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SUBJECT

Issues/Challenges of Primary Education in India (Special reference to Maharashtra)

BY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Research Project entitled **"Issues/Challenges of Primary Education in India (Special reference to Maharashtra)"** is a genuine record of the work done by **Mrs. Pravina More**, studying in M. A Part II, Year 2021-22 in the Department of Economics of Prof. Ramkrishna More Arts, Commerce and Science College, Akurdi, Pune 411044.

This research is related to M. A. Research Projects in Economics. It has been completed under my guidance and supervision. The source of the material for this dissertation is mentioned in the right place.

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DECLARATION

I, **Mrs. Pravina More** hereby declares that this Project titled "**Issues/Challenges of Primary Education in India (Special reference to Maharashtra)"** submitted to the Department of Economics, PROF. RAMKRISHNA MORE ARTS, COMMERCE AND SCIENCE COLLEGE, AKURDI is a record of original work done by me under the guidance of **Dr. B. G. Lobo.** The information and data given in the project is authentic to the best of my knowledge. This project is not submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma or fellowship or published any time before.

Mrs. Pravina More
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Place: Akurdi

Date: June 2022

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

India has a rich tradition of imparting knowledge. The ‘gurukula’ was a type of education system in ancient India with shishya (students) living with the guru in the same house. The student stayed as long as she wished or until the guru felt that he had taught everything he could teach. All learning was closely linked to nature and to life, and not confined to memorising some information.

Nalanda was the oldest university system of education in the world. Students from across the world were attracted to Indian knowledge systems. Many branches of the knowledge system had their origin in India. Education was considered a higher virtue in ancient India.

However, the British who took control of the Indian affairs by that time established the modern education system still followed in India. They replaced age-old systems of education in the country with English ways**.**

The modern school system was brought to India, including the English language, originally by Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay in the 1830s. The curriculum was confined to “modern” subjects such as science and mathematics, and subjects like metaphysics and philosophy were considered unnecessary. Teaching was confined to classrooms and the link with nature was broken, as also the close relationship between the teacher and the student.

India is divided into 28 states and 8 “Union Territories”. The states have their own elected governments while the Union Territories are ruled directly by the Government of India, with the President of India appointing an administrator for each Union Territory. As per the constitution of India, school education was originally a state subject —that is, the states had complete authority on deciding policies and implementing them. The role of the Government of India (GoI) was limited to coordination and deciding on the standards of higher education. This was changed with a constitutional amendment in 1976 so that education now comes in the so-called *concurrent list*. That is, school education policies and programmes are suggested at the national level by the GoI though the state governments have a lot of freedom in implementing programmes. Policies are announced at the national level periodically. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), set up in 1935, continues to play a lead role in the evolution and monitoring of educational policies and programmes.

1.2 Education Policies in India since independence

Since the country's independence in 1947, the Indian government has sponsored a variety of programmes to address the problems of illiteracy in both rural and urban India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Minister of Education, envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a uniform educational system. The Union government established the University Education Commission (1948–1949), the Secondary Education Commission (1952–1953), University Grants Commission and the Kothari Commission (1964–66) to develop proposals to modernise India's education system. The Nehru government sponsored the development of high-quality scientific education institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology. In 1961, the Union government formed the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) as an autonomous organisation that would advise both the Union and state governments on formulating and implementing education policies.

National Educational Policy 1968

- The policy provided for "radical restructuring" and **equalisation of educational opportunities** to achieve **national integration** and greater **cultural and economic development.**
- Increase public expenditure of education to 6% of GDP.
- Provide for better training and qualification of teachers.
- **Three-language formula:** state governments should implement the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi-speaking states, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the non-Hindi speaking states. Hindi was encouraged uniformly to promote a common language for all Indians.

National Educational Policy 1985

- The policy aimed at **the removal of disparities** and to equalise educational opportunities, especially for women, SC and ST.
- Launching of **"Operation Blackboard"** to improve primary schools nationwide.
- **IGNOU,** the Open University, was formed.
- Adoption of **the "rural university" model**, based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India.

National Educational Policy 1992

- All India bases common entrance examinations for admission in all professional and technical programmes in the country.

- Government of India vide Resolution dated 18 October 2001 has laid down a Three – Exam Scheme For admission to Engineering and Architecture/Planning programmes:JEE AIEEE at the National Level SLEEE State Level Engineering Entrance Examinations

- State Level Institutions have the option to join AIEEE.With this problem of overlapping and also reducing physical, mental and financial burden on students and their parents which was very high due to multiplicity of entrance examinations.

National Educational Policy 2020

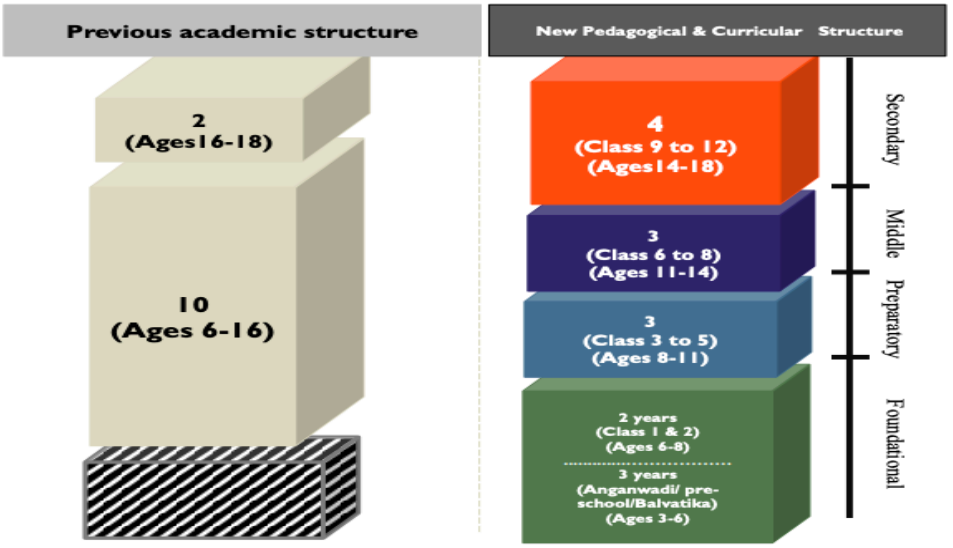
In 2019, the Ministry of Human Resource Development released a Draft New Education Policy 2019, which was followed by a number of public consultations. It discusses reducing curriculum content to enhance essential learning, critical thinking and more holistic experiential, discussion-based and analysis-based learning. It also talks about a revision of the curriculum and pedagogical structure from a 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 system design in an effort to optimise learning for students based on cognitive development of children.

On 29 July 2020, the cabinet approved a new National Education Policy with an aim to introduce several changes to the existing Indian education system. Which will be introduced in India till 2026.

1.3 Structure of Indian Education System

As per the new policy, the 10+2 structure of school curricula is to be replaced with a 5+3+3+4 curricular structure corresponding to age groups 3-8 years, 8-11, 11-14 and 14-18 years respectively.

- **Foundation Stage**: The first five years will be the foundation stage, including three years of primary education and class 1 and 2. It will also include pre-school in the foundation stage — which was earlier considered a part of informal education.
- **Preparatory Stage**: The next three years will be the ‘preparatory’ stage. This consists of classes three to five.
- **Middle Stag**e: The next three years — between class six and class eight— will be the ‘middle’ stage.
- **Secondary Stage:** The last stage will be the ‘secondary’ stage comprising class 9,10,11, and 12.



Structure of Indian Education System

1.4 Constitutional Provisions for Education in India

The Indian constitution contains a large number of clauses and articles that have a direct or indirect bearing on education.

	Provisions	Article
1.	Right of free and compulsory education	45
2.	Right to education	21A
3.	Education for women	15(1) (3)
4.	Promotion of education and economic interests of SC, ST and other weaker sections	46
5.	Religious education	25, 28(1)(2)(3)
6.	Education of minorities, protection of interests of minorities	29
7.	Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions	30
8.	Instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage	350-A
9.	Promotion of Hindi	351

- Under **Article 45 in DPSP,** it was mentioned that **the** government should provide free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14 years within 10 years from the commencement of the Constitution. As this was not achieved, Article 21A was introduced by **the 86th**
- **Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002**, making elementary education a fundamental right rather than a directive principle. And Article 45 was amended to provide for **early childhood care and education** to children below the age of six years.
- To implement Article 21A, the government legislated the RTE Act. Under this act, SSA – **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan –** got a further impetus. SSA aims to provide Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time-bound manner.SSA has been operational since 2000-2001. Its roots go back to 1993-1994 when the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched. However, under the RTE Act, it got legal backing.

1.5 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) related to Education

Goal 4 of SDG: Education for all – ensures equitable, inclusive and quality education along with the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.

India and Goal 4

The new national Education Policy and Sustainable Development Goal 4 share the goals of universal quality education and lifelong learning. The flagship government scheme, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, is aimed at achieving universal quality education for all Indians, and is complemented in this effort by targeted schemes on nutritional support, higher education, and teacher training.

Targets

- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes.
- By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education.
- By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.
- By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship.
- By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations.
- By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy.

- By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.
- Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, nonviolent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.
- By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries.
- By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international co-operation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states.

1.6 Schools in India

As per the latest available record, **15,07,708** schools (including Government Aided, Private Unaided and Other schools) are in India.

Table 1
Number of Schools in India

Year	Total Number of School
2017-18	15,58,903
2018-19	15,51,000
2019-20	15,07,708
2020-21	15,09,136

Source: UDISEReport

In 2017-18, total 15,58,903 schools were there in India. The number of schools decreased in 2018-19 to 15,51,000. Further in 2019-20 the number of schools were 15,07,708 and in 2020-21 the number increased to 15,9,136. On comparing the data from 2017 to 2020, number schools were highest in 2017-18 and lowest in 2019-20.

Number of Schools in India and State/UT

Table 2

India/ State /UT	Total No. of Schools	India/ State /UT	Total No. of Schools
India	**1507708**	**Maharashtra**	**110229**
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	418	Ladakh	1054
Andhra Pradesh	63824	Lakshadweep	45
Arunachal Pradesh	3666	Madhya Pradesh	133379
Assam	65907	Manipur	4663
Bihar	90275	Meghalaya	14730
Chandigarh	229	Mizoram	3924
Chhattisgarh	56303	Nagaland	2758
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	346	Odisha	67020
Daman and Diu	137	Puducherry	741
Delhi	5669	Punjab	28775
Goa	1482	Rajasthan	106240
Gujarat	54629	Sikkim	1277
Haryana	23699	Tamil Nadu	58897
Himachal Pradesh	18185	Telangana	42575
Jammu and Kashmir	28863	Tripura	4940
Jharkhand	45596	Uttar Pradesh	254352
Karnataka	77166	Uttarakhand	23295
Kerala	16665	West Bengal	95755

Source:UDISE+2019_20_Booklet.pdf

Table- 2 presents the data of the total number of schools in India and States/UT. According to the data collected India has a total **1507708** schools whereas in the state of Maharashtra there are a total **110229** schools including Government Aided, Private Unaided and Other schools. Among all the States and Union Territories, Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of schools (254352) and Lakshadweep has the lowest number of schools (45).

1.7 Primary Education In India

Primary education in India is divided into two parts, namely Lower Primary (Class I-IV) and Upper Primary (Middle school, Class V-VIII). The Indian government lays emphasis on primary education (Class I-VIII) also referred to as elementary education, to children aged 6 to 14 years old. Because education laws are given by the states, duration of primary school visit alters between the Indian states. The Indian government has also banned child labour in order to ensure that the children do not enter unsafe working conditions. However, both free education and the ban on child labour are difficult to enforce due to economic disparity and social conditions. 80% of all recognised schools at the elementary stage are government run or supported, making it the largest provider of education in the country.

However, due to a shortage of resources and lack of political will, this system suffers from massive gaps including high pupil to teacher ratios, shortage of infrastructure and poor levels of teacher training. Figures released by the Indian government in 2011 show that there were 5,816,673 elementary school teachers in India. As of March 2012 there were 2,127,000 secondary school teachers in India. Education has also been made free for children for 6 to 14 years of age or up to class VIII under the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009.

There have been several efforts to enhance quality made by the government. The District Education Revitalisation Programme (DERP) was launched in 1994 with an aim to universalise primary education in India by reforming and vitalising the existing primary education system. 85% of the DERP was funded by the central government and the remaining 15% was funded by the states. The DERP, which had opened 160,000 new schools including 84,000 alternative education schools delivering alternative education to approximately 3.5 million children, was also supported by UNICEF and other international programs. "Corruption hurts the poor disproportionately – by diverting funds intended for development, undermining a government's ability to provide basic services, feeding inequality and injustice, and discouraging foreign investment and aid" (Kofi Annan, in his statement on the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption by the General Assembly, NY, November 2003).This primary education scheme has also not shown a high gross enrolment ratio of 93–95% for the last three years in some states. Significant improvement in staffing and enrolment of girls has also been made as a part of this scheme. The current scheme for universalisation of Education for All is the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which is one of the largest education initiatives in the world. Enrolment has been enhanced, but the levels of quality remain low.

1.8 Education in Maharashtra

Each state in the country has its own Department of Education that runs its own school system with its own textbooks and evaluation system. The curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation method are largely decided by the SCERT in the state, following the national guidelines prescribed by the NCERT.

Maharashtra has always been a pioneer in the field of education. Pune is popularly known as the "Oxford of the East". In Maharashtra as of 2010-11 there were 97,256 Elementary schools of which 49,085 were Primary schools, 48,171 were Upper Primary schools and 5,595 were Secondary and Higher Secondary schools. Of the total number of Elementary schools, 67,241 were Government manager schools and 30, 015 schools were privately managed schools. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has strengthened basic infrastructural facilities in most schools. The Pupil Teacher ratio is also less than 1:40 in about 95% schools. However, improving learning achievement level is a greater challenge for the state. Maharashtra follows the 10+2 system of education. The schools offering primary and secondary education are affiliated to Maharashtra State Secondary School Certificate, Central Board of Secondary Education or Indian School Certificate Examination (ICSE). Some of the schools in Maharashtra use Marathi as their medium of instruction. However, most of the ICSE and CBSE schools in the state use English for imparting education to their students. Hindi and Marathi are also treated as second languages in most of the schools in Maharashtra.

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CHAPTER 2

2.1 Introduction

Education is the most crucial input for empowering youth with knowledge, skills & vocational training by providing them access to productive employment which will ultimately help to boost economic growth of the State. The Maharashtra State Government right from its formation on 1st May, 1960 committed itself to planned development of primary education. The planning process in the country started in the year 1951 with the First Five Year Plan. During the First Five Year Plan, among the schemes designed to assist the growth of primary education in the state, an important place was occupied by the scheme relating to the introduction of compulsory primary education on an organised basis. Elementary education is very important for a society and a country at large. Elementary education is very important whether we are living in a developing country or a developed world. As we know India's main challenge is poverty, we need to uplift millions of people out of poverty and we can't do it unless we focus on elementary education. Primary education starts from Class 1st when a child is 5 years old. Primary education does not only mean a classroom, books and a teacher (that is bare minimum) but nutrition, clothes and creating an environment where a child can learn new things every day, an environment that can help in bringing out the best within a child.

2.2 Importance

Right to Primary Education is a fundamental right in India. Free-education is now being provided to every boy and every girl up to the primary level. Every child ought to get a quality education. The parents and guardians should understand the value of education and send their children to primary schools. Elementary learning of well being and cleanliness is an important thing for primary education for keeping the child's physical well being in good condition. As knowledge of health, hygiene and morals play an essential role in our lives, playing and exercising also help to create social skills and participation abilities of the child. Moral education helps to develop sentiments of the child and also helps in developing the ability to see positive outlooks and have a clear point of view.

Primary education does not only mean dealing with books and learning but it also highlights the importance of hygiene and good nutrition. We cannot ignore the importance of primary education as it also works for the betterment of poverty issues of a country. In India, child labour has also been banned for the improvement in literacy rate and to make sure that children do not work in difficult and risky conditions. Education has been made free for the people who cannot afford it and are therefore forced to not go to schools .The future of our nation relies on the children of today.

The primary education system in Maharashtra is similar to the system of education adopted by other parts of the nation. There are several preparatory schools that provide ample scope of education, Education in Maharashtra in primary level emphasises on child development techniques. From 3 years of age a child is

asked to get proper training under the particular education system. Each child is provided with care and affection by the primary teachers so that they can easily focus on their development part.
Education system has challenges like the changing dynamics of the population's requirements with quality education, affordable vocational training, access to higher education, innovation & research, etc. Keeping in view these challenges, various educational programmes are being implemented through the joint venture of GoI and GoM in the State.

2.3 Need

Research provides answers to questions of what, when, how and why of man, social life and institutions. The main purpose is to discover various facts and their interrelationship and to help us to discard distortions and contribute to our understanding of reality. The another purpose of research is to diagnose different problems prevalent in our society and education system and to make critical and logical analysis of those problems.
Our society has innumerable problems such as poverty, unemployment, economic and gender inequality, social stratification etc. and these problems have an impact on our education system. The nature and dimensions of such problems have to be diagnosed and analysed. An analysis of problems leads to an identification of appropriate remedial actions.
Research provides first hand information about the nature of social and educational institutions. This knowledge helps us to control social phenomena. Research also has potential to investigate and assess latest needs and level of advancement. Another important purpose of research is to suggest possible remedial measures and effective solutions to various problems and challenges.
Researchers come up with innovative and creative strategies and ideas to improve the education system and its associated components. Researchers can identify the causes of existing evils and problems and thus it can help in taking appropriate remedial actions.

2.4 Objectives

- To review the Education system in India, special reference to primary education in Maharashtra.
- To study the profile of Primary education in Maharashtra.
- To study the challenges and issues of primary education in Maharashtra.
- To give conclusion and recommendation regarding Primary education in Maharashtra.

2.5 Hypothesis

It is hypothesised that due to covid-19 pandemic like any critical sector, education has been hit hard. Students, schools, colleges and universities have been deeply impacted.

2.6 Data Sources

'Secondary research method' is used for this research project. The data is collected from different websites available on the internet, already filled in surveys from some government and non-government agencies like Economic Survey of Maharashtra by DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS AND STATISTICS, PLANNING DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA, Ministry of Education report on UDISE etc.

2.7 Tools of Analysis

Research works often require one or more analytical tools for problem solving, optimization, prediction, system modelling, data analysis or interpretation *etc*. As this is an academic research work, suitable analytical tools are used to progress the work before arriving at some inferences. Following tools are used to study the profile of Primary Education in Maharashtra.

- MS Excel
- Frequency table
- Column Chart
- Bar Chart
- Line Chart
- Percentage
- Total
- Ratio

2.8 Chapter Scheme

This research paper on Primary Education in India - Issues and Challenges (Special Reference to Maharashtra) includes the following chapter scheme.

Chapter 1- Introduction: This chapter includes Introduction, Education Policies in India since independence, Constitutional Provisions for Education in India, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) related to Education, Structure of Indian Education System, Schools in India, Primary Education in India and Education in Maharashtra.

Chapter 2- Research methodology: This chapter includes introduction of the topic, importance, need and objectives of the study. This chapter also provides the study hypothesis, research methodology, tools of analysis and chapter scheme.

Chapter 3- Literature review: This chapter is a comprehensive review of existing literature related to the study of challenges, issues of primary education in India or in the state of Maharashtra.

Chapter 4- Data analysis: This chapter includes an assessment of the secondary data collected through different websites available on the internet, already filled in surveys from some government and non-government agencies.The chapter also includes figures and graphs for better assessments of the results.

Chapter 5- Conclusion and recommendations: This chapter includes recommendations for future research as well as concludes the research by providing a summary and future scope of the present research.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Review of Literature

In this chapter, the writing or research on issues and challenges of Primary education, has been reviewed. Researchers or authors have previously highlighted various issues such as causes of dropout in primary schools, improving elementary schools, factors leading to school dropouts in India. primary schools in tribal areas etc. In the present study - Primary Education in India - Issues and Challenge (Special reference to Maharashtra) have been studied.

Following are the review of the research done

- **Chakrabarti, Malhotra, Parulkar and Preece, 2009[1], "Improving elementary education in Maharashtra": The work of the state education quality cell, In collaboration with the Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration, Pune.**
  This study examines a growing concern about the quality of elementary education in India. It focuses on Maharashtra, where significant progress in access to education has enabled more attention to be placed on what children actually learn when they are at school. Following a statewide baseline test in 2005, which revealed that 42 per cent of pupils in government schools were unable to read or do simple numeracy tasks, a Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3R) Programme was initiated. This incorporated regular tests and remedial teaching to help children who failed these tests achieve basic learning levels. This was followed by a 2005 Government Resolution marking the launch of the state Educational Quality Improvement Programme (EQIP). In order to implement EQIP, a state education Quality Cell (QC) was created. This was a semiautonomous agency dedicated to improving educational quality in government elementary schools. It comprised a small team assembled to monitor local education systems and to help develop and implement strategies for enhancing these systems.Through discussions with educationalists from across Maharashtra, they learnt how the QC created platforms for sharing and developing promising educational initiatives. By bringing together civil society and government, it has been possible to upscale schemes such as the Learning Enhancement Programme (LEP), incorporating inclusive activity-based pedagogies in schools across the state.

- **Mukherjee, Joshi and Thaku, 2022[2]: "Examining the Preparedness for Achieving Goal 4 of the SDGs in India", A Case Study on School Governance vis-à-vis Outcome for Primary Schools in Rural Maharashtra:**
  The study inspected the status of school governance and school outcome at primary school level and set up a roadmap for all the stakeholders to achieve the mandate of Goal 4 in SDGs within 2030, especially in the context of rural India. The status of school governance and school outcome are assessed under 4 dimensions and 16 parameters through a survey of 21 rural primary schools from rural Maharashtra.Two different indices have been constructed for school outcomes and school

governance using multi-stage principal component analysis. Public and private-aided schools are compared according to the degree of accountability and transparency. It has been realised that there is an absolute need for strong school governance at ground level which is very poor across public schools in rural India. The study followed the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) project and ASER (2014) and considered these baselines to find the present status of school governance and school outcome for the present study.

- **Chattopadhyay A, 2009[3], "Primary Schooling in a Tribal District of Maharashtra", Mumbai:** The study focuses on the situation of primary education in some tribal villages of a backward district of Maharashtra, India with the help of qualitative and quantitative data. Besides infrastructural improvements, the study strongly favours introduction of tribal languages for basic education, provision of personnel for clerical works and proper maintenance of records that reflects the reality of primary schooling. Economic uncertainty and financial hardship are the contributing factors for the age-old disinterest in education among the tribes. Thus increasing the sources of income is the only way to encourage willing participation in basic education.

- **Vikhe and Gujrathi, 2018[4], "A Study of Sources for Elementary Education in Maharashtra under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan", International Journal of Scientific Research.**
The research work is related with sources and utilisation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in general and particularly in Ahmednagar district. This Abhiyan is related with primary education; hence it is necessary to study primary education in Maharashtra. The core part of the research is implementation of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and funds there on. Research has concentrated on the study of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Its sources and utilisation of funds is an important aspect in this study, hence it is covered as important objectives. Utilisation of funds is important for improvement in primary education. How these funds are utilised under this scheme is important. However, at the time of availability of funds and utilisation of funds for this scheme is important and it should be studied by researchers. The result of this scheme is not satisfactory hence it is necessary to find out problems in implementation of the scheme i.e. problem of students, teachers and others. As a research scholar it is important to take some measures to improve the elementary education system and funds are to overcome the problem in this system. The researchers had selected seven objectives in order to suggest that measurement of such elementary education system i.e. SSA.

- **Gouda, Dr.T.V.Sekher, 2014[5]: " Factors Leading to School Dropouts in India": An Analysis of National Family Health Survey-3, International Journal of Research and Method in Education.**
The present article tried to understand the differentials and factors associated with school dropouts in India.Based on the data from National Family Health Survey-3, it was found that only 75 percent of the children in the age group 6 to 16 years were attending school. About 14 percent of the children never attended the school and 11 percent dropped out of school for various reasons. It was observed that the dropout was high among the children belonging to Muslim, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe families. Parental characteristics also play a significant role in determining school education.The dropouts among the children belonging to illiterate parents were four times

higher than that of the literate parents. It was also observed that if parents were not working, the possibility of dropout among their children was relatively high. The study suggests that unless and until there is considerable improvement in the economic status of households and change in the social attitudes of parents, achieving the goal of universalisation of school education will remain a major challenge for India.

- **Sipahimalani, Vandana ; Clarke, Prema, 2015[6]: "A Review of Educational Progress and Reform in the District Primary Education Program (Phases I and II)": Book.**

  The District Primary Education Program (DPEP) is a centrally sponsored scheme launched by the Government of India in partnership with the state governments and external donor agencies seeking to expand the opportunities for poor and disadvantaged children to receive quality primary education. This report assesses the progress made in terms of outcomes and processes in the first two DPEP programs. The report contains an introduction, chapters on assessment of the progress toward outcomes and the status and effectiveness of DPEP interventions, and a conclusion.

- **Chutani, 2019[7]: "School lunch program in India: Background, objectives and components": Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition.:**

  The School Lunch Program in India (SLP) is the largest food and nutrition assistance program feeding millions of children every day. This paper provides a review of the background information on the SLP in India earlier known as national program for nutrition support to primary education (NP-NSPE) and later as mid day meal scheme, including historical trends and objectives and components/characteristics of the scheme. It also addresses steps being taken to meet challenges being faced by the administrators of the program in monitoring and evaluation of the program. This program was initially started in 1960 in a few states to overcome the complex problems of malnutrition and illiteracy. Mid Day Meal Scheme is the popular name for the school meal program. In 2001, as per the supreme court orders, it became mandatory to give a mid day meal to all primary and later extended to upper primary school children studying in the government and government aided schools. This scheme benefitted 140 million children in government assisted schools across India in 2008, strengthening child nutrition and literacy. In a country with a large percent of illiterate population with a high percent of children unable to read or write; governmental and non-governmental organisations have reported that the mid day meal scheme has consistently increased enrollment in schools in India. One of the main goals of the school lunch program is to promote the health and well-being of the Nation's children.

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CHAPTER 4

4.1 Introduction

Research is a scientific and systematic investigation or inquiry especially through search for new facts in any branch of knowledge. On the other hand education is regarded as the aggregate of all the processes by which a person develops abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour of practical values in the society in which she or he lives. Research is widely regarded as providing benefits to individuals and to local, regional, national, and international communities involved in the education system. Education is a tool for economic development, social mobility, inclusion and equality. 'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all' is one of the Sustainable Development Goals of Maharashtra. To achieve this, National Education Policy 2020 emphasises on the development of the creative potential of each individual. The core purpose of this paper is to understand the status of primary education and issues or challenges for primary education in Maharashtra.

The right to education of children in the age group of 6-14 years was enacted in the State to provide free & compulsory education. Also, it is imperative to provide "education for all, quality education" to all the children. There has been significant progress to provide primary education and secondary education. Though the major responsibility for basic education lies with the State Government, the local self-government bodies, both in rural and urban areas are associated with school education. Educational programmes, especially for primary education, are executed through collaborative efforts of the State Government and local bodies. Use of modern technology for providing education services have a significant impact not only on the quality of education but also on its accessibility to the rural areas.

Some important indicators of primary (Std I to VIII) education in Maharashtra are given below:

4.2 Total Number of Primary Schools in Maharashtra:

Table 3 presents the total number of primary schools in Maharashtra. The number of Primary schools in Maharashtra in **2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21** was 104971, 106546, 106237, 106491 and 106338 respectively**.** The table also shows change over a period of time in the number of schools in terms of percentage.

Table 3
Number of Primary schools in Maharashtra

Year	Total Primary schools	Change in Number	Change in %
2016-17	1,04,971	_	_
2017-18	1,06,546	1575	1.48%
2018-19	1,06,237	-309	-0.29%
2019-20	1,06,491	254	0.23%
2020-21	1,06,338	-153	-0.14%

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 1.1 - Number of Primary Schools in Maharashtra

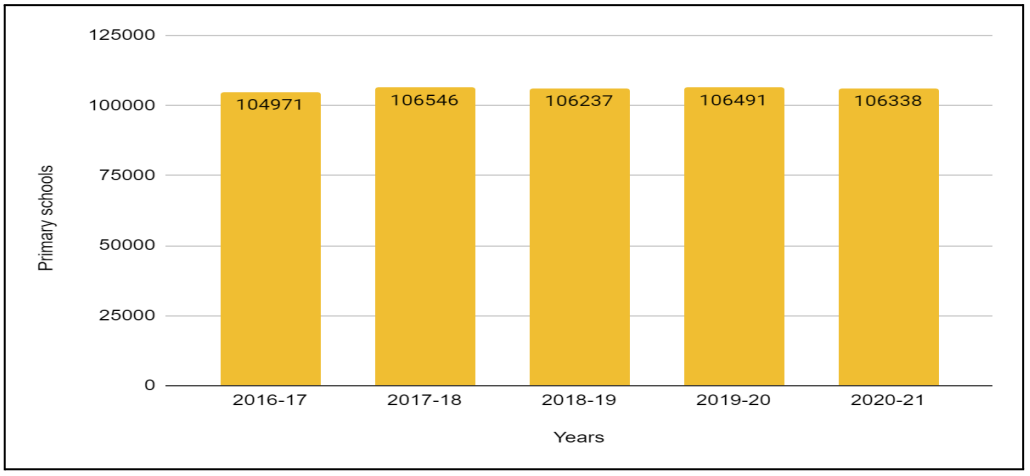


Chart 1.2 - Primary Schools in Maharashtra (Change in terms of Percentage)

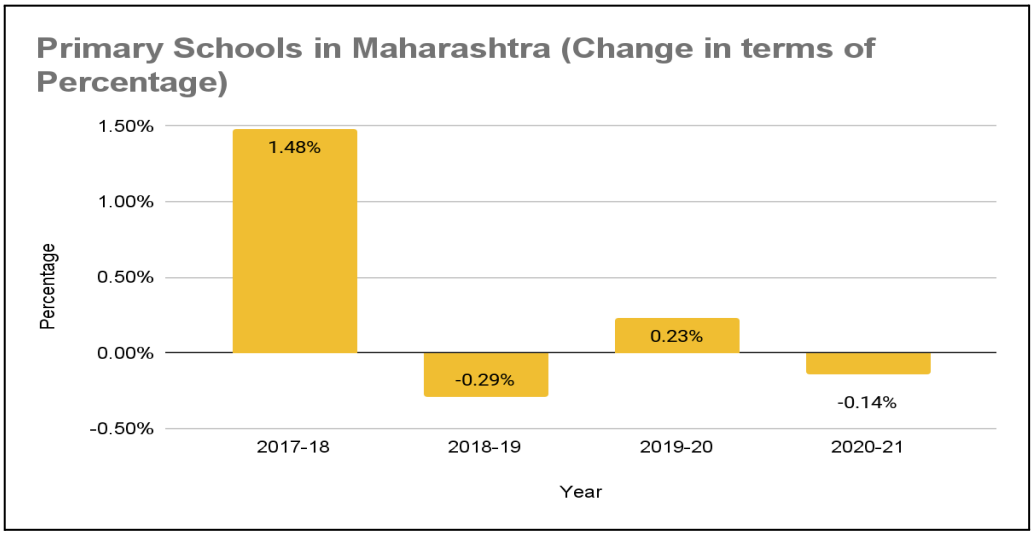


Chart 1.1 and 1.2 is a graphical presentation of Primary schools in Maharashtra. In **2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21** there were 104971, 106546, 106237, 106491 and 106338 schools respectively**.** Compared to the other given years, in 2017-18 the number of primary schools was highest (106546) . After 2017-18 it is showing a decreasing trend in the number of primary schools. In the year 2018-19 the number of primary schools was the lowest i.e 106237. The absolute change in the number of primary schools in terms of percentage in 2017-18 increased by 1.48%. After 2017-18 it is showing a decreasing trend, in 2018-19 it is -0.29%, in 2019-20 it is 0.23% and in 2020-21 it is -0.14%.

4.3 Total Enrolment in Primary Schools- Maharashtra:

Table 4 shows total enrolment of students in Primary schools in Maharashtra. The table also presents a change in the number of students enrolment in terms of percentage from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

Table 4
Total Enrolment in Primary schools in Maharashtra

Year	Enrolment in school (lakh)	Change in Number	Change in %
2016-17	159.9	_	_
2017-18	159.1	-0.8	-0.5
2018-19	157.4	-1.7	-1.08
2019-20	156.9	-0.5	-0.3
2020-21	153.9	-3	-1.94

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 2.1- Enrolment in school (in Lakh), Maharashtra

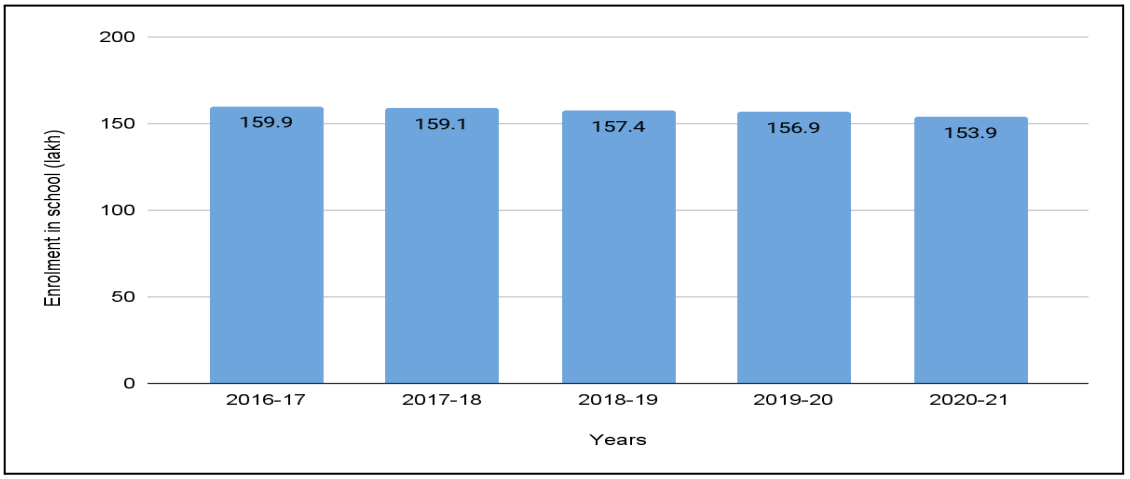
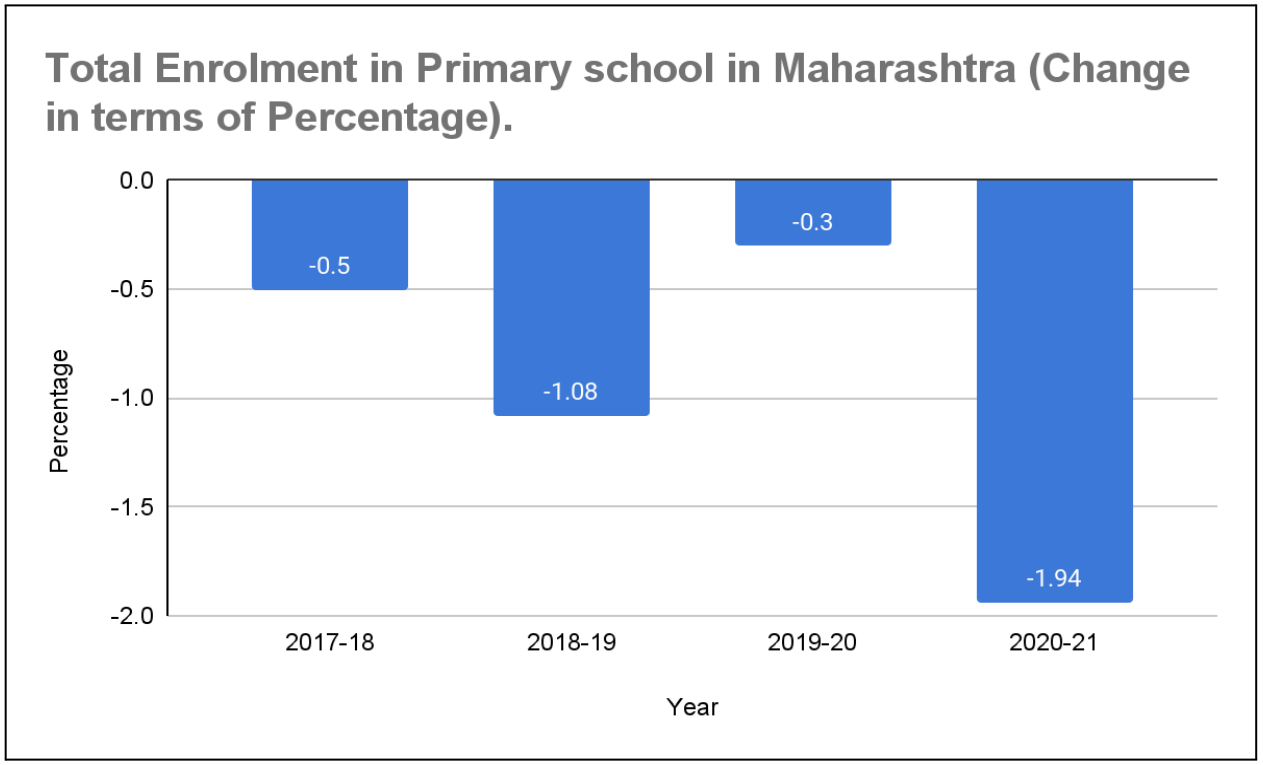


Chart 2.2 - Total Enrolment in Primary school in Maharashtra (Change in terms of Percentage)



The total enrolment in primary school in 2016-17 was 159.9 lakh which is the highest. In 2017-18 it decreased to 159.1 lakh, a negative change or fall in enrolment is noticed after 2016-17. In 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 the enrolment was 157.4 lakh, 156.9 lakh and 153.9 lakh respectively. The deepest fall in enrolment is seen in 2020-21 which is 153.9 lakh. The absolute change in the total enrolment in terms of percentage is -0.5% in 2017-18, -1.08% in 2018-19, -0.3% in 2019-20 and -1.94% in 2020-21. The number of students at primary schools in the state has been declining for the last four years. According to the data compiled in the last two economic surveys, the number of students enrolled at the primary level (Class 1 to 8) dipped from 159.9 lakh in 2016 -17 to 153.9 lakh in 2020.21 – a drop of 3.57%.

According to the report the experts have not been able to identify the exact reasons behind the drop in the number of children in primary school; they have implied that the fall in the number of children in primary schools could be because of rising dropout rates and a dip in fertility rates.

4.4 Percentage of Girls Enrolment in Primary Schools- Maharashtra

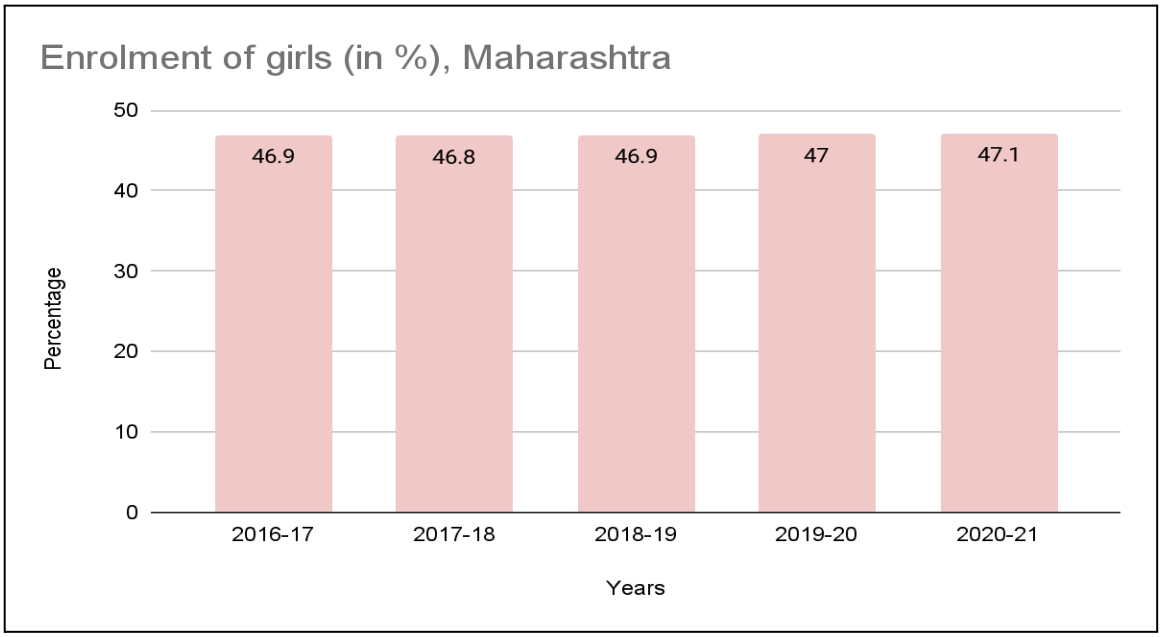
Table 5 presents the percentage of girls in primary schools of Maharashtra from 2016-17 to 2020-21. We can notice that the percentage of girls enrolment in primary schools is increasing year by year.

Table 5
Percentage of Girls in Primary schools in Maharashtra

Year	Percentage of Girls enrolment
2016-17	46.9
2017-18	46.8
2018-19	46.9
2019-20	47.0
2020-21	47.1

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 3 - Enrolment of girls (in %), Maharashtra



Girls enrolment in 2016-17 in the primary schools of Maharashtra was 46.9%. In 2017-18 it was 46.8%, a slight fall of 0.1% is seen in 2017-18. Again in 2018-19 the girls enrolment was reported 46.9%. In 2019-20 the girls enrolment increased to 47%. In 2020-21 it became 47.1%. From 2019-20 to 2020-21 an upward trend is seen in girls enrolment.

4.5 Number of Teachers (in Lakhs), in Primary Schools- Maharashtra

Table 6 shows the number of teachers in primary schools of Maharashtra from 2016-17 to 2020-21. It also presents a change in the number of teachers in terms of percentage.

Table 6
Number of Teachers in Primary schools in Maharashtra

Year	No. of Teachers (lakh)	Change in Number	Change in %
2016-17	5.2	_	_
2017-18	5.4	0.2	3.70%
2018-19	5.2	-0.2	-3.84%
2019-20	5.3	0.1	1.88%
2020-21	5.1	-0.2	-3.92%

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 4.1 - Number of Teachers (in lakh) in Primary schools Maharashtra

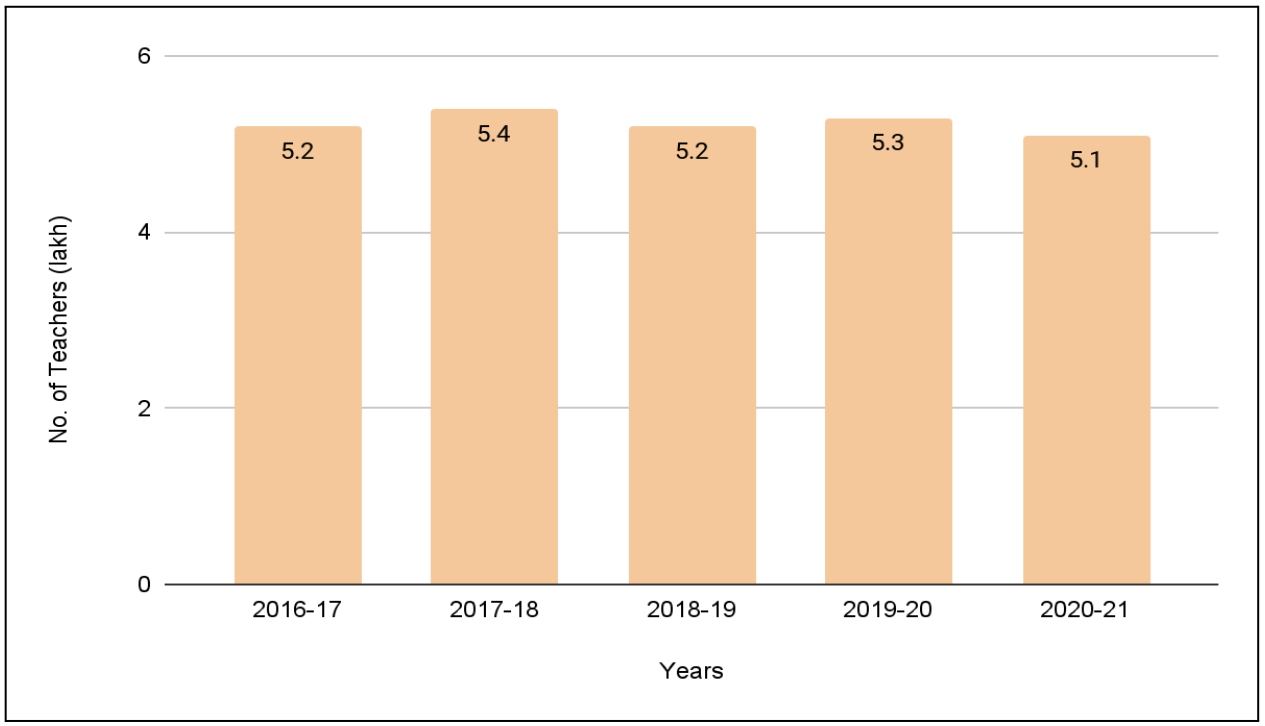
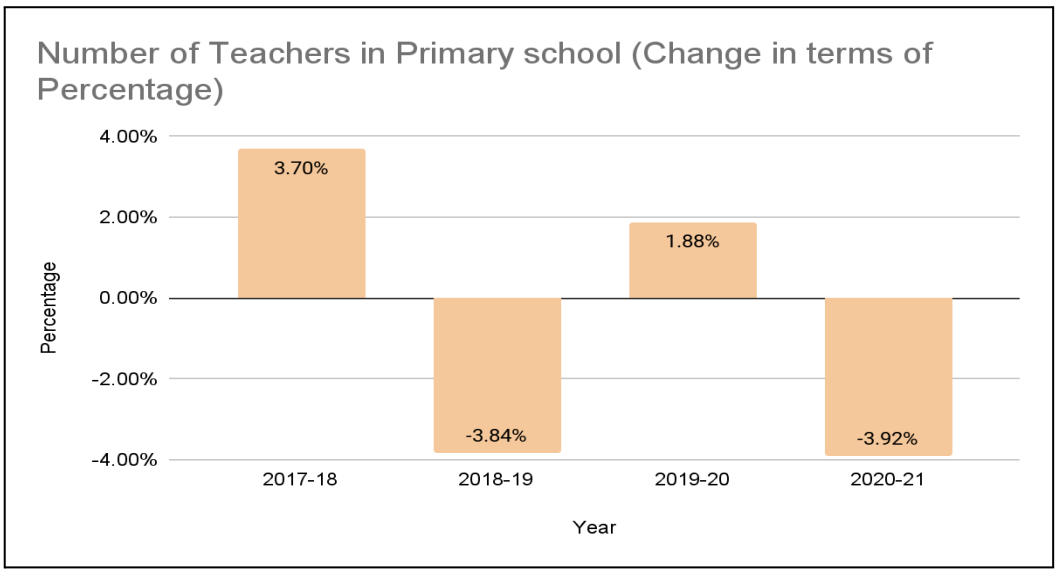


Chart 4.2 - Number of Teachers in Primary school :Maharashtra (Change in terms of Percentage)



In 2016-17 the number of teachers was 5.2 lakh, the number increased in 2017-18 to 5.4 lakh. After 2017-18 the number of teachers dropped to 5.2 lakh in 2018-19, 5.3 lakh in 2019-20 and 5.1 lakh in 2020-21. In 2017-18 the number of primary teachers in Maharashtra were highest and lowest in 2020-21. In terms of percentage, in 2016-17 there was a 3.70% increase in the number of teachers, whereas in 2018-19 the number of teachers decreased to 3.84%. In 2019-20 it increased by 1.88% but it dropped by 3.92% in 2020-21.

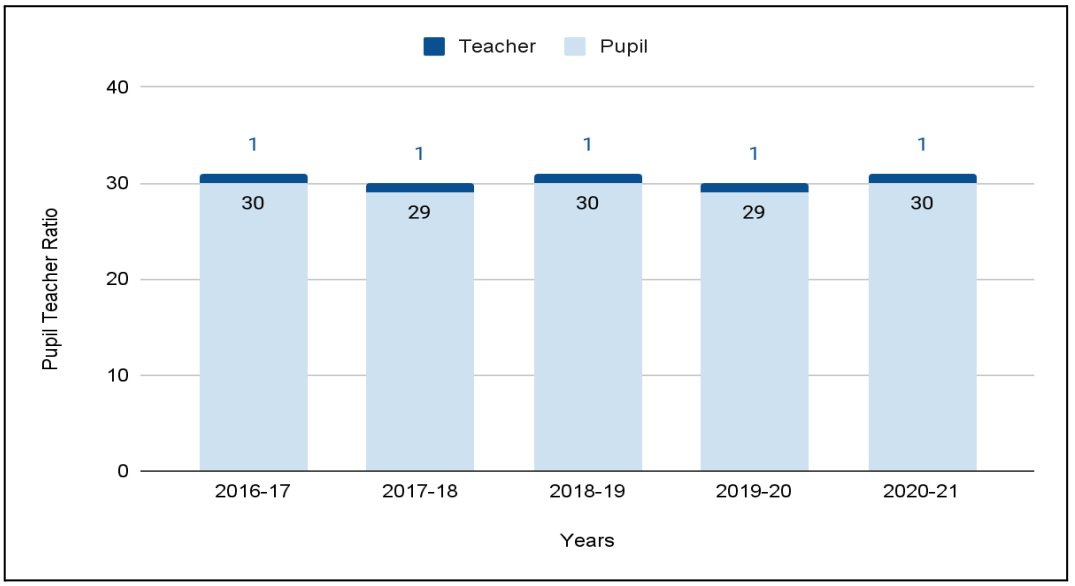
4.6 Pupil-Teacher Ratio in Primary Schools- Maharashtra

Table 7 shows the Pupil-Teacher ratio in primary schools of Maharashtra from 2016-17 to 2020-21. The student-teacher ratio refers to the number of students for every teacher in a school. The student-teacher ratio has been found to be one of the strongest indicators of student success and engagement.

Table 7
Pupil-Teacher ratio in Primary schools: Maharashtra

Year	Percentage of Girls enrolment
2016-17	30:1
2017-18	29:1
2018-19	30:1
2019-20	29:1
2020-21	30:1

Chart 5 - Pupil teacher ratio, Maharashtra:



Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

The RTE Act, 2009 in its Schedule lays down Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR) for both primary and upper primary schools. At primary level, the PTR norm is 30:1 and at the upper primary level it is 35:1. As per the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE), except 2017-18 and 2019-20 the PTR from 2016-17 to 2020-21 is 30:1, which is according to the norms.

4.7 School infrastructure of primary (Std I to VIII) education:

The term infrastructure is comprehensive and there are a number of aspects that are included in it. These include, playgrounds, library facilities, laboratories, computers, toilets, safe drinking water etc. Table 8 gives the details of infrastructure facilities in primary schools of Maharashtra from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

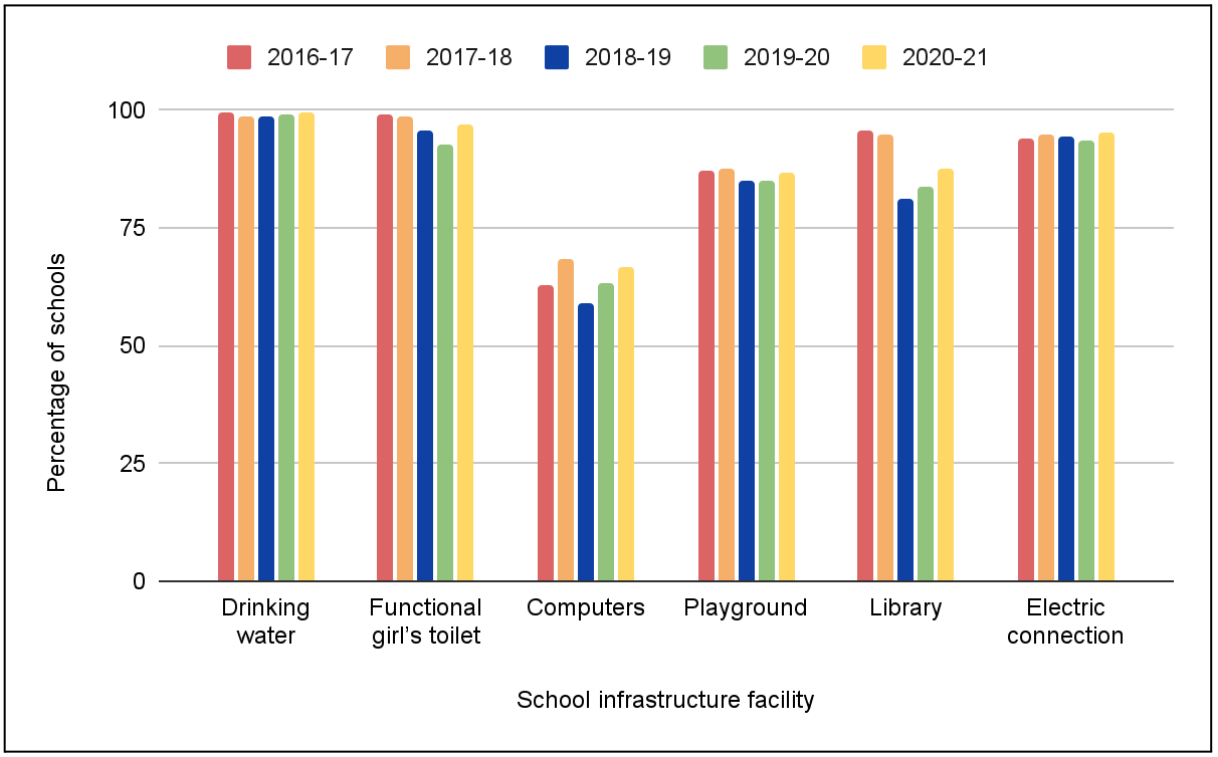
Table 8

Percentage of schools having specific infrastructure facility, Maharashtra

Year	Drinking water	Functional girl's toilet	Computers	Playground	Library	Electric connection
2016-17	99.6	99.0	62.9	87.3	95.7	94.0
2017-18	98.8	98.8	68.2	87.6	95.0	94.7
2018-19	98.8	95.9	58.9	85.1	81.2	94.3
2019-20	99.3	92.9	63.3	85.1	83.9	93.5

2020-21	99.4	96.9	66.7	86.8	87.5	95.3

Chart 6 - Percentage of schools having specific infrastructure facility, Maharashtra:



Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 6 provides a comparison of a few major infrastructure facilities available in the primary school of Maharashtra in 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21.

6.1 Drinking Water:

In 2016-17, 99.6% of primary schools had drinking water facilities in Maharashtra. In 2017-18 and 2018-19 it decreased to 98.8% - a drop of 0.8% is seen here. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 the drinking water facilities improved. In 2019-20, 99.3% schools and in 2020-21, 99.4% schools had drinking water facilities.

6.2 Functional GirlsToilet:

The toilet facility in a school is an important and necessary facility for a good school. In 2016-17, 99% of primary schools had functional girls toilets in Maharashtra. In 2017-18, 98.8% of schools had this facility. In 2018-19 and 2019-20 the percentage reduced to 95.9% and 92.9% respectively. The functional girls toilet facility in Primary school improved in 2020-21, 96.9% schools had the facility of functional girls toilet.

6.3 Computers:

India in 2021 is supposed to be digital and smart. But data provided by the government does not paint a very pretty picture. In the case of Maharashtra, in the year 2016-17 only 62.9% of the primary schools had a computer facility. About 68.2% schools had computer facilities in 2017-18 , an improvement by 5.3% over

the previous year. In 2018-19 the percentage of schools having computer facilities dropped to 58.9%, almost 9.3% drop compared to the previous year. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 the number of schools with computers has increased. About 63.3% of the schools had computers in 2019-20 whereas in 2020-21 it increased to 66.7%, an improvement by 7.8% compared to 2018-19 data.

6.4 Playground:

At elementary level of schooling i.e. primary and upper primary schools, the playground facilities are available in 87.3% schools had playground facilities for the students In 2016-17. In 2017-18, 87.6% schools had the facility of playgrounds. In 2018-19 and 2019-20 the percentage of schools having playground facilities dropped to 85.1%, almost 2.5% drop compared to the previous year. In 2020-21, 86.8% schools had playground facilities, which improved by 1.7% compared to 2019-20.

6.5 Library:

School libraries improve student's interest in studies, it plays a very important role while providing academic knowledge to the students. In 1916-17, 95.75% schools and in 2017-18, 95.0% schools had library facilities. In 2018-19 the percentage of schools having library facilities dropped to 81.2%, almost 13.8% drop compared to the previous year. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 the percentage of schools having library facilities improved a little by 83.9% and 87.5% respectively.

6.6 Electric Connection:

About 94.0% of schools had electric connections in 2016-17. In 2017-18 the facility of electric connection was available in 94.7% schools. After 2017-18 the percentage of schools having electric connection decreased to 94.3% in 2018-19, 93.5% in 2019-20 and 95.3% in 2020-21.

It shows that all the major infrastructural facilities have improved in 2020-21 compared to the previous years that is 2018-19 and 2019-20. Among all the facilities the percentage of schools having computer facilities is less, but it has shown an upward trend from 62.9% in 2016-17 to 66.7% in 2020-21.

4.8 Dropout rate in Primary and Upper primary

India has faced many challenges with a phenomenal growth in education in terms of the number of institutions or enrolments since independence. Dropout rates are one such problem.Students who enrolled in the education system from standard 1 and earlier were not able to complete their education till standard 10th and above. Dropout rates are considered to be a great wastage in the education system. Dropout rate in Primary and Upper primary, Maharashtra 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20 and 2020-21 are given in Table 7.

Table 9
Dropout Rate in Primary and Upper Primary Schools

Year	Primary	Change	Upper Primary	Change
2016-17	0.70	-	1.06	-
2017-18	0.21	-0.49	1.56	0.5
2018-19	1.09	0.88	2.15	0.59
2019-20	0.04	-1.05	1.17	-0.98
2020-21	1.00	0.96	1.53	0.36

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 7.1 - Dropout rate in Primary and Upper primary, Maharashtra:

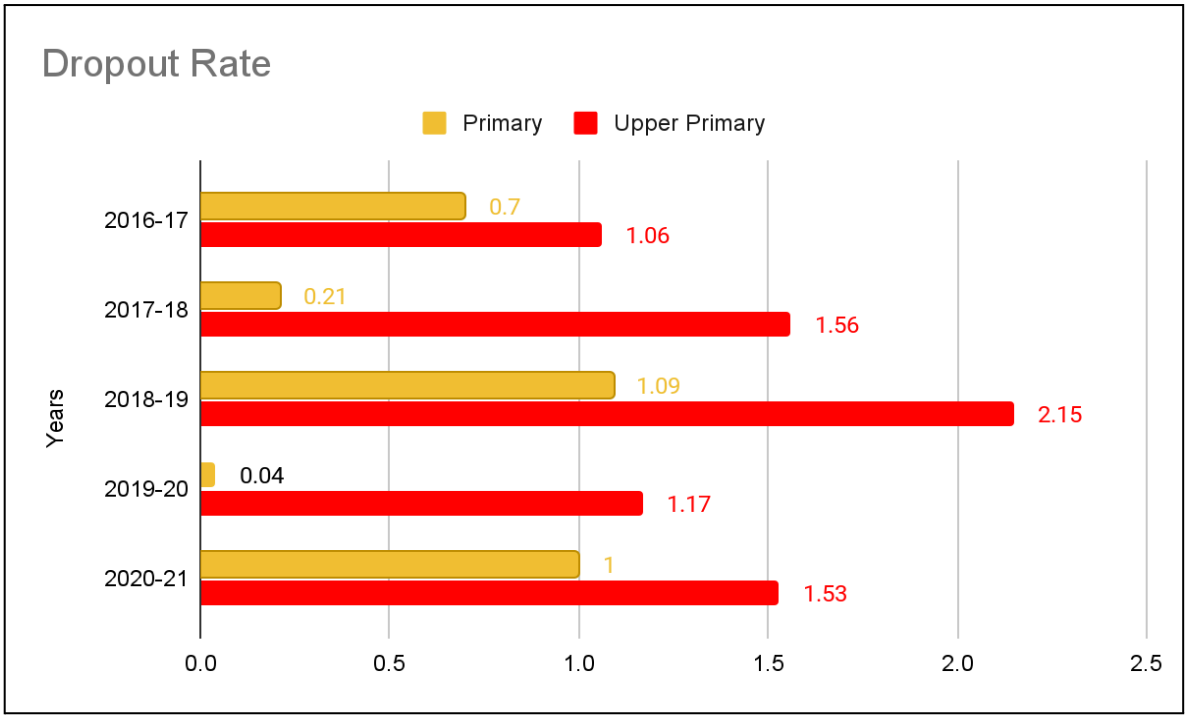
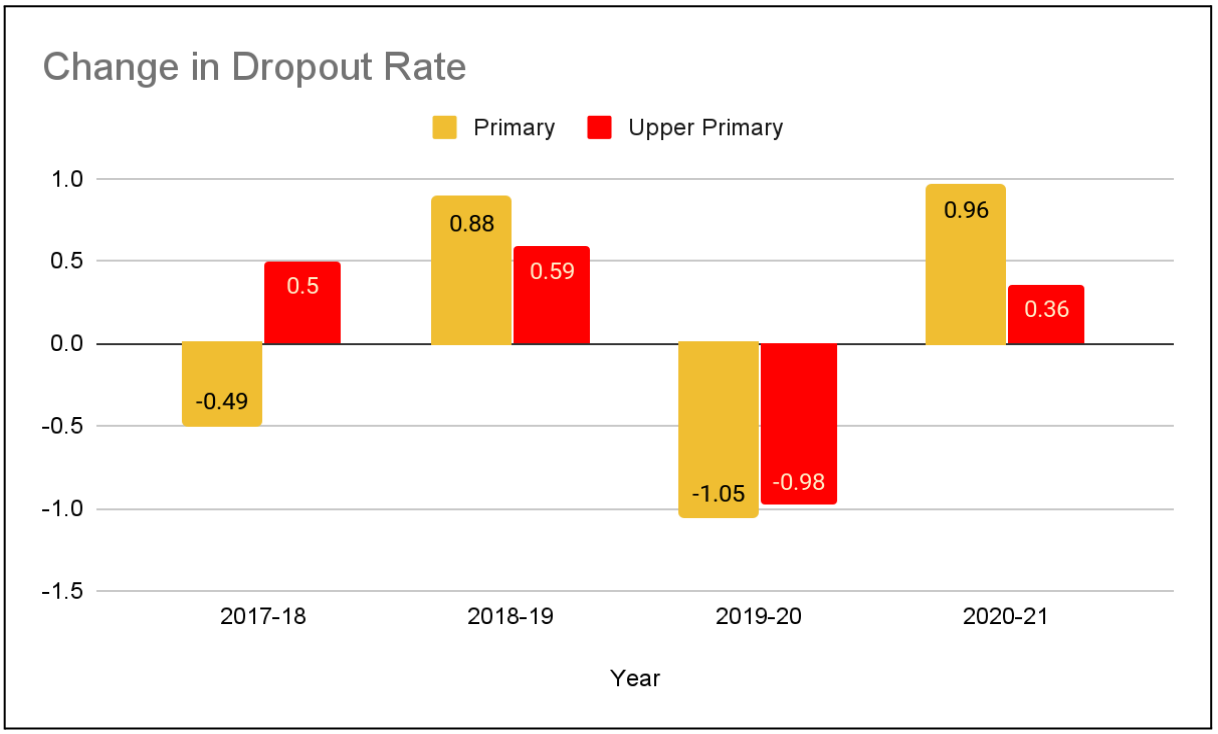


Chart 7.2 - Dropout rate in Primary and Upper primary, Maharashtra (change in terms of rate)



In 2016-17 the dropout rate in primary and upper primary schools of Maharashtra was 0.70 and 1.06 respectively. In 2017-18 the dropout rate in Primary schools was 0.21, it decreased by 0.49 whereas in Upper primary classes the dropout rate was 1.56, the rate increased by 0.5 as compared to the previous year. In 2018-19 the dropout rate increased in both primary and upper primary classes, In primary classes it was 1.09 and in upper primary it was 2.15. In 2019-20 the dropout rate in Primary and Upper primary was 0.04 and

1.17 respectively. Again in 2020-21 the dropout rate increased in both primary and upper primary classes. In primary classes the rate was1.00 and upper primary it was 1.53. The dropout rate was highest in 2018-19 in both primary and upper primary classes.

In spite of various schemes brought in to ensure free and compulsory education, the dropout rate at the upper primary level in Maharashtra continues to rise. The dropout rate of upper primary students has gone up from 1.06% (2016-17) to 1.56% (2017-18) whereas it increased to 2.15 % in 2018-19.

The survey report has mentioned that Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme being implemented in the state from 2018-19 by subsuming three schemes, that is, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teachers Education to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education.

4.9 Sports education

The State Government has established Shiv Chhatrapati Kridapeeth in Pune with the motive of promoting sports and developing excellence by upgrading the skills of sports persons. The State level accredited players or players participating in authorised national sports competitions are given admission through direct entry. For selected players participating at State level, admission is given through skill tests. Eight to 10 years training is provided in 14 sports to the selected players. There are nine sports academies under the purview of the Kridapeeth. So far, 30 students from these academies were awarded Shiv Chhatrapati Sports Award of State and 81 players had represented the nation in international competitions. Medals received by students of sports

On an average 9,000 per trainee per month is spent by the government. Due to Covid-19 pandemic the selection procedure was not carried out in the year 2020-21.

Medals received by students of sports academies are given in Table 10.

Table 10
Medals received by students of sports academies

Year	No. of Trainee	International level medals	National Level Medals	State Level Medals
2016-17	607	22	81	251
2017-18	561	5	97	314
2018-19	545	7	108	333

2019-20	545	4	80	304
2020-21	408	-	-	-

Note : Due to covid-19 pandemic State and National level competitions were not organised.
Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

The number of trainees seems to decrease every year. In 2016-17, 607 trainees were there, the number decreased to 561 in 2017-18, 545 in 2018-19, and 408 in 2020-21. Many medals are received by the students at State level, National level and International level.

4.10 Schemes to encourage education, enrolment & attendance:

A. Samagra Shiksha

Samagra Shiksha is being implemented in the State from 2018-19. Under this programme three schemes, viz. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE)** are subsumed to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education from preschool to senior secondary stage as envisaged in one of the Sustainable Development Goals. The main objectives of Samagra Shiksha are as follows:

- To provide quality education and enhancing learning outcomes of students
- To bridge Social and Gender Gaps in School Education
- To ensure equity and inclusion at all levels of school education
- To ensure minimum standards in schooling provisions
- To promote Vocationalisation of education
- To implement Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009
- To strengthen and up-grade State councils of education research and training/State Institutes of Education and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) as a nodal agencies for teacher training

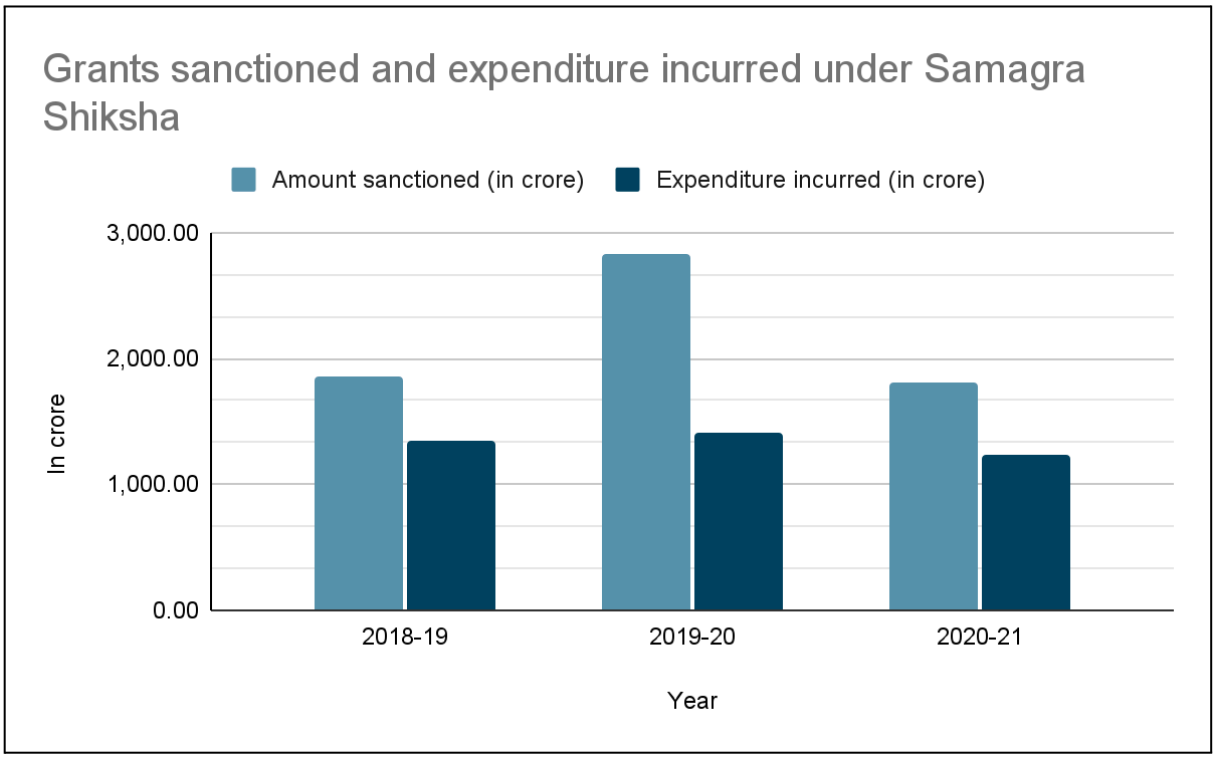
  Details of grants sanctioned and expenditure incurred under Samagra Shiksha is given in Table 9

Table 11
Grants sanctioned and expenditure incurred under Samagra Shiksha

Year	Amount sanctioned (in crore)	Expenditure incurred (in crore)
2018-19	1,854.54	1,354.06
2019-20	2,825.47	1,404.53
2020-21	1,807.49	1,239.30

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 8 shows the details of grants sanctioned and expenditure incurred under Samagra Shiksha.



B. <u>Mid Day Meal Scheme</u>

The School Education Department of Maharashtra has implemented the Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM) Since January 2003. The scheme is implemented for children in Std I to V in Government schools, schools

run by local bodies, Government aided private schools and students enrolled in Education Guarantee Scheme Centre i.e, Vastishalas and Alternative and Innovative Education Centres i.e. Mahatma Phule Education Guarantee Scheme Centres.

'Mid Day Meal Scheme' is being implemented in the State with a view to enhance enrolment & attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children studying in primary & upper primary schools. Under this scheme, cooked meals are provided to the children.

During Covid-19 pandemic lockdown period, the government distributed food grains viz. rice, gram, moong dal, etc. to eligible students either in schools or at door step. Food grains were delivered at the doorstep to all divyang students.

Objectives: The objectives of the mid day meal scheme are:

(i) Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I – VIII in Government, Local Body and Government aided schools, and EGS and AIE centres.

(ii) Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.

(iii) Providing nutritional support to children of primary stage in drought-affected areas during summer vacation.

Progress of Mid Day Meal Scheme

Table 12

Mid Day Meal Scheme: Expenditure incurred in crore

Year	I -V	Change in Number	Change in %	VI- VIII	Change in number	Change in %
2016-17	666	-	-	451	-	-
2017-18	747	81	10.84%	585	134	22.9%
2018-19	938	191	20.36%	628	43	6.84%
2019-20	808	-130	-16.08%	661	33	4.99%
2020-21	776	-32	-4.12%	635	-26	-4.09%

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 9.1 Progress in mid day meal scheme expenditure incurred in crore.

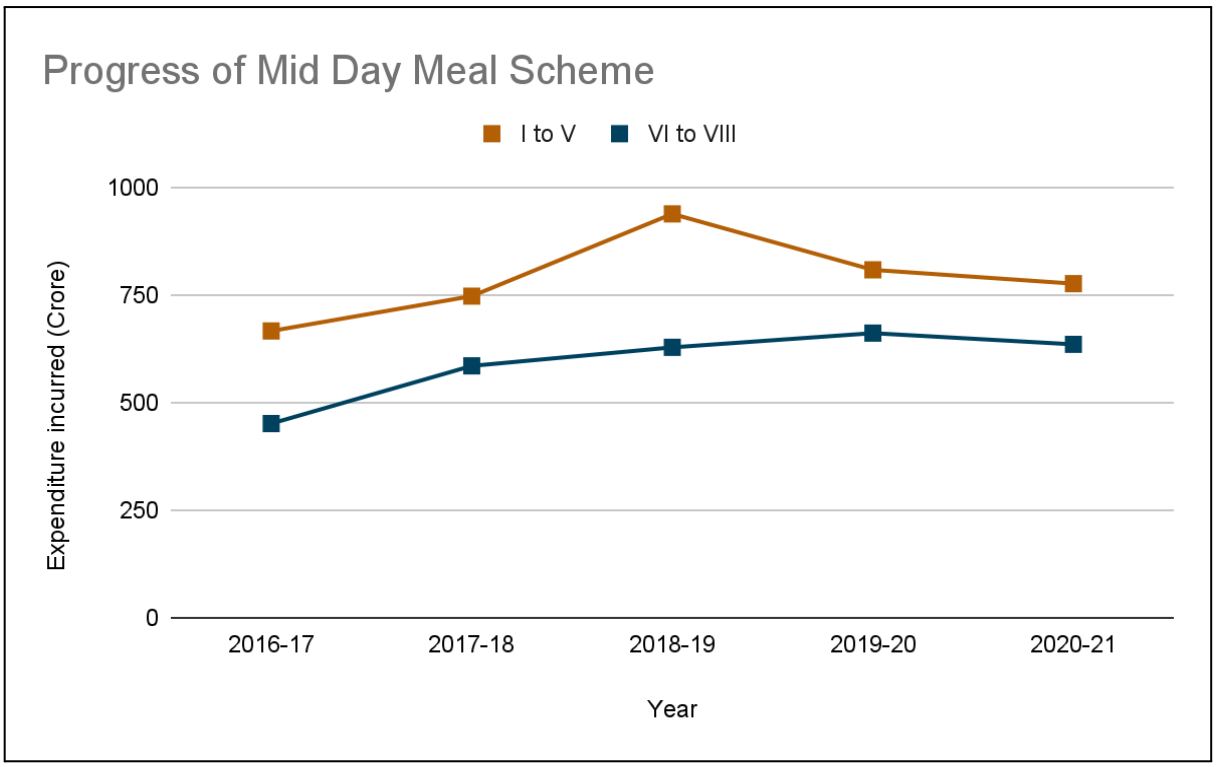
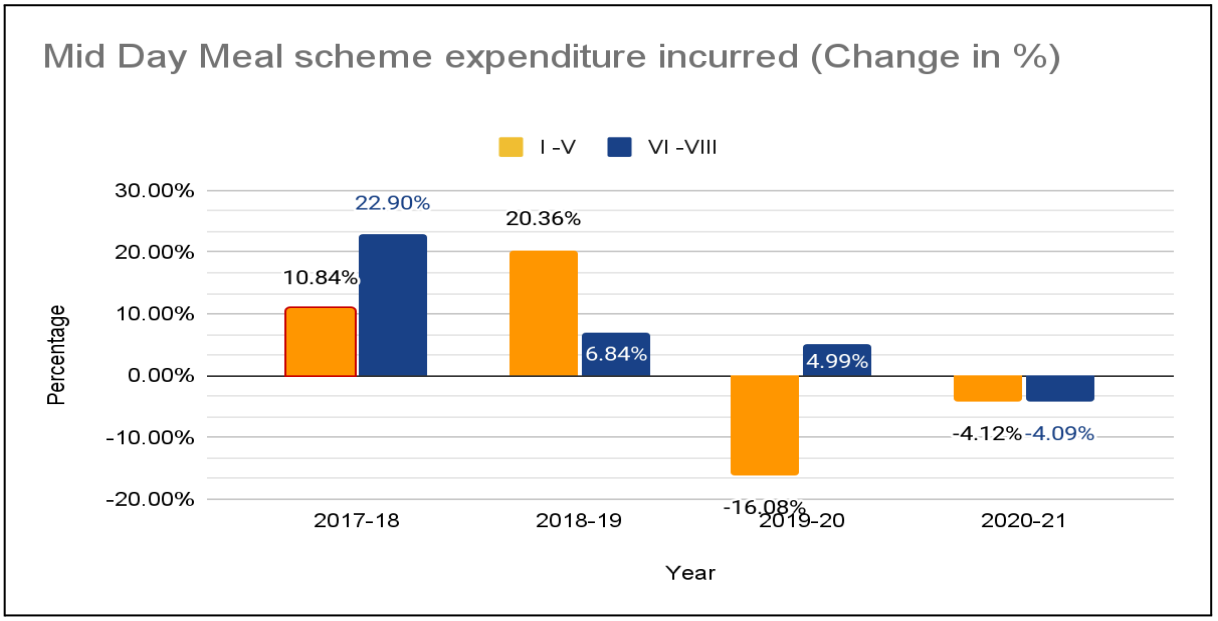


Chart 9.2 Mid Day Meal scheme expenditure incurred (Change in %)



Expenditure incurred for the mid day meal scheme in 2016-17 was Rs. 666 crore for Primary level (I to V) and Rs. 451 crore for Upper Primary classes. In 2017-18 and 2018-19, the expenditure received for both the levels increased. For Primary it was Rs. 747 crore in 2017-18 and Rs. 938 crore in 2018-19 whereas for Upper Primary it was Rs. 585 crore in 2017-18 and Rs. 628 crore in 2018-19. In 2019-20 and 2020-21 the

expenditure incurred for the mid day meal scheme reduced compared to the previous years. In 2019-20 it was 808 crore for Primary and 661 crore for Upper Primary classes. In 2020-21 the expenditure received was 776 core for Primary and 635 crore for Upper Primary.

In terms of change in percentage we can notice that expenditure incurred under Primary level has increased by 10.84% in 2017-18 and by 20.36% in 2018-19. After that in 2019-20 and 2020-21 we can see the expenditure received for the mid day meal scheme reduced by 16.08% and 4.12% respectively.

Table 13

Mid Day Meal Scheme: Beneficiaries in lakh

Year	I -V	Change in Number	Change in %	VI- VIII	Change in number	Change in %
2016-17	58.24	-	-	37.12	-	-
2017-18	57.51	-0.73	-1.26%	36.59	-0.53	-1.44%
2018-19	56.99	-0.52	-0.91%	36.34	-0.25	-0.68%
2019-20	51.47	-5.52	-10.72%	32.56	-3.78	-11.61%
2020-21	60.7	9.23	15.20%	39.2	6.64	16.9%

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 10.1 Beneficiaries of mid day meal scheme

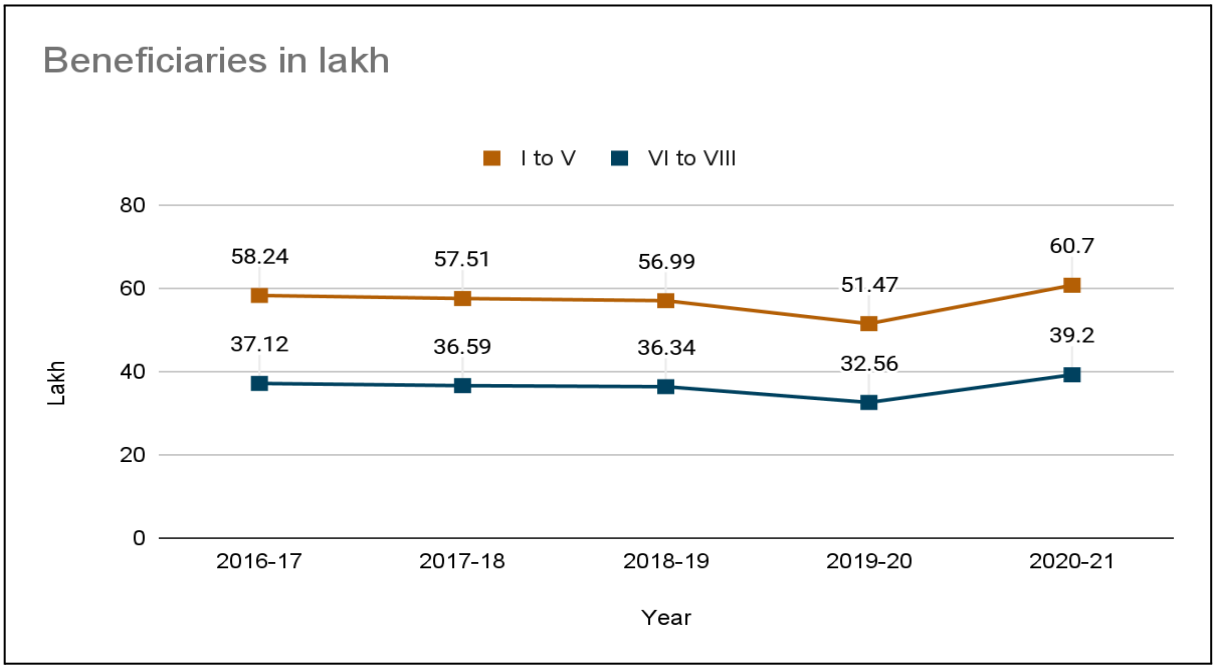
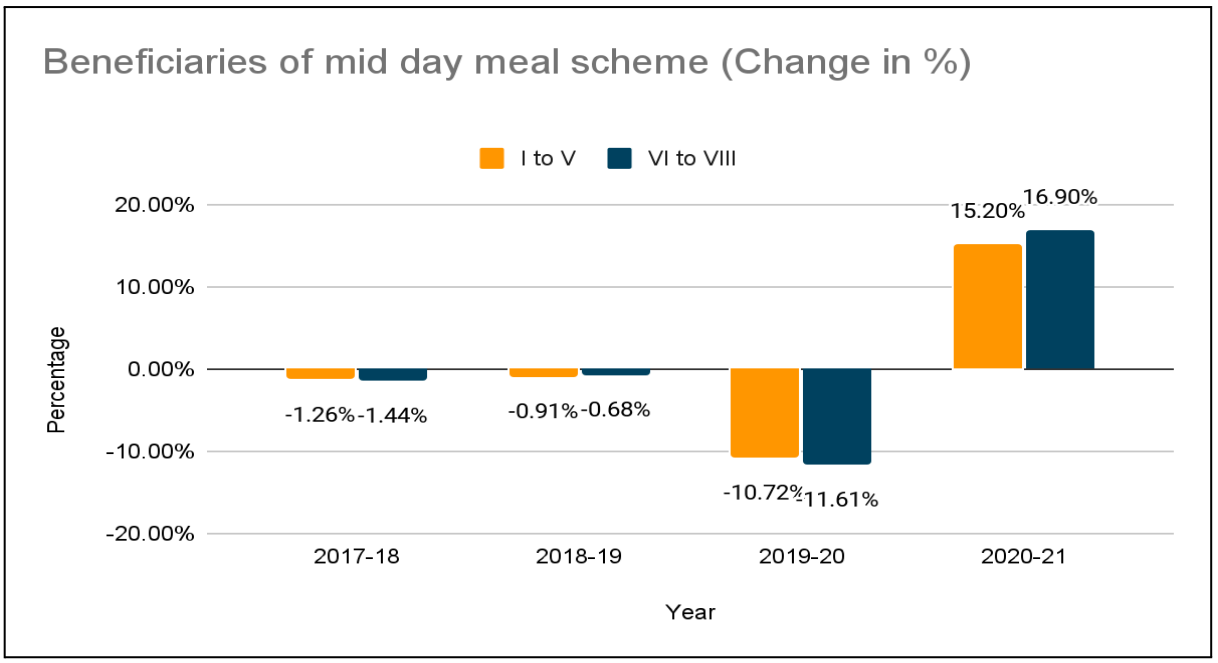


Chart 10.2 Beneficiaries of mid day meal scheme (Change in %)



The number of beneficiaries availing the benefit of the mid day meal scheme in Primary classes were 58.24 lakh in 2016-17, 57.51 lakh in 2017-18, 56.99 lakh in 2018-19, 51.47 lakh in 2019-20 and 60.7 lakh in 2020-21. Whereas in Upper Primary classes there were 37.12 lakh in 2016-17, 36.59 lakh in 2017-18, 36.34 lakh in 2018-19, 32.56 lakh in 2019-20 and 39.2 lakh beneficiaries in 2020-21. In 2019-20 the number of beneficiaries availing the benefit of the mid day meal scheme is the lowest. School closures due to COVID-19 have badly affected the school food program across the globe. Students and families relying on these programs are further being pushed to hunger and poverty. Maximum number of beneficiaries are seen at both primary and upper primary levels in 2020-21,a rise of 15.20% compared to previous year and under the upper primary section it is 16.9% of rise.

Maharashtra has been successfully implementing the MDM scheme with the involvement and active participation of Village education Committee/ Ward Committees, Parents, Community. Self Help Group and NGOs are contributing positively in the successful execution of the mid day meal scheme. Each child in primary school/ EGS Centre is provided a nutritious cooked meal.

4.11 Out-of-school

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 is being implemented in the State from April, 2010. RTE Act provides the right to children for free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in neighbourhood school. The act ensures that no child is liable to pay any kind of fee, charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. Under this act, 25 percent of intake capacity is reserved in self-financed private schools (excluding minority schools) and admission as well as free education is provided to children of economically backward & deprived class from pre-primary to VIII standard.

- With a view to identify out-of-school children, GoM conducted a survey in 2015-16. According to the survey 74,971 children were found to be out of school, of which 50,682 were enrolled and efforts are made to enrol the remaining children in school.
- During the year 2017-18 upto December 48,379 children were out of school. Special training for 36,185 children was proposed, of which 15,529 were enrolled and efforts are being made to enrol the remaining.
- During 2018-19, out of school children enrolled were 42,768 and efforts are being made to mainstream all children. Of this, special training was imparted to 30,074 students.
- During 2019-20, efforts were made to bring 33,888 out of school children into the mainstream. Of this, special training was imparted to 20,921 students.
- During 2020-21, in all 26,453 out of school children were brought to mainstream. Of this, special training was imparted to 13,784 students.
- During 2021-22, in all 20,886 out of school children were brought to mainstream and of which special training is proposed for 12,344 students

Since inception of RTE Act, 5.76 lakh students received admission upto June, 2021.

4.12 Budget: Education, Sports, Art and Culture

The purpose of budgeting is to provide the best possible educational opportunities for every student in an educational institution. Budgets should also reflect the administration's ability to manage the financial affairs of the school. Table-12 gives an idea about the expenditure on development of education, sports, art and culture in Maharashtra from 2016 to 2020.

Budget: Education, Sports, Art and Culture
Table 14

Year	Rs. in Crore	Change in No.(crore)	Change in %
2016-17	45,358	-	-
2017-18	48,476	3118	6.4%
2018-19	50,922	2446	4.80%

2019-20	62,357	11435	18.33%
2020-21#	65,525	3168	4.83%

Revised Estimates

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22

Chart 11.1 Budget: Education, Sports, Art and Culture, Rs. in crore

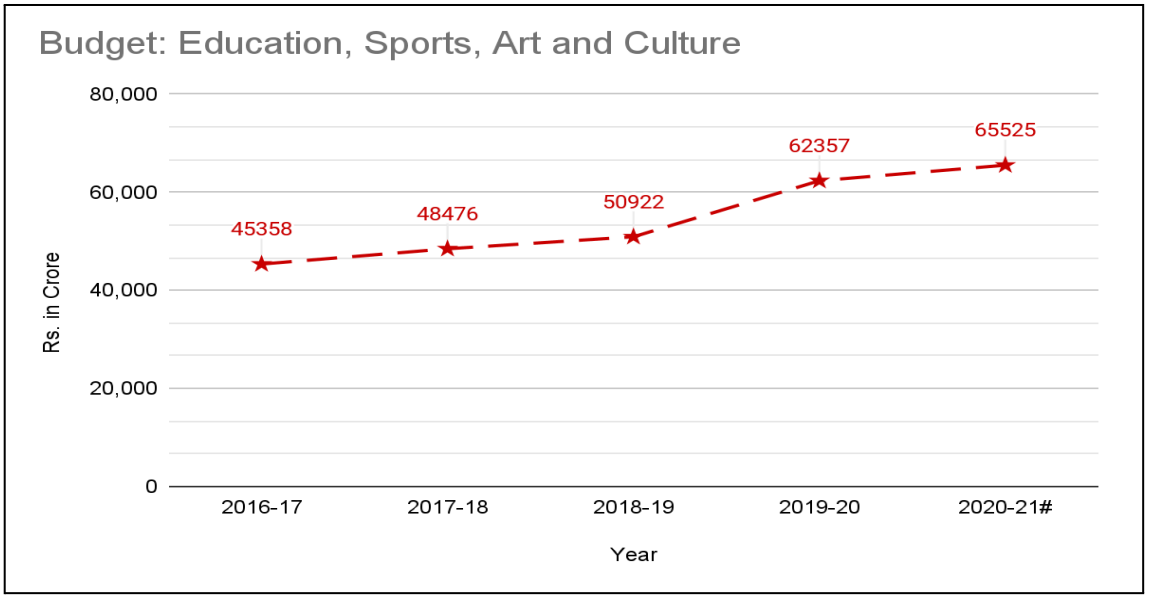
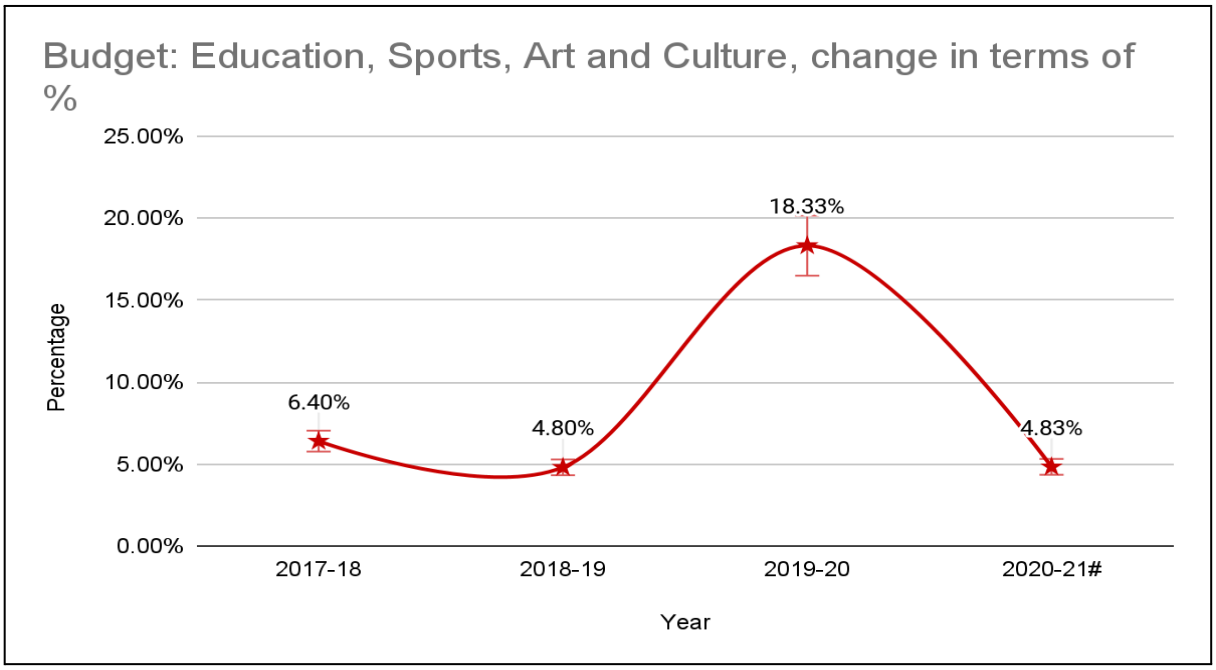


Chart 11.2 Budget: Education, Sports, Art and Culture, change in terms of percentage.



The expenditure on Education, Sports, Art and Culture in Maharashtra in the year 2016-17 was Rs. 45,358 crore which increased to 48,476 crore in 2017-18. In terms of percentage the expenditure increased by 6.40% in 2017-18. In 2018-19 the expenditure was 50,922 crore, again it increased by 4.80% compared to the previous year. Further in 2019-20 the expenditure on education including sports, art and culture was Rs. 62,357 crore, a highest raise of 18.33% is observed in 2019-20. In 2020-21 the expenditure was Rs. 65,525 crore. In terms of percentage the expenditure raised by 4.83% in 2020-21 as compared to the previous year.

4.13 Primary Education: Measures taken during Covid-19 pandemic

Due to Covid-19 pandemic all the schools were closed due to the lockdown imposed in the State from March 2020. The government effectively used information and communication technology to maintain the continuity in education of students during the lockdown period. The concept of ‘learning at home’ was adopted and education was given through various websites, portals, platforms and educational applications. In this process parents were involved. The following activities were carried out.

- **Abhyasmala (Education through ‘DIKSHA’ App)**: The National Council for Educational Research and Training developed a portal based on information technology viz. ‘DIKSHA Digital Infrastructure for School Education’. Daily more than two lakh students, teachers and parents use ‘DIKSHA App’. Of the total average use of ‘DIKSHA App’ in the country, the average in Maharashtra is 46 per cent
- **Shaikshanik dindarshika:** Maharashtra State Council for Educational Research and Training (MSCERT) prepared an educational calendar for students and teachers in the areas where internet facilities are not available. The educational calendar from June, 2020 to November, 2020 was distributed to the students, teachers and parents through smart PDFs as well as various WhatsApp groups
- **Distribution of textbooks:** The government distributed Textbooks to all students so that they could learn at home
- **Education through Geo TV and Geo Sawan:** Education was imparted to the students of class III to XII through 12 educational channels of Geo TV. Telecast of the lectures of expert teachers in the subject was carried out through these channels
- **Programmes on Doordarshan:** Education through educational programmes on Doordarshan such as Gali Gali Sim Sim, Tilly Milli, Vividh Gyanganga, etc. is implemented
- **Google Classroom Online Training**: In order to keep interaction between students and teachers, MSCERT arranged online training programmes of Google Classroom for the teachers in the State
- **Saturday Stories:** In order to develop reading skills in the students, an online programme 'Saturday Stories' was launched to read ethical and cognitive stories with the help of UNICEF and Pratham foundation

- **Maitri karuya Vidnyan va Ganitashi:** Experiments and activity based innovative online workshops on science and mathematics were conducted under the joint venture of MSCERT and Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune
- **Mid day Meal Scheme:** During lockdown, instead of cooked food government distributed food grains viz. rice, gram, moong dal, etc. to the eligible students either in schools or at door step. Special instructions were issued to deliver food grains at door step of all divyang students

4.14 Hypothesis Testing

It is hypothesised that due to covid-19 pandemic like any critical sector, education has been hit hard. Students, schools, colleges and universities have been deeply impacted. The total primary schools in Maharashtra reduced from 106491 to 106338 in 2020-21. Similarly the enrolment in school also decreased from 156.9 lakh to 153.9 lakh in 2020-21.

Total Primary Schools in Maharashtra

Year	Total Primary schools	Change in Number	Change in %

2019-20	1,06,491	254	0.23%
2020-21	1,06,338	-153	-0.14%

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20 & 2020-21

Total Enrolment in Primary schools in Maharashtra

Year	Enrolment in school (lakh)	Change in Number	Change in %
2019-20	156.9	-0.5	-0.3
2020-21	153.9	-3	-1.94

Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2019-20 & 2020-21

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion and Recommendation

- In 2017-18, total 15,58,903 schools were there in India. The number of schools decreased in 2018-19 to 15,51,000. Further in 2019-20 the number of schools were 15,07,708 and in 2020-21 the number increased to 15,9,136. On comparing the data from 2017 to 2020, number schools were highest in 2017-18 and lowest in 2019-20.

- The total number of schools in India and States/UT. According to the data collected India has a total **1507708** schools whereas in the state of Maharashtra there are a total **110229** schools including

Government Aided, Private Unaided and Other schools. Among all the States and Union Territories, Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of schools (254352) and Lakshadweep has the lowest number of schools (45).

- In Maharashtra as of 2016-17 there were 1,04,971 Primary schools, the number increased to 1,06,546 in 2017-18. Further the number of primary schools decreased as compared to 2017-18 data. In 2020-21 the number of primary schools was 1,06,338. In the year 2018-19 the number of primary schools was the lowest i.e 106237. The absolute change in the number of primary schools in terms of percentage in 2017-18 increased by 1.48%. After 2017-18 it is showing a decreasing trend, in 2018-19 it is -0.29%, in 2019-20 it is 0.23% and in 2020-21 it is -0.14%.

- The Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2020-21 has revealed that enrolment of students at the primary education level in Maharashtra has been sliding for the last three academic years. According to the data compiled in the last two economic surveys, the number of students enrolled at the primary level (Class 1 to 8) dipped from 159 lakh in 2016-17 to 153.9 lakh in 2020-21 – a drop of 3.8%.

- Girls enrolment in 2016-17 in the primary schools of Maharashtra was 46.9%. In 2020-21 it became 47.1%. From 2019-20 to 2020-21 an upward trend is seen in girls enrolment.Which shows a positive outlook towards gender equality.

- The number of primary teachers in Maharashtra was 5.2 lakh in 2016-17 which increased to 5.4 lakh in 2018-19, but after that the number has decreased, in 2020-21 there were 5.1 lakh teachers.

- As per the Unified District Information System For Education Plus (UDISE), except 2017-18 and 2019-20 the PTR from 2016-17 to 2020-21 is 30:1, which is according to the norms.

- Buildings, classrooms, laboratories, and equipment- education infrastructure - are crucial elements of learning environments in schools. In the primary schools of Maharashtra the major infrastructural facilities have improved in 2020-21 compared to the previous years that is 2018-19 and 2019-20. Among all the facilities the percentage of schools having computer facilities is less, but it has shown an upward trend from 62.9% in 2016-17 to 66.7% in 2020-21.

- Dropout rates are considered to be a great wastage in the education system. In spite of various schemes brought in to ensure free and compulsory education, the dropout rate at the upper primary level in Maharashtra continues to rise. The dropout rate of upper primary students has gone up from 1.06% (2016-17) to 1.56% (2017-18) whereas it increased to 2.15 % in 2018-19.

- The survey report has mentioned that Samagra Shiksha is an integrated scheme being implemented in the state from 2018-19 by subsuming three schemes, that is, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Teachers Education to ensure inclusive and equitable quality

education from preschool to senior secondary stage as envisaged in one of the Sustainable Development Goals.

- In 2018-19, the amount of 1854.54 crore was sanctioned under Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan out of which expenditure of 1354.06 crore was incurred. In 2019-20 the amount sanctioned was more than the previous year and the expenditure incurred was also more.

- Maharashtra has been successfully implementing the MDM scheme with the involvement and active participation of Village education Committee/ Ward Committees, Parents, Community. Self Help Group and NGOs are contributing positively in the successful execution of the mid day meal scheme. Each child in primary school/ EGS Centre is provided a nutritious cooked meal.

- The expenditure on school education in 2020-21 increased by 30 percent compared to the 2016-17 expenditure in education.

- The Maharashtra government needs to substantially step up and sustain investments on education for a longer period, in order to reap the benefits from this sector.

- Teacher education and infrastructure building should be the immediate priority for the state.

- State should design its school education budget by allocating more funds for interventions towards marginalised children.

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