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Government schools and private schools as means to achieve quality education for all

Shabnam Bahadur
Assistant Professor (ADHOC) Department Economics Present University/College DCAC College, Delhi University State and country, New Delhi, India

Abstract
Education has always been a massive challenge for India. Initially, after independence, there was neither despread awareness on education, nor were there institutions that educated the masses. The importance of education was only realized by an elite few. The literacy rate (not an absolute measure of education, but gives us a rough idea) in 1947 was a mere 12%, which is hardly anything. The Government of India, realizing the dire need of education for the Indian masses, started rolling out programs in order to educate the citizens.

Keywords: education, citizens, government, realizing

Introduction
Out of this, the biggest and one of the most defining changes was the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009, which ensures that all children between the age group of 6-14 have a right to be educated, free of cost. For education beyond the age of 14, a nominal fee could be charged.

It's been more than 7 years to the implementation of the act, and studies carried out have shown that education has become available to a large percentage of the population, even in remote rural areas. The major limitation the RTE Act, 2009, is that it has focused only on the enrolment of students in schools, but not the quality of education that is imparted in these schools.

In India, the education sector is broadly classified in two categories, on the basis of its source of funding, government and private. Private schools, largely, have certain barriers to their entry, and these barriers need to be crossed before a child can start to study in a private school.

With the increasing demand for education, the demand on schools, both government and private, has dramatically increased, to provide quality education to students. Under this immense pressure, cracks have started to appear in the government education system, failing to provide quality education to students, due to numerous reasons. Because of this, it becomes all the more important for private schools to step up and take initiative to maintain a certain standard of education in schools.

This paper aims to show how private schools, in general, will aim to do a better job at imparting quality education.

Objectives
To separately examine government schools and private schools and draw a comparison on the following factors- Infrastructure (Campus, Classrooms, Washrooms, Medical Facilities), Fees paid by student, Teacher to Student ratio in a classroom, Sports facilities, Extracurricular activities, Methodology of teaching and transport facilities. The paper will explore the scope of improving quality of education through private schools where two major costs act as barriers to entry in private schools are identified as tuition fee, transportation fee

Literature Review
Lacking Quality of Education
In India, an estimated 2 crore students are studying all across in the country in higher secondary schools. Even though such a large number of students are enrolled, there hasn't been a major change or progress in the productivity of the country, as these students are not employable, even though they are supposedly 'educated'. A focus on enrolment in schools is just one part of the tale, and the story cannot end there. It is very necessary that we increase the standards and quality of education in our education system.

Poor Infrastructure
It is widely known that availability of infrastructure facilities in school has a wide impact on the quality of education imparted. Several researchers (Ajayi, 2002; Kuuskorpi & Gonzalez, 2011) conducted in different international contexts and situations have linked availability of proper infrastructure and school education effectiveness.

Most of the government schools however, have extremely deplorable infrastructure.The DISE data shows that less than 6 out of every 10 schools in the country have access to electricity. State-level data throws up an even grimmer picture-one-third of states do not provide electricity to the majority of their schools. Bihar is the worst offender with only 10% of its schools having access to electricity.

Toilets
In the case of toilets, however, India fares quite well. According to DISE data, 86% schools in India have boys' toilets while 91% have girls' toilets. Most of the states have toilets in more than 80% of their schools. Among the worst performers are Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya. However, the data may be a little misleading since they do not make a distinction between usable and unusable toilets.

Table 1: Bottom ten states in terms of the percentage of their schools with boys' toilets.

States	% of schools with boys' toilet
Arunachal	
Pradesh	48.87
Meghalaya	53.78
Andhra Pradesh	56.92
Assam	59.78
Jammu & Kashmir	69.83
Bihar	73.47
Odisha	76.54
Mizoram	78.32
West Bengal	81.42
Chhattisgarh	82.74

All-India 86.69

Table 2: Bottom ten states in terms of the percentage of their schools with girls' toilets.

State	% of schools with girls' toilet
Meghalaya	51.04
Assam	74.61
Bihar	75.5
Jammu & Kashmir	76.99
Arunachal	
Pradesh	77.01
Andhra Pradesh	81.17
West Bengal	82.08
Odisha	86.01
Jharkhand	87.62
Tripura	89.13

All-India 91.23

Student to Teacher Ratio

The student-teacher ratio in India stands at 27.25:1 across all levels of schooling. This seems healthy in light of the Right to Education Act stipulation of a ratio of 30:1. However, the student-teacher ratio of 41:1 in higher secondary education needs some work. Uttar Pradesh, in particular, needs to hire many more teachers as its ratio of 60:1 is well above the recommended level.

Table 3: States and their Respective Student -teacher ratios

State	Students per teacher in a classroom
Uttar Pradesh	60.5
Bihar	43.75
Jharkhand	42.75
Madhya Pradesh	36.75
West Bengal	35.25
All India	27.25
Maharashtra	26.75
Gujarat	25.25
Chhattisgarh	24.5
Delhi	24.5
Andhra Pradesh	23.75

Quality of teachers

The quality of the teachers is also important for learning outcomes. The DISE data shows that only 69% of all school teachers in the country have a graduate degree or more. However, around 91% of all higher secondary teachers in the country have a graduate degree or more. Only eight states have a proportion lower than this.

Table 4: States and their respective percentages of teachers at least with a graduate degree at higher secondary level

State	% of teachers with at least a graduate degree (higher secondary)
Uttar Pradesh	66.22
Bihar	76.25
Karnataka	78.1
Lakshadweep	80.6
Daman & Diu	82.7
Gujarat	86.125
Madhya	
Pradesh	89.655
Uttarakhand	90.975
All-India	91.295
A & N Islands	92.17
Nagaland	93.335

Student Academic Performance: Comparison between Government and Private Schools

Huge gaps between public and private sector spending do not ensure lesser gaps in learning outcomes. Even though the government spends a lot more on a pupil than a private entity does (only exception state being Bihar), the academic performance in private schools has been found to be much better than that in government schools. The table depicts difference between percentage points of students from private and public schools, who pass basic arithmetic and reading tests.

Table 5: Percentage points of difference between passing percentages in students from private and public schools, who pass basic arithmetic and reading tests

State	Excess learning outcome (private over government)
J&K	37.1
Madhya	33.4
Uttar	32.3
Jharkhand	32.2
Haryana	29.8
Rajasthan	29.6
Odisha	28.4
Bihar	25
Manipur	24.4
Gujarat	20.9
Chhattisgarh	18.6
Assam	17.6
Uttarakhand	16.4
Karnataka	15.1
Nagaland	14.4
Meghalaya	12.8
Himachal	9.8
Tripura	8.1
Kerala	7.5
Tamil	7.4
West	6.7
Andhra	6.5
Maharashtra	5.8
Punjab	5.2
Mizoram	4.5
Goa	3.4
Sikkim	2.9

Methodology of Study

This study aims to show how private schools, in comparison to government schools, are much more resourceful as compared to government schools. Hence, private schools

can play an important and major role in the improvement of quality of education imparted in India.

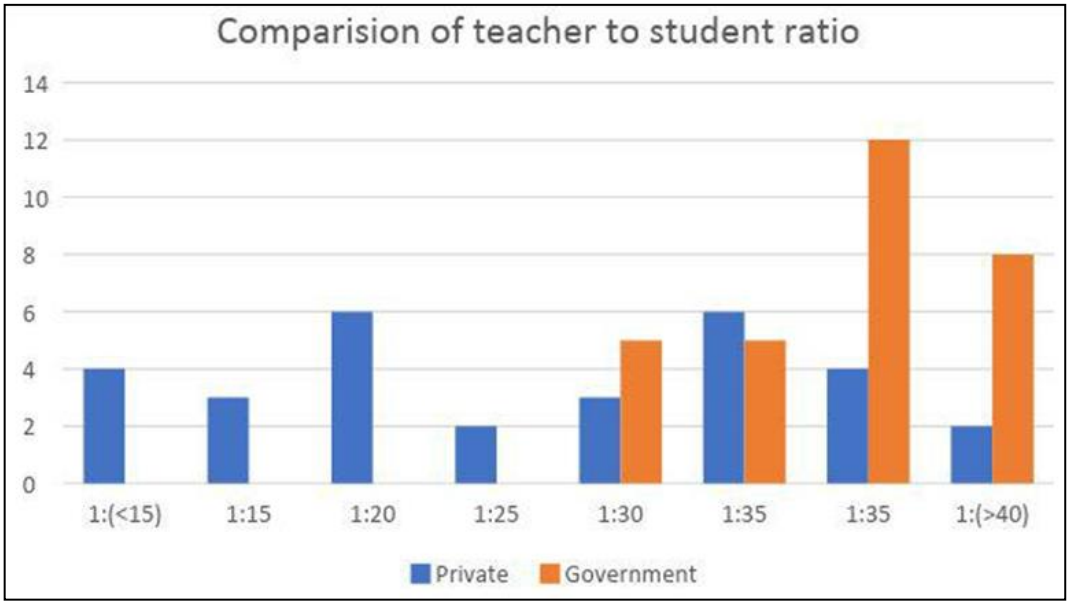
Sample for Study

For this study, the area of the study was restricted to South Delhi. Two government schools, and two private schools were picked, which were in close proximity of each other, to eliminate any external factors that would affect the data, only because of the area difference. Each school lies within 5 km of the other.

To randomize the selection, and make the data more authentic, out of the 25 responses received from each school, only 15 were picked, via a random number generator. This was done in the following manner-

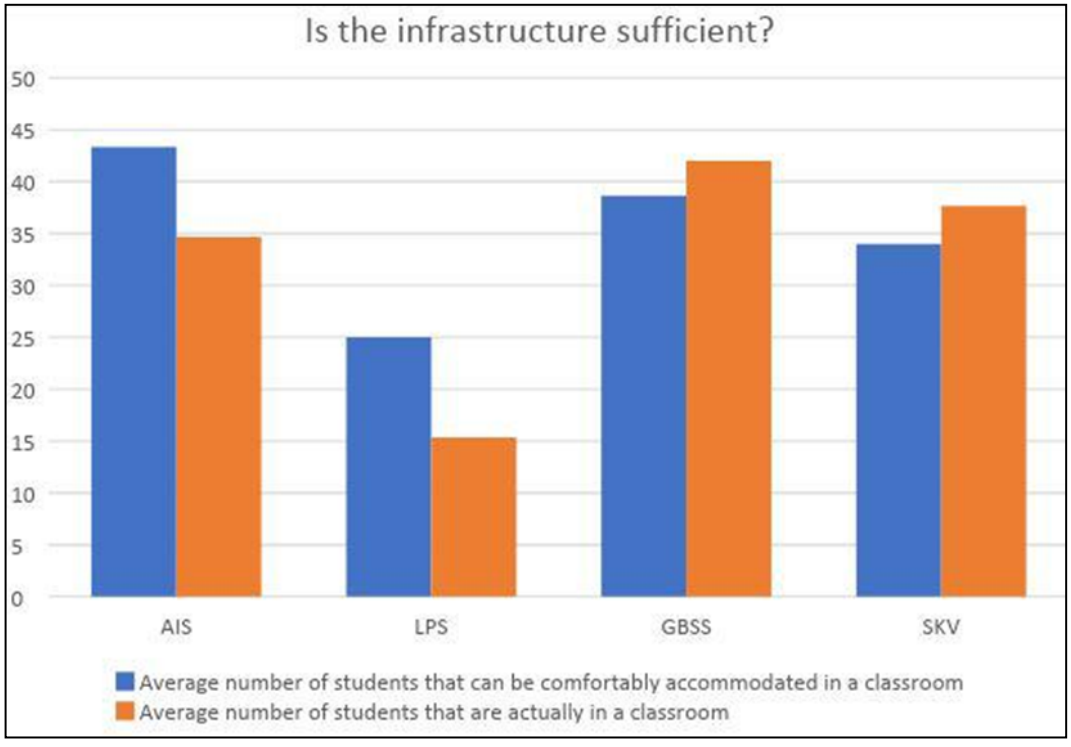
Comparative study between Government Schools and Private Schools

Government schools do not have a teacher to student ratio below a 1:30, and more than half of their responses are for a ratio of 1:40 and 1:(>40).Private schools also do exhibit the higher ratios, but more than half of the responses indicate towards a lower student to teacher ratio. Hence, private schools run on a much lesser student to teacher ratio, which is quite important for imparting quality education.



Is the current infrastructure sufficient?

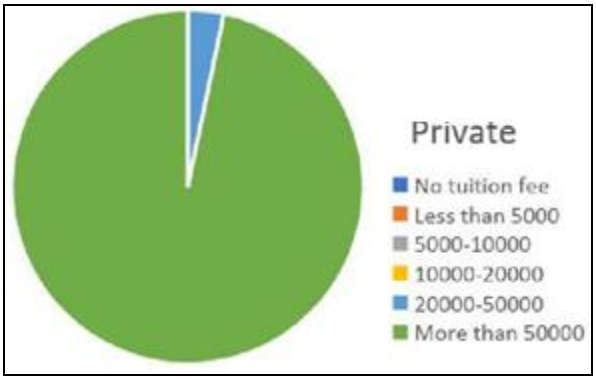
From the chart above, it is quite clear that the infrastructure available in private schools is more than sufficient for the current student population. On the other hand, government schools seem to be running a little short on infrastructure, with the requirement being greater than what is at present. So, private school students are infrastructurally more comfortable as compared to their government school counterparts.

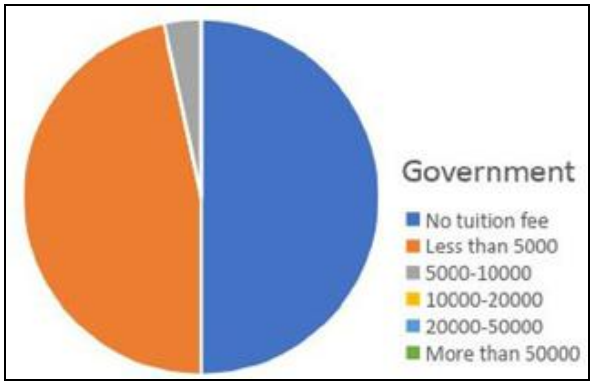


Tuition Fee

Table 15: Fees bracket for government schools and private schools (each number represents the number of responses for that particular cat

Fee Bracket	Private	Government
No tuition fee	0	15
Less than 5000	0	14
5000-10000	0	1
10000-20000	0	0
20000-50000	1	0
More than 50000	29	0





All the respondents in the sample of this category incurred a monthly cost of less than 500 on transportation, out of which majority of the respondents incurred absolutely no cost.

And, here is where the difference lies. Even though a large proportion of both government school students and private school students travel by bus/van, the same mode of transportation, the costs incurred by the two have a wide disparity, with the monthly cost incurred by private school students more than 4 times the cost incurred by government school students, which is just another barrier to the entry of all students into private schools.

Summarizing the comparison

- The teacher to student ratio is higher in government schools as compared to private schools
- The infrastructure, though largely available in both the private and government schools, is still insufficient for all the students of the government schools, whereas the infrastructure is quite sufficient in the private schools.
- The sports facilities in both, government schools and private schools is more or less at par.
- There is a wider choice of extra-curricular activities in private schools as compared to government schools, and more students from private schools actively know about/participate in these activities as compared to government school students.
- The quality of washrooms in government school is quite bad, and there is no maintenance of the washrooms, making it unhygienic to use. This is not the case in private schools, where the washrooms are clean and in usable condition.
- Government schools do not have basic medical aid in case of emergencies, whereas private schools do.
- Government schools have absolutely no digital teaching resources in their classrooms. Private schools not only have these resources, but also use it regularly, enhancing the quality of education imparted in these schools.
- The tuition fee charged in private schools in phenomenal as compared to the government schools, as large as 10 times, and is identified as a major economic barrier for free entry into private schools.

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