GDP** for education but **we have been stuck at 4 percent.**"

CM Modi (2013)

"The Centre and the States will work together to increase the public investment in Education sector **to reach 6% of GDP at the earliest.** This is considered extremely critical for achieving the high-quality and equitable public education system that is truly needed for India's future economic, social, cultural, intellectual, and technological progress and growth."

National Education Policy (2020)

REALITY

WHAT DOES THE GOVERNMENT'S OWN DATA SAY?

Table 1*	CENTRE		STATES & UTs		TOTAL	
Year = 2021	Rs. (lakh crores)	% of GDP	Rs. (lakh crores)	% of GDP	Rs. (lakh crores)	% of GDP
Education	2.2	1.1%	6.8	3.4%	9.0	4.5%

As of 2021, the total government (Union & States) **annual expenditure on education** is still only at around **4.5% of GDP**, of which the **Centre's contribution is only around 1.1%**. In other words, education expenditure has not gone up much as a % of GDP from 2013.

Less than half of the **Centre's 1.1%** contribution **is directly** to education. The **budget of the Ministry of Education is only around 0.49% of GDP**. The larger half is money supposedly spent by all other departments on education. For instance, the Ministry for Atomic Energy supposedly contributes around 0.05% of GDP to education (we didn't find such a massive education spend in the Ministry of Atomic Energy budget).

Here is a comparison of the total Indian expenditure per capita against Brazil and South Africa (BRICS members) and NY.

Government	per year per person in Rs.
India (Centre MoE only)	693
India (all union ministries)	1,571
India (Centre + States)	6,571
Brazil	11,429
South Africa	31,667
New York City	3,69,270

“A STUDENT WHO IS IN CLASS 3 CAN READ AT LEAST 30-35 WORDS IN ONE MINUTE”

PM Modi while speaking about NEP 2020

“WE BELIEVE THAT FOUNDATIONAL LITERACY FORMS A STRONG BASE FOR OUR YOUTH.”

PM Modi to G20 Education Ministers (2023)

REALITY

WHAT IS THE REALITY OF INDIANS' LITERACY AND NUMERACY?

One of the impacts of the massive underfunding of education is very poor literacy and numeracy outcomes.

1 IN 4 students aged **14 - 18**
cannot read **2nd grade level** text in the mother tongue.

1 IN 3 students aged **14 - 18**
cannot solve a simple **subtraction** problem.

1 IN 2 students aged **14 - 18**
cannot **divide a 3 digit number** by a 1 digit number.

And these numbers have mostly become worse since 2017.

REALITY

The World Bank's Human Capital Index shows that an Indian student who has studied for 11 years has only learnt what they should have in 7 years (because of underinvestment in education and healthcare) and so ...

51%

of the average Indian's potential lifetime earnings are **lost**.

If you combine this with loss of income due to not having a paid job (a very small percentage of women is in paid jobs) ...

90%

of the average Indian woman's potential lifetime earnings are **lost**.

Due to underinvestment in Early Childhood Education and Healthcare ...

35%

of Indians will develop cognitive and physical impairments (stunting) that will **last a lifetime**.

**“IT IS CRITICAL TO
PREPARE THE
'DEMOGRAPHIC
DIVIDEND' OF THE
COUNTRY AS PER THE
DEMANDS OF THE
CHANGING JOB ROLE**

PM Modi in 2022

**“OUR GOVERNMENT
IS WORKING IN
MISSION MODE
KEEPING IN MIND THE
FUTURE OF THE
YOUTH”**

PM Modi online (October 2023)

REALITY

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE UNDERINVEST IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

1 IN 2

college students
is **unemployable**.

* [Wheebox India Skills Report 2024](#)

Engineering graduates fare poorly as well.

Year	% Unemployed Engineering Graduates
2012	18.8%
2018	37.3%

* National Sample Survey (NSS) data

The percentage of engineering students graduating with jobs is decreasing as you can see above.

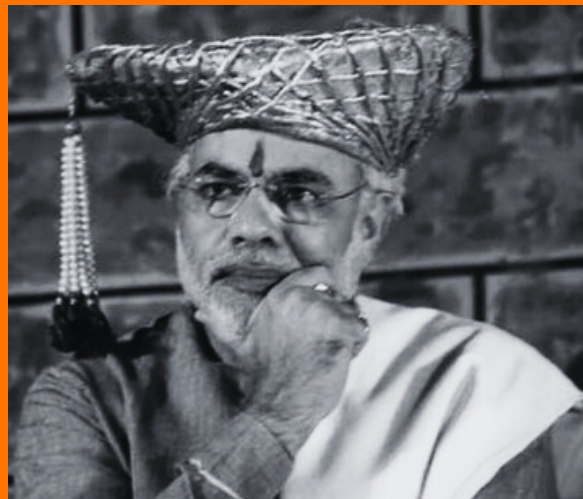
CLAIM EARLY-CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

“OVER 85% OF A CHILD’S CUMULATIVE BRAIN DEVELOPMENT OCCURS PRIOR TO THE AGE OF 6 ... UNIVERSAL PROVISIONING OF QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT, CARE, AND EDUCATION MUST THUS BE ACHIEVED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND NO LATER THAN 2030 ...”

NEP 2020

“OUR CHILDREN MUST NOT ONLY BE HEALTHY BUT ALSO RECEIVE PROPER EDUCATION”

PM Modi tweet June 2016



REALITY

THERE'S HARDLY ANY MONEY BEING SPENT THERE!

India (Centre and States together) currently spend 2500 Rs. per child per year (7 rupees per day) on ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education).

Comparison of ECCE expenditure for some groups of countries:

Country-ies	% of GDP spent on ECCE to protect against cognitive/physical stunting	
India	0.1%	
OECD countries	0.7%	(7 times India's)
Scandinavian	1.6%	(16 times India's)

16 times less

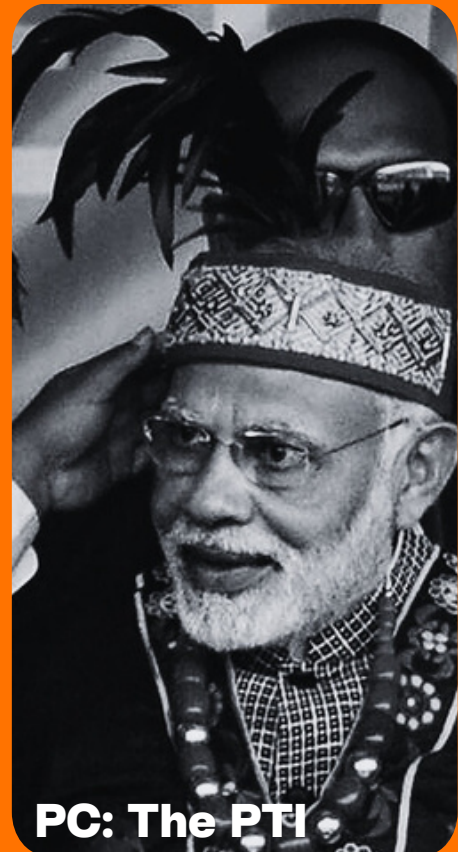
how much less the current Indian government values your **brain developing normally** versus governments of some other countries.

CLAIMS

“Today’s Cabinet decision on post-matric scholarship will ensure greater educational access to youngsters belonging to SC communities.”

PM Modi, tweet in Dec 2020

CASTE INCLUSION



PC: The PTI

“BJP government in MP will provide free education to girls from KG to PG and will open medical colleges in tribal districts”

PM Modi, during the election campaign in MP

“For us development means the development of the poorest of the poor, development of dalit, tribals, backwards and deprived.”

PM Modi, Mar 2024

REALITY

Post-Matric Scholarships - SC (PMS-SC)

50%

The amount released **in 2021** compared to the amount announced (3415.62 crores instead of 7000 crores).

25%

The amount released **in 2023** compared to the amount announced (1623.42 crores instead of 7000 crores).

1000

What each student should have received from the Centre in Rs. each month.

Comparison with Income Limit Cutoffs for “EWS”

PMS-SC

(disadvantaged)

Income Limit Cutoff

2.5 or 1.0

lakh Rs. per year

EWS

(privileged)

Income Limit Cutoff

8.0

lakh Rs. per year

*Parliament question on income cut-offs for SCs vs EWS

Other Scholarships for the Underprivileged

50%

reduction in the National Fellowship for students belonging to Scheduled Castes.

50%

reduction in the National Fellowship for students belonging to OBCs.

SHREYAS (scholarship) allocations have been **reduced** for both SCs and OBCs.

*1000 crores cut from minority scholarship funds

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FOR SC, ST & OBC STUDENTS

1 IN 4 government schools in MP

was closed down between 2018 and 2022 affecting tribal areas the most ...

whereas **privileged institutions such as “institutions of excellence”** and PM-SHRI schools received aid, **so a policy of lifting up the strong (or plain stupidity) seems to be at work.**

Source: UDISE Reports from 2018-19 and 2021-22

Privileged educational institutions seem to be kinder to privileged castes, as seen from dropout rates.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS DROPPING OUT

Type of Institute	OBC	SC	ST
Central Universities	4596	2424	2622
IITs	2066	1068	408
IIMs	163	188	91

This is more than half the total number of students who dropped out.

*Lok Sabha question on student drop-outs from central universities, IITs, IIMs.

REALITY

DO DALIT STUDENTS FEEL SUPPORTED?

CLASS 6,7,8

grades where social science textbooks have deleted Dalit authors or material about caste discrimination.

Around 32,000 students dropped out of higher education institutions between 2019 and 2023.

More than half of these were from SC, ST and OBC categories.

SC and ST students have been driven to commit suicide due to...

ostracism or humiliation

being subjected to financial or administrative pressures

15%

IIT students who admitted **intentionally** making casteist remarks.

Vegetarian-only spaces have been created in messes in several IITs.

50%

IIT students from SC/ST communities who felt that students intentionally passed casteist comments

CLAIMS

CASTE ATROCITIES

“I want to assure the nation that the law which has been made stringent by us will not allowed to be affected (by the Supreme Court order)”

PM Modi, referring to the Supreme Court’s attempt to supposedly add safeguards to - and arguably as a result, weakening - the Prevention of Atrocities Act



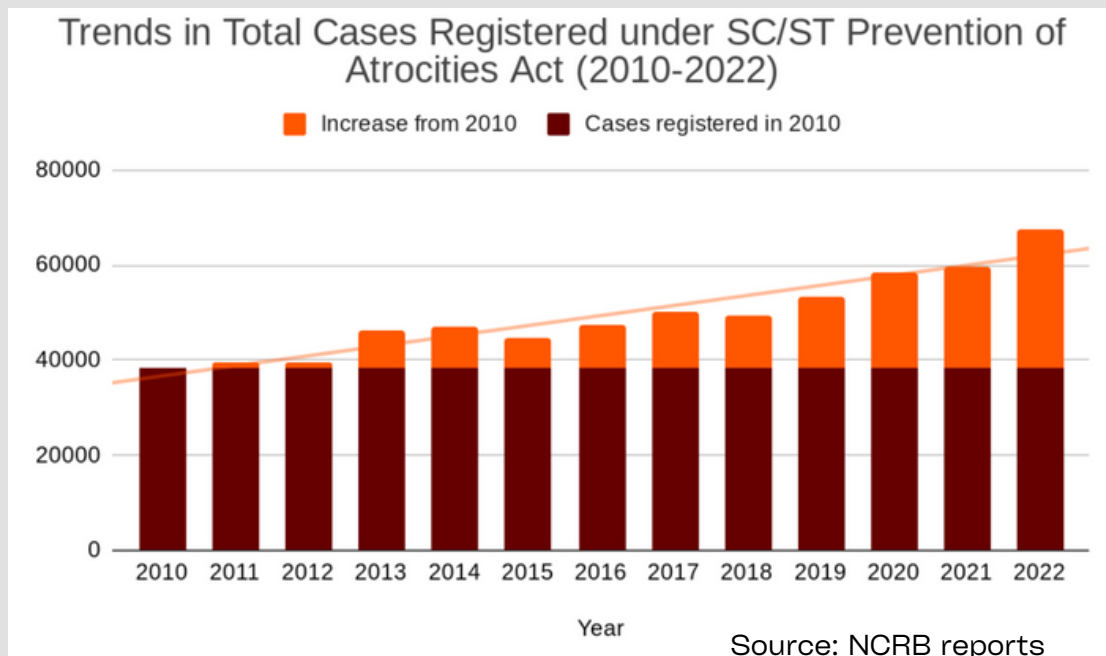
REALITY

DO DALIT STUDENTS FEEL SAFER?

50%

increase from 2014 to 2022 in

Caste Atrocities



Dalit students have been beaten to death for ...

a wrong answer

drinking water from the 'wrong' pot

Dalit students have been attacked and injured for ...

studying well

drinking water from the 'wrong' bottle

touching a motorcycle

Requests to the PM to speak out against these atrocities have been met with a deafening silence.

- Rahul Gandhi demands that the PM speak out against caste atrocities

CLAIMS

REGIONAL LANGUAGES

“BJP sees a reflection of Indian culture in every regional language and considers them worth worshipping. We have given importance to every regional language in NEP.”



PC: The Statesman

PM Modi, May 2022 in a video-conference with BJP office bearers.

REALITY

IS ANYTHING BEING DONE FOR REGIONAL LANGUAGES?

200

crore rupees

Centre's spend per year **for Sanskrit**

1

crore rupees

Centre's spend per year **for Kannada**

1

crore rupees

Centre's spend per year **for Telugu**

10 crores per year for all regional languages combined.

The three language formula, from the 1960s was:

- **Hindi**-speaking states: English, Hindi & a **modern** Indian language.
- **Non-Hindi** states: English, Hindi & one Indian language.

In return for Hindi being taught in South Indian states, South Indian languages could have been taught in North-Indian states. However, no efforts have been made to do so.

Instead, BJP-ruled states have **made Sanskrit compulsory as the third language**, leaving **no room for regional languages**.

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There is still a policy of appeasing the Hindi belt.

For instance, in 2023, the central government donated 8 crores to the UN to promote Hindi.

The use of Hindi names for laws disadvantages students of law from the South. Amit Shah boasted that 70% of the agenda of the cabinet is now prepared in Hindi disadvantaging South Indian civil service aspirants.

The tendency to give prestigious scientific and engineering projects **only Hindi-belt names** excludes South Indian children and students from feeling the same sense of ownership and belonging that a student in the Hindi belt might feel.

For instance, nomenclature such as Gaganyaan and Chandrayaan pointedly excludes Southern regional languages though these regions contribute (possibly disproportionately) in taxes towards these projects.

And this possibly affects the degree to which students think of regional identities as having agency in scientific progress.

CLAIMS

SCIENTIFIC TEMPERAMENT

“On National Science Day, my greetings to all scientists and innovators. India is making innumerable strides in the world of science and nurturing an eco-system for research and innovation”

PM Modi, tweet in Feb 2023



PC: News X

REALITY

SCIENCE TEXTBOOK CHANGES AND FUNDING

The following have been dropped from 10th Std. science textbooks by the NCERT:

- Darwin's theory of evolution
- The periodic table of elements
- The Pythagorean theorem

“No one ever saw an ape turning into a human being.”

Minister of State for Higher Education Satyapal Singh

The Madhya Pradesh government, while shutting down a quarter of the State's government-run schools, has instead invested in courses on astrology, vaastu and “purohit vidya”.

"Our country's ancient culture is getting affected by modernity. Astrology impacts human lives, the courses of events and climate change. We need to study astrology to understand these changes."

Madhya Pradesh Education Minister Vijay Shah

Not only is research underfunded, but research **grants are now loans**. This severely discourages fundamental (vs applied) research, affecting long-term scientific progress and scientific thinking.

CLAIMS

SOCIAL STUDIES

“We are not history-conscious people. We belong to a country where every stone has a history but unfortunately today neither there is an audience nor narrators to explain it.”

“We don't take care (of) our history which we should do.”

PM Modi in 2018



PC: Wikimedia, 1783 Painting by William Hodges Babri Masjid at the top of the hill.

REALITY

Deletions from Std. 12 history books:

- The reference to Nathuram Godse being “the editor of an extremist Hindu newspaper” in the chapter ‘Mahatma Gandhi and the Nationalist Movement’.
- All mentions of Hindu extremists in connection to the killing of Gandhi.
- References to the Gujarat riots of 2002.
- Understanding Partition: Politics, Memories, Experiences
- Colonial Cities: Urbanisation, Planning and Architecture
- Kings and Chronicles: The Mughal Courts

Deletions from Std. 12 political science books:

- The demolition of the Babri Masjid

Deletions from Std. 11 history books:

- The Industrial Revolution

Deletions from Std. 12 sociology books:

- 'The Story of Indian Democracy'
- 'Social Movements'
- 'Patterns of Social Inequality'

Deletions from Std. 11 sociology books:

- The mention of the report of the National Human Rights Commission on the Gujarat Riots.

Deletions from social science textbooks for Std. 10 and below:

- Mentions of the Dalit writer Omprakash Valmiki
- 'Democracy and Diversity'
- 'Popular Struggles and Movements'
- 'Challenges to Democracy'

CLAIMS

TEACHER SUPPORT

“First, teacher vacancies will be filled at the earliest, in a time-bound manner.”

NEP 2020

“The fundamental principles that will guide both the education system at large, as well as the individual institutions within it are: [...] creativity and critical thinking [...], ethics and human & Constitutional values like [...] democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and justice”

NEP 2020



REALITY

1 IN 6 school teacher posts lies vacant

that is, about 10 lakh posts are vacant

42% of the openings for SC, ST & OBC

candidates across 45 Central Universities lie vacant

5 IN 7 of the Bills passed by the

Legislative Assembly of Kerala but blocked by the Centre were about education

Some scholars imprisoned for their views:

- Anand Teltumbde
- Asif Iqbal Tanha
- Devangana Kalita
- Gokarakonda Naga
- Saibaba
- Hany Babu
- Meeran Haider
- Natasha Narwal
- Rona Wilson
- Safoora Zargar
- Sharjeel Imam
- Shoma Sen
- Varavara Rao

Still in prison:

- Umar Khalid

Shot and killed:

- M. M. Kalburgi

Some who resigned or were suspended:

- Amartya Sen
- Sudipta Bhattacharyya
- Gilbert Sebastian
- Pratap Bhanu Mehta
- Arvind Subrahmanian
- Sabyasachi Das
- Rajendran Narayanan

“BJP is committed to ensure that all communities are equal partners in India's progress, ... Strengthen and modernize minority educational systems and institutions; dovetailing them with modern requirements”

BJP Manifesto 2014



PC: PTI

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8.5% fewer

Muslim students in the age group 18-23 enrolled in higher studies in 2020-21 compared to 2019-20, that is, a drop of 1.8 lakh students.

Direct attempts to deny resources to Muslims:

- The Maulana Azad National Fellowship (MANF) for minority community students has been discontinued.
- 70% of housing societies in Delhi had no Muslims, resulting in differential access to educational opportunities.

Attempts to deemphasize history involving Muslims:

- The NCERT has removed introductory passages from textbooks on the Mughal emperors Babur, Humayun, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb.
- The NCERT has removed references to the demolition of the Babri Masjid from political science textbooks.

Attempts to deny Muslims access based on their customs:

- Students were denied permission to appear for their final examinations in hijabs. No similar restrictions were imposed on mangalasutras, naamas, sacred threads, juttus, toe-rings, patkas or crosses.

The moon landing point was given a religious name, ignoring the tax and scientific contributions of people of other religions (creating psychological exclusion for students who would be inspired by such achievements in their name, similar to regional-language exclusion).

“NEP 2020 has provisions to set up a Gender Inclusion Fund and also **Special Education Zones. These will specially focus on making education more inclusive.”**

PM Modi's tweet (July 2020)



PC: Reuters

REALITY

The Combination of SEZs and EWS is a veritable nightmare of casteist exclusion

Special Education Zones (SEZs) are envisaged in the NEP as specific locales where EWS students or where SC/ST/OBC students reside, and where interventions aimed at them take place.

So EWS areas could receive state-funded benefits that will be denied to historically oppressed groups, turning the clock back thousands of years.

As long as **EWS** unfairly **excludes SC/ST/OBC groups** and remains a preserve of the most privileged castes, this will reinforce caste-based segregation.

For example, the NEP mentions ECCE investment for EWS SEZs. This could in the wrong hands very easily begin a slide towards state funding of caste-specific cooks/food.

So SEZs might open the doors to **more exclusion, not inclusion**, and become an enabling mechanism for state-sanctioned segregation and “apartheid”.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

About 35% of Indians are at risk of cognitive impairment and physical stunting owing to poor nutrition and healthcare.

A well-fed, healthy, well-nourished and well-educated society is a prerequisite not only for overall well-being but also as an engine for economic growth.

Many campaigns have articulated the following to be non-negotiable justifiable socio-economic rights*.

Explorative empirical work on discovering interventions needs to be undertaken at scale to identify suitable interventions for different local conditions (in differing conditions of inequality, discrimination, poverty, etc.) for different communities, geographies and languages to improve the quality of teachers and their teaching and thereby to obtain better literacy and numeracy outcomes.

Right to early childhood nutrition for all
Right to free & quality healthcare for all
Right to free & quality education for all

These would require a minimum allocation of

8%

of GDP for education.

1%

to ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education)

More

SC and ST scholarships.

Meaningful

scholarship amounts.

8 lakh

income limit cutoff for all

REALITY

WHAT IS THE BJP'S UNION EDUCATION BUDGET FOR 2024?

The 2024 budget of the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Central Government is **again only**

0.4%
of GDP

- **7% less** than last year's budget
- Just 0.7% more for school education
- **18% less** for higher education
- **less** than the **education budget of New York city alone**

The Centre's (MoE) education budget is \$14.3 billion.
New York city's education budget is \$37 billion.

And all this time, the Centre had the means to partly forgive \$150 billion in bad corporate loans.



EDUCATION

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