



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Goal 5 talks about gender equality and Goal 4 talks about quality education and ensuring that all girls and boys get complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education by 2030



Girl Child Education

Girl child education in India has been historically fraught with a myriad of challenges. The issue is doubly daunting as multiple heterogeneous problems exist from both the supply (availability of schools, teachers availability in the schools, quality of teaching and budgetary provisions for elementary and higher education etc.) and the demand side (access to schools, knowledge of services provisions, utilizations of services provisioned etc).

Policy Efforts



The History of policy efforts to improve the condition of girl child education in India is almost half a century old and over the years, girl child incentivisation schemes have emerged to be a popular vehicle for remedying the problem.

Child Rights and You (CRY) is a prominent Indian Non-Government Organization (NGO) working for the rights of underprivileged children across India for over four decades.

In 2018-19, CRY undertook a research study on Girl Child Education. The objectives were to understand the two key aspects of the girl child education in contemporary India - factors affecting enrolment and continuation including the response of girls and their families, and policy initiatives at incentivising education by the State. The study investigates the interplay of possible causal factors at the system, society and family levels including significant shifts in the State's approach to the question of educating the girl child in the arena of incentivisation.

The Government of India has over the decades invested continually in promoting the school education of girls through enabling infrastructure and school facilities and provision of incentives. "The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 enabled unrestricted and mandatory education for all children under 14 years of age in the country". In addition, multiple schemes exist to promote school girls' education for all ages - these include cash incentives, conditional transfers, provision of school supplies, cycles for easy transport, residential facilities, etc.

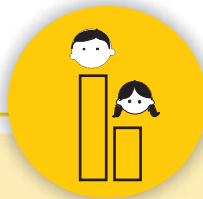
The study was carried out in four states namely Haryana, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, one from each zone- North, East, West and South respectively was chosen based on criticality mapping of education indicators.

A total of 1604 girls between 11-18 years, and their parents were interviewed to understand their schooling experiences. 16 focus group discussions (FGDs) with girls were also conducted. Additionally, 69 Key Informant Interviews (KII) with school teachers and scheme implementers (e.g. RMSA Coordinators, Block Development Officers etc.) were conducted to understand the supply side issues. The critical findings of the study are given below. The complete study report is available on the [CRY Website](#)



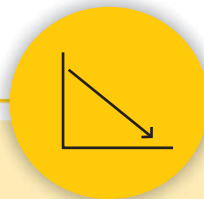
Low Access to Secondary and Higher Secondary Education

Less than 15% of schools in India offer secondary education and only 7% have facilities for higher secondary education.



Low Enrolment of Girls

Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), which is age appropriate enrolment, stands at 52%.



Dropout of Girls

Increases steeply during Secondary education, where the provisioning of RTE ends.

¹Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan was a centrally sponsored scheme of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, for the development of secondary education in public schools throughout India. It has been subsequently subsumed into Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan in 2018-19.

Sample Characteristics

1 83% girls interviewed were in school.

2 62% girls interviewed were between 11-14 years; the rest were between 15-18 years.

3 41% of the respondents had more than 1 girl child living in the household.

4 61% parent interviews were conducted with the mother of the girl child, 38% of respondents were fathers and the rest were other guardians family members/ relatives

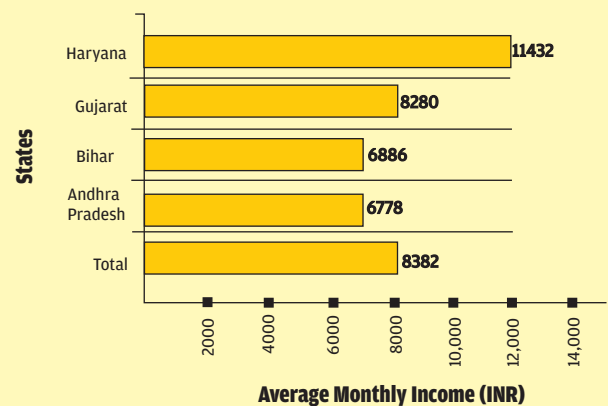
5 More than 90% of the respondents were from Hindu families across all four study states.

6 Average annual expenditure on education varied from 2% to 4% of income across all the 4 states - mean spending stood at 3% of average annual income.

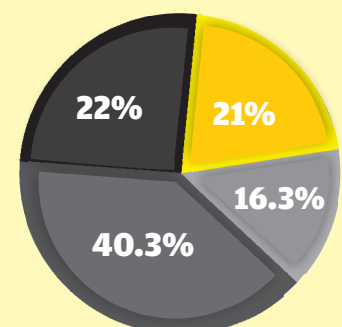
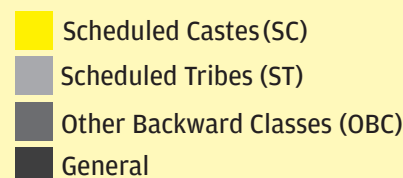
Parent's Educational Qualification

	Bihar (n=397)	Gujarat (n=392)	Andhra Pradesh (n=390)	Haryana (n=413)	Total (n=1592)
Non-literate	55.4%	46.7%	71.0%	31.7%	50.9%
Primary	32.8%	34.0%	54.0%	26.6%	33.9%
Upper primary	27.1%	27.8%	26.5%	30.1%	28.3%
High school	26.0%	28.2%	15.0%	26.6%	25.2%
Senior Secondary school	8.5%	6.2%	3.5%	12.8%	8.7%
Above school	5.6%	3.8%	0.9%	3.9%	3.8%
Median years of schooling	8.0%	7.0%	5.0%	8.0%	8.0%

Household Income (INR.) (n= 930)



Respondents by Community (n=1592)



Mother's Occupation
n=930

- Farmer/ Cultivator - 36%
- Labourer - 28%
- Housewife - 20%
- Shop/ Business Owner - 8%
- Job/ Service - 6%
- Unemployed - 2%

Father's Occupation
n=570

- Farmer/ Cultivator - 48%
- Labourer - 36%
- Shop/ Business Owner - 9%
- Job/ Service - 5%
- Unemployed - 2%

Dropout Girls- Characteristics, Disablers and Current Status

1

More than 2/3rds of the girls had dropped out before the age of 14 years. However, only 58% of the dropout girls reported an educational attainment of upper primary level or lower levels.

Half of the girls (49.4%) belonged to the households having a monthly family income less than equal to Rs. 5,000, and around 89% of dropout girls belonged to families whose monthly income was INR 10,000 or lesser.

2

CHARACTERISTICS OF DROPOUT GIRLS

Educational Attainment of Dropout Girls

Educational Levels	Bihar (n=35)	Gujarat (n=130)	Andhra Pradesh (n=33)	Haryana (n=60)	Total (n=258)
Primary (I-V)	28.6%	26.2%	27.3%	10.3%	23.0%
Middle Class (VI-VIII)	40.0%	35.4%	48.5%	2%	35.5%
Secondary Class (IX-X)	25.7%	33.1%	21.2%	46.6%	33.6%
Higher Secondary Class (XI-XII)	5.7%	5.4%	3.0	17.2%	7.8%

Current status of Dropout Girls



Total (n=258)

Bihar (n=35)

Gujarat (n=130)

Andhra Pradesh (n=33)

Haryana (n=60)

Parents trying to get married

20.0%

3.9%

21.2%

11.7%

9.7%

Engaged in household work

60.0%

95.4%

72.7%

81.7%

84.5%

Taking care of younger siblings

8.6%

16.9%

12.1%

20.0%

15.9%

Helping in family occupation

14.3%

64.6%

30.3%

18.3%

42.6%

Working outside

7.1%

7.7%

30.3%

5.0%

11.2%

Sitting idle

28.6%

27.7%

6.1%

18.3%

22.9%

Vocational training course

0.0%

5.4%

0.0%

13.3%

5.8%

Others

2.9%

0.8%

3.0%

6.7%

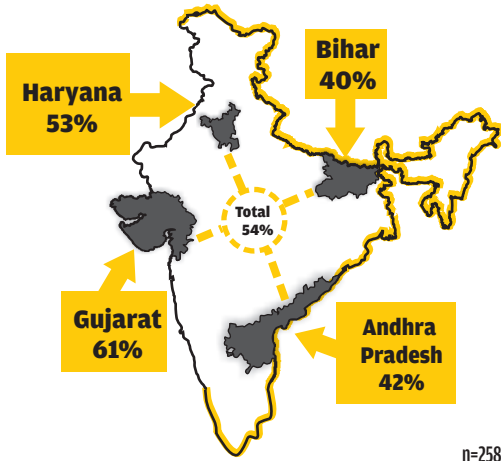
2.7%

3

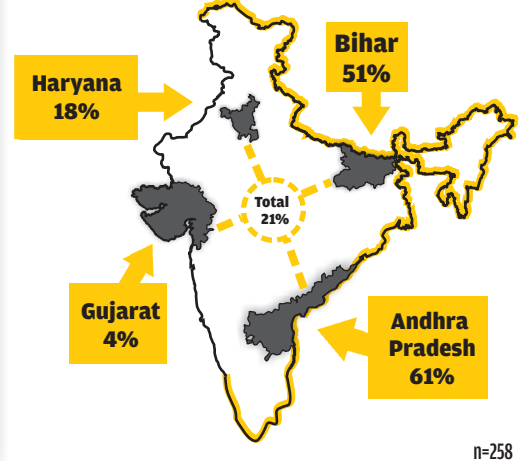
Dropout Girls- Characteristics, Disablers and Current Status



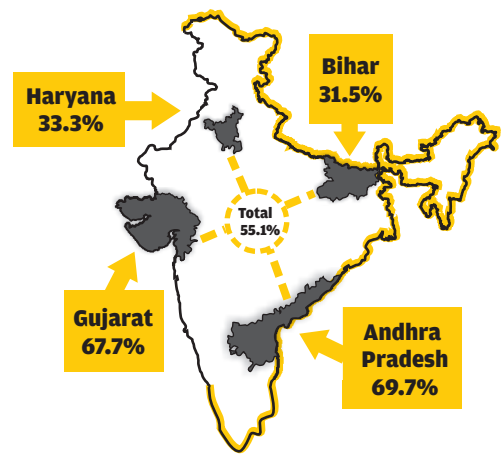
Percentage of girls who took their own decision to drop out of school



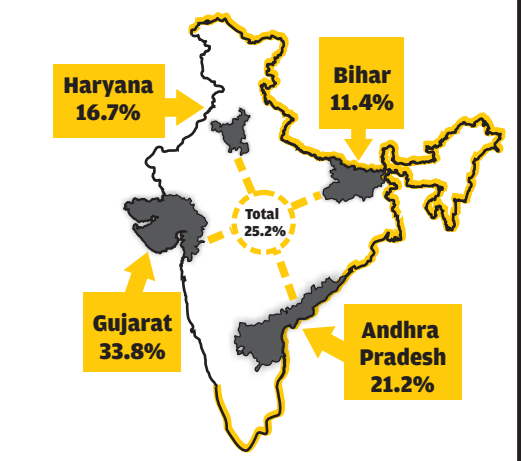
Girls who dropped out of school due to unaffordability of education



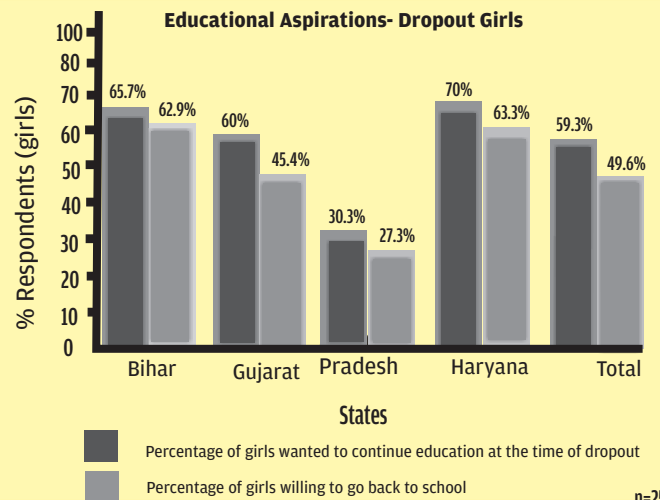
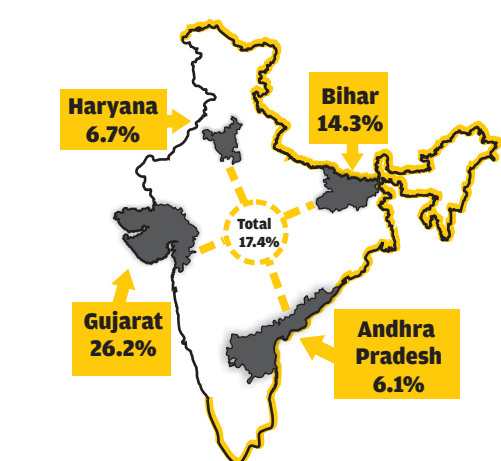
Percentage who stated that household chores/sibling care contributed to their dropout



Girls who stated that distances/access to school was one of the reasons for dropout



No Motivation to Continue



School-Going Girls- Enablers and Disablers

More than 90% of the girls overall reported no resistance from their families








1

Enablers for School Going Girls

2

A majority of the school-going girls (>90%) in all states except Andhra Pradesh (71%) reported high levels of self-motivation to go to school. A similar trend was observed for encouragement from families to attend school with more than 90% of girls from all states except Andhra Pradesh (65%).

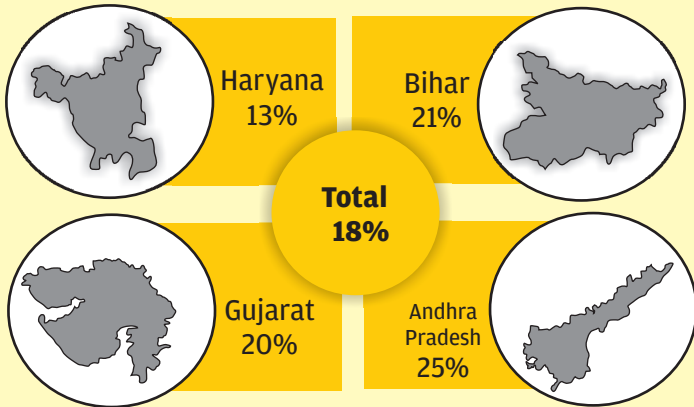
School infrastructure and Amenities*

	Bihar (n=362)	Gujarat (n=264)	Andhra Pradesh (n=363)	Haryana (n=357)	Total (n=1346)
 Safe Drinking Water Available	92.8%	98.9%	98.6%	95.2%	96.2%
Proper Sitting Arrangement	87.3%	98.5%	96.4%	88.2%	92.2%
 Separate Toilet for Girls	75.4%	96.2%	81.3%	97.5%	86.9%
Boundary Wall	78.5%	95.8%	87.3%	91%	87.6%
 Playground Facility	89.2%	100%	85.7%	88.5%	90.2%
Ramp	55.8%	54.25%	28.1%	35.6%	42.6%
 Electricity	81.25%	99.6%	89.8%	97.5%	91.5%
Computer	24.3%	94.3%	82.6%	75.4%	67.3%
 Mid-Day Meal facility	89.5%	98.1%	95%	96.9%	94.6%
Library	71.5%	83.7%	54.5%	66.9%	68.1%
 Safe & Welcoming environment at school	83.7%	97%	86.8%	92.2%	89.4%
Separate teacher for each subject	89%	92.4%	95.3%	79.6%	88.9%
 Female teachers in the school	94.8%	96.2%	98.9%	91%	95.2%

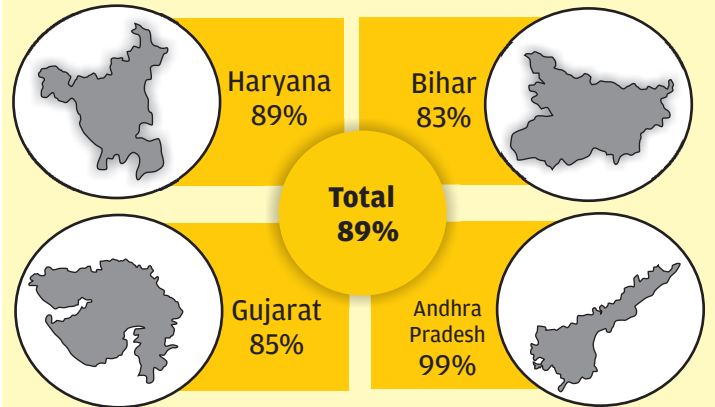
*The Responses are based on the interviews conducted with parents and not actual observations in schools and interviews with teachers. Responses are not indicative of whether the amenities are functioning.

School-Going Girls- Enablers and Disablers

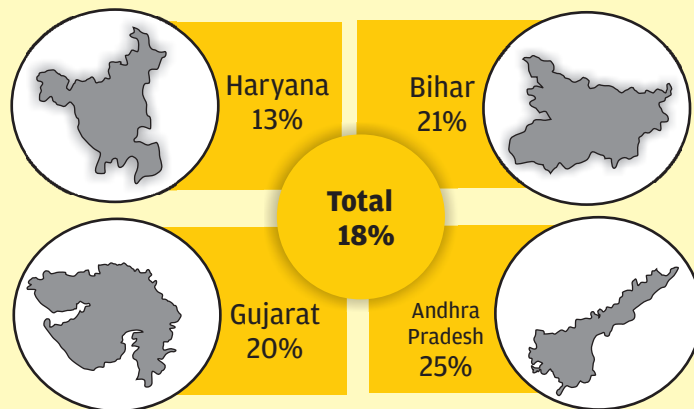
School-going Girls who reported not being comfortable in the absence of Female Teachers



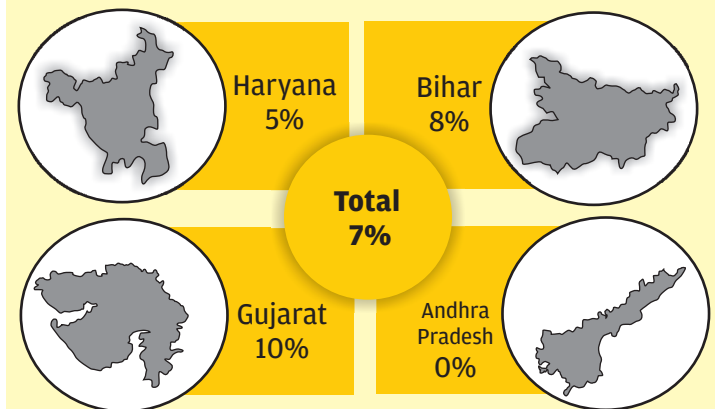
School-going girls who reported dependency on others for accompanying them to school



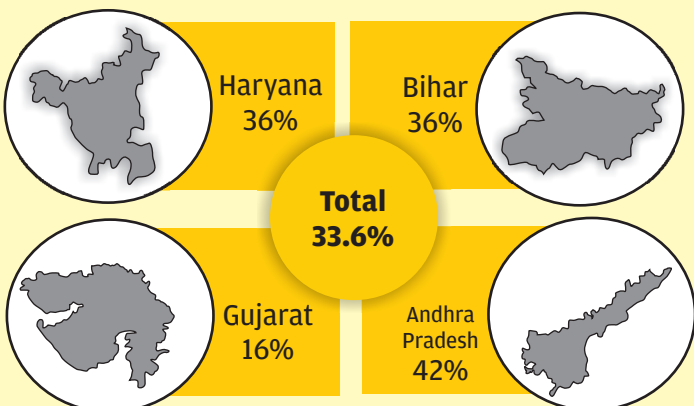
School-going girls who reported illness as a reason for absenteeism



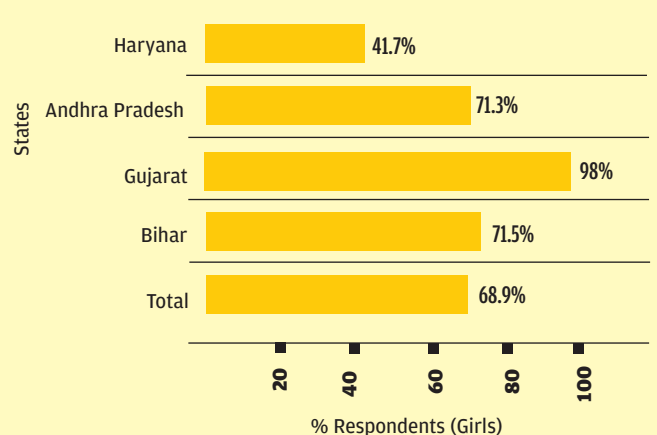
School-going girls who reported access issues in reaching school.



School-going girls who reported corporal punishment in schools



% of School-going girls who reported receiving Incentives from the State



Self and Family- Knowledge, Attitude & Practices related to Education

1

Participation in household chores was seen for school-going and dropout girls alike with 76% and 90% respectively.

Study findings indicate that sibling care was entrusted to dropout girls (and average of 13% of dropout girls were engaged in sibling care; this varied between 2.1% to 25.7% across states)

2

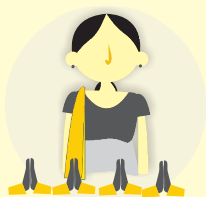
Girls's role in the family

3

Participation in economic activities outside the household was substantially higher for dropout girls at 28.5% compared to less than 5% of school -going girls.

Why is education important?

Perception of parents



52.3%

People will give more respect to an educated girl

34%

Increased chance in getting a respectable job



43.8%

Can easily get a job

17.9%

For becoming a better mother



19.4%

For getting a better paid job

28.7%

To face the challenges in life in a better way



10.9%

For getting better proposal for marriage

43.4%

To read and write



12.1%

For becoming financially independent

5.6%

To contribute to family income



Self and Family- Knowledge, Attitude & Practices related to Education

1 Responsibility of household work emerged as the biggest disabling factor with more than 1/3 rd of the parents (ranging from 33% to 67% among states) stating that it interferes with girls education.

Distance of school from the house emerged as the second biggest disabling factor with 1 in 4 parents citing it is a disabler.

2

TOP 3 DISABLING FACTORS

Pressures/ Interference from outside in the family, was the third biggest disabler to education with 10%-33% of the parents citing this reason.

3



84.1%

Parents believe that education more important than anything else



40%

Parents respect their daughter's preference for her future



27%

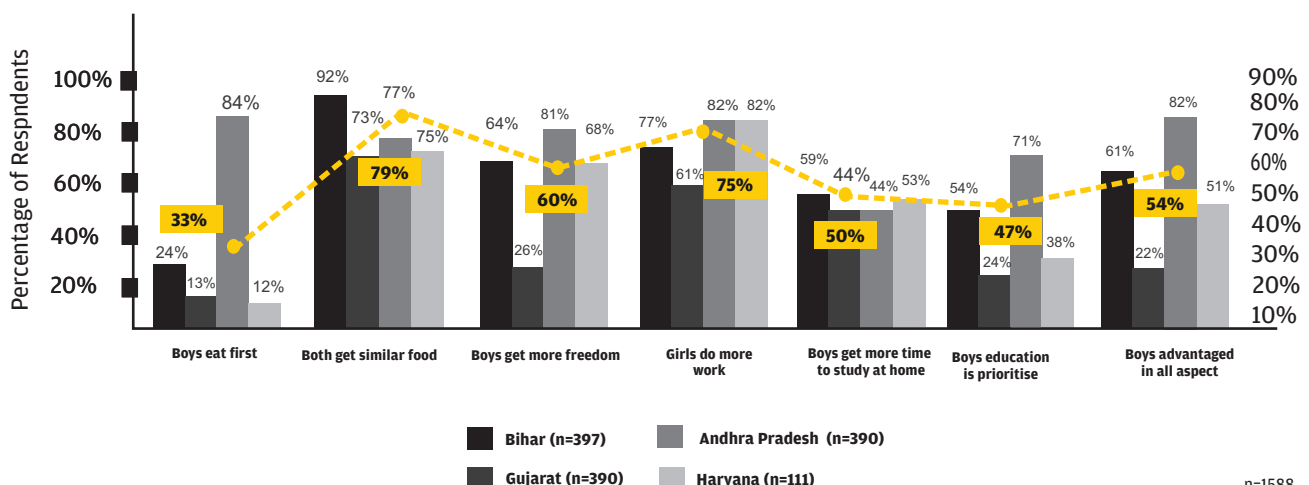
Parents reported pushing their girl child to attain as high education as possible



>90%

Parents in all states knew the correct age for marriage for girls.

Distribution of respondents by attitudes on food, health, education and mobility at home



INCENTIVISATION SCHEMES – AWARENESS, ACCESS AND UTILISATION

AWARENESS ABOUT INCENTIVISATION SCHEMES

1 Around 60% of parents (ranging from 20% in Andhra Pradesh and 86% in Gujarat) were aware of any incentivisation schemes by the Government for Girl Child Education.

69% of the school-going girls reported receiving incentives from the State.

2

88% of the parents believed that the State had a role to play in educating girls.

4

82% of the parents reported having a keen need for support from the State for educating their girl children.

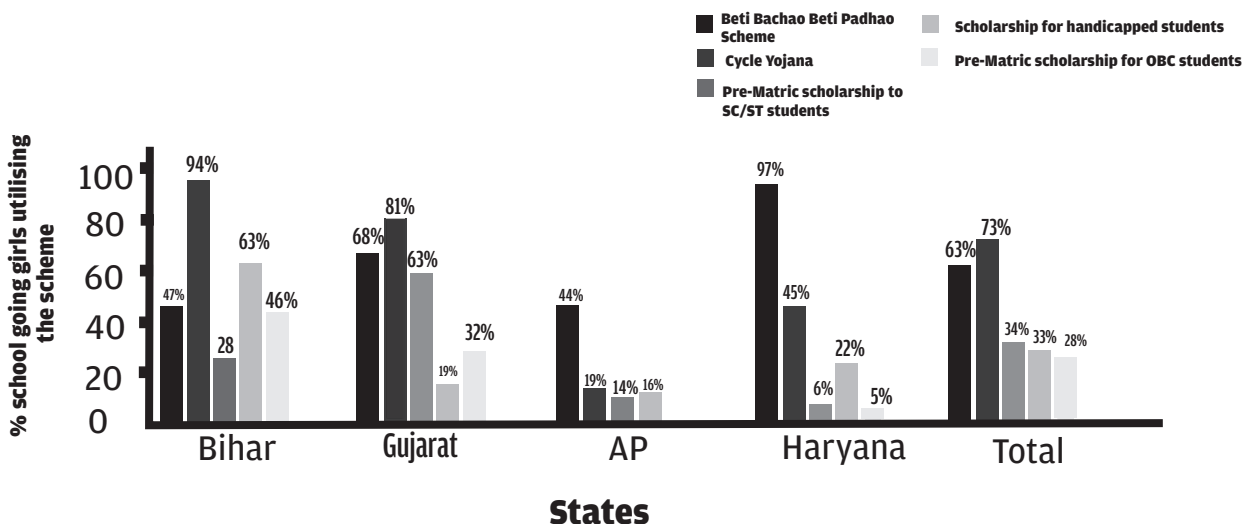
3

Incentives received by School-Going Girls

n=948

	Bihar (n=362)	Gujarat (n=264)	Andhra Pradesh (n=363)	Haryana (n=357)	Total (n=1346)
Scholarship	57.7%	94.7%	38.6%	35.9%	53%
Fees Waiver	11%	43.9%	17.6%	18.8%	21.3%
Free Books	27.6%	75.4%	25.1%	21%	35%
Uniform	42.5%	7.6%	21.5%	24.1%	25.1%
Transportation Facility	0%	5.3%	0.8%	0.8%	1.5%
Bicycle	17.1%	34.1%	3.9%	1.7%	12.8%
Others	1.1%	6.4%	8.0%	1.1%	2.1%
Nothing	28.5%	1.5%	28.7%	58.35%	31.1%

Utilisation of Top 5 most popular schemes (%)



n=380

INCENTIVISATION SCHEMES – AWARENESS, ACCESS AND UTILISATION



Key Messages

Strengthening RTE – Strengthening of implementation of Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009 and ensure its extension till higher secondary education. School distance and unaffordability of education emerged as main reason for dropout. The proper implementation of norms laid down in the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (now subsumed under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan) and extension of RTE Act will help in containing the dropout rates at different transition periods like from 5th to class 6th, 8th to 9th and 10th to 11th class. Extension of the Right to Education Act up to higher secondary levels would also improve availability of affordable schooling with quality education.

Attitudinal Change toward Girls' Engagement in Household Chores - Girls have significant burden of household responsibilities. Majority of school going (76%) and drop out girls (90%) were participating in household chores. One in every fourth drop out girl was contributing to family income by working outside as well and then one in every tenth drop out girl resumed the role of caregiver to siblings. Strengthening of Central and State scheme components designed to address attitudinal change towards girl child is therefore a pressing need. There is also a need for universalization of crèche / other care provisions for younger children as this will not only ensure continuation of girls education, but also ensure early childhood care and education facilities for children below 6 years.

Strengthening design and implementation of schemes - More than 80% of the dropout girls were from socioeconomically backward families and family income and educational expenditure were significantly correlated. There are several schemes targeted to encourage completion of girls' education while simultaneously aiming to address issues such as child labour or child marriage. Largely the eligibility criteria and provisions for financial support are contingent on girls being unmarried or them not engaged in any form of child labour. Field experience reveals that it is socio-economic and cultural factors that push girls into labour or marriage, and their inability to avail educational benefits through incentivisation schemes further exacerbates their challenge.

Therefore, there is a keen need to revisit eligibility criteria and conditionalities attached with schemes to address issues of vulnerable children. Public display of all schemes and incentives related to girl's education at Panchayat-level and in line departments could be a useful tool.

Monitoring of Scheme Beneficiaries - Scholarships (54%) and free books (35%) were the most cited incentives received by school going girls. However, around 31 percent girls across all states reported not receiving any incentive in the school. In Haryana, a high proportion of girls (58%) reported receiving nothing in schools. Majority of the girls those who did not receive any benefits in the school were in the age bracket of 11-14 and majority of them were girls from poor families having monthly income between Rs. 5,000 – Rs. 10,000. Girls from combined reserved categories (SC/ST/OBC) formed the largest group of girls who did not get any benefits in the school. Annual or regular review and collection of data regarding scheme beneficiaries must be collated at District, State and Central level for better planning.

Investments to enable Social Behavioural Changes at Family Level - There were gender differentials in the perception of parents. Across study locations, parents indicated that they would prefer their sons to study for longer than their daughters. Three in four parents also agreed that girls do more household work than boys. One in every two parents reported that boys get more time to study as opposed to girls and also that they prioritized the boy's education over that of the girl. A little more than half of the parents admitted that boys are advantaged on all respects. Therefore, efforts need to focus on working with opinion-makers, leaders to address attitudinal change and addressing social hierarchies. There must be platforms for dialogue between the duty bearers, children, community members and civil society organizations. In addition, investment in social behaviour change communication and awareness about government schemes through a sustained campaign is essential to make people aware about government efforts and to help them utilise the services/benefits provisioned under various schemes



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