



ISSN Print: 2394-7500  
ISSN Online: 2394-5869  
Impact Factor (RJIF): 8.4  
IJAR 2025; 11(3): 201-205  
[www.allresearchjournal.com](http://www.allresearchjournal.com)  
Received: 19-12-2024  
Accepted: 25-01-2025

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## Funding adequacy in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad: Perceptions of school principals

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### Abstract

This study examines the adequacy of funding in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad from the perspective of school principals. The research explores financial allocation and utilization across key areas, including classroom supplies, infrastructure maintenance, student activities, teacher training, technological resources, and overall school operations. A survey-based approach was employed, using a structured research tool consisting of nine Likert-scale items to assess principals' perceptions. The findings reveal both strengths and challenges in financial adequacy. While teacher training and fund utilization received favorable ratings, significant concerns emerged regarding insufficient funding for student activities, technological resources, and infrastructure maintenance. The study also assesses the impact of funding constraints on school operations and educational quality, highlighting the need for policy interventions to ensure equitable and effective resource allocation. The paper concludes with recommendations to enhance funding adequacy and improve financial management in these schools.

**Keywords:** Funding adequacy, Urdu medium schools, school principals' perceptions, educational quality

### Introduction

Hyderabad has long been a bastion of Urdu education in India. Urdu, one of India's 22 scheduled languages, holds historical and cultural prominence in Hyderabad, where it is spoken by nearly 30% of the population (Census of India, 2011). Urdu medium schools, particularly those run by the government, play a pivotal role in preserving the language and providing accessible education to socio-economically marginalized communities. Despite their cultural and educational significance, these institutions are facing challenges related to funding and infrastructure, which undermine their ability to deliver quality education. There are existing literature and media reports that highlight the persistent challenges these schools face.

Adequate funding is fundamental to providing quality education, as it directly influences infrastructure, learning resources, and overall student outcomes. In Hyderabad, many Urdu medium government schools face significant infrastructural challenges due to insufficient funding. A report highlighted that out of 220 such schools, 117 operate in rented or dilapidated buildings, with shortages in classrooms, toilets, drinking water, and electricity. An estimated ₹69.06 crore is required to address these infrastructural deficits (Times of India, 2016).

In some cases, students have been compelled to study in tin sheds due to the deteriorating conditions of school infrastructures, underscoring the critical need for enhanced funding to ensure safe and conducive learning environments (Business Standard, 2019).

Research indicates a strong correlation between adequate funding and improved student performance. A study by the Public Policy Institute of California found that increased spending leads to better student outcomes, including higher test scores, graduation rates, and college attendance (Lafortune *et al.*, 2018) [4]. Additionally, the Learning Policy Institute emphasizes that equitable and adequate school funding is crucial for fair education, ensuring resources are distributed fairly and sufficiently to meet educational standards (Learning Policy Institute, 2021).

Financial constraints severely affect the quality of education by limiting the availability of essential infrastructure and learning resources. In Hyderabad, despite the government's efforts to refurbish schools, challenges such as a shortage of teachers and inadequate

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sanitation facilities persist, deterring parents from enrolling their children in these institutions (Times of India, 2023). Furthermore, a study examining the impact of school infrastructure on learning outcomes in Ecuador found a significant positive correlation between various types of school infrastructure and student achievement, highlighting the importance of investing in physical learning environments (Rivera *et al.*, 2023)<sup>[7]</sup>.

In conclusion, the literature underscores that adequate and equitable funding is essential for improving infrastructure, providing necessary learning resources and enhancing student outcomes in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad. Addressing financial constraints and ensuring proper allocation of resources are crucial steps toward achieving quality education in these institutions.

### Significance of the Study

While there are existing studies that have explored broad challenges in Indian government schools, few focus on principals' perspectives in Urdu medium institutions. Principals, as administrators, offer unique insights into inefficiencies and funding issues. This study addresses this gap by analyzing principals' perceptions of funding adequacy, thereby contributing actionable insights for policymakers. This paper examines the adequacy of funding in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad through the perspective of school principals. By identifying critical resource gaps in such schools, it aims to offer insights regarding the reforms in infrastructure and funding aspects.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate principals' perceptions of the adequacy of funding allocation and utilization in aspects, including classroom supplies, infrastructure maintenance, student activities, teacher training, technological resources, fund utilization and overall school funding.
2. To assess principals' perceptions of the impact of funding adequacy on school operations and educational quality

### Research Method

This study employs a descriptive research design using survey methodology to assess the adequacy of funding in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad. The research focuses on evaluating principals' perceptions, as they are key decision-makers with first-hand knowledge of school finances, infrastructure, and resource allocation.

The survey method was chosen because it allows for systematic data collection from multiple schools, ensuring a broad perspective on the financial realities of government Urdu medium schools. A structured questionnaire was developed to capture principals' perceptions regarding various aspects of funding. The study also employed quantitative analysis to measure trends in funding adequacy

**Population:** The target population for this study comprises principals of government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad. These schools primarily serve students from economically diverse backgrounds, and their funding depends on government allocations.

**Sampling:** A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure fair representation of different school levels in the study. The schools that are government-funded and

Urdu-medium were chosen. To achieve balanced representation, the sample was stratified by school level, with 10 principals selected from primary schools and 10 from high schools. The final sample of 20 principals was drawn from a total of 289 Government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad. By selecting principals from both primary and high schools, the study ensures that funding adequacy issues are examined across different educational levels.

### Research Tool

A research tool was developed to assess principals' perceptions regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of funding provided to their schools. The tool comprises nine items, each presented as a statement with responses measured on a five-point Likert scale. It evaluates various aspects of school funding, including overall adequacy, sufficiency for operational needs, provision for classroom supplies, infrastructure maintenance, student activities, teachers' professional development, and technological resources. The initial version of the tool consisted of 11 items. To ensure content validity, it was reviewed by educational experts, who assessed the relevance, clarity, and comprehensiveness of the items in relation to the study's objectives. Based on their feedback, two items were excluded, and minor revisions were made to enhance clarity. Consequently, the final version of the tool includes nine items.

### Statistical Techniques

The collected data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions, are used to summarize responses.

### Results and Discussion

Objective-wise analysis and interpretation of the results concerning the principals' perception of funding adequacy are as follows:

#### Objective 1: To evaluate principals' perceptions of the adequacy of funding allocation and utilization in aspects, including classroom supplies, infrastructure maintenance, student activities, teacher training, technological resources, fund utilization and overall school funding

To evaluate principals' perceptions of the adequacy of funding allocation and utilization, responses were analyzed in specific aspects. Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions were used to assess variations in funding adequacy across schools. Results are presented as follows:

#### Item 01: Adequacy of Funding for Classroom Supplies

**Table 1:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 01

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.35
SD	1.309

**Table 2:** Frequency Distribution for Item 01 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Inadequate	1	5.0%
Inadequate	7	35.0%
Adequate	8	40.0%
Very Adequate	4	20.0%

As shown in Table 1 and 2, the mean of 3.35 suggests that funding for classroom supplies is moderately adequate across schools. 40% (Very Inadequate + Inadequate) of principals indicate that classroom supply funding is insufficient. However, 60% (Adequate + Very Adequate) rate it positively, meaning there is variability in funding allocation across schools. It is concluded that some principals perceive that their schools have sufficient funding for classroom supplies, while others perceive that their schools struggle with shortages, indicating inconsistency in resource allocation.

**Item 02: Adequacy of Funding for Infrastructure Maintenance**

**Table 3:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 02

Statistics	Value
Mean	2.85
SD	1.309

**Table 4:** Frequency Distribution for Item 02 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Inadequate	5	25.0%
Inadequate	3	15.0%
Undecided	2	10.0%
Adequate	10	50.0%

As shown in Table 3 and 4, the mean of 2.85 suggests that funding for infrastructure maintenance is below adequate in many schools. 40% (Very Inadequate + Inadequate) of schools struggle with insufficient funds for maintenance. However, 50% find it adequate, showing variation in funding across different institutions. It is concluded that infrastructure maintenance remains a challenge for a significant portion of schools, with some receiving sufficient funds while others face shortages.

**Item 03: Adequacy of Funding for Student Activities & Extracurricular Programs**

**Table 5:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 03

Statistics	Value
Mean	2.10
SD	1.119

**Table 6:** Frequency Distribution for Item 03 Responses

Response	Frequency	Valid Percent
Very Inadequate	8	40.0%
Inadequate	5	25.0%
Undecided	4	20.0%
Adequate	3	15.0%

As shown in Table 5, the mean of 2.10 indicates one of the lowest funding levels across all items. 65% (Very Inadequate + Inadequate) of principals report severe shortages in funding for student activities. Only 15% consider it adequate, indicating a widespread lack of extracurricular opportunities for students. It is concluded that funding for student activities is highly inadequate, and most schools lack proper resources for extracurricular engagement, which could negatively affect holistic student development.

**Item 04: Adequacy of Funding for Teacher Training & Professional Development**

**Table 7:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 04

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.65
SD	1.496

**Table 8:** Frequency Distribution for Item 05 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Inadequate	1	5.0%
Inadequate	6	30.0%
Undecided	2	10.0%
Adequate	1	5.0%
Very Adequate	10	50.0%

As is evident from Table 7, the mean score of 3.65 suggests that funding for teacher training and Professional Development is relatively sufficient compared to other areas. 50% of respondents consider it Very Adequate, indicating strong support in many schools. However, 35% (Very Inadequate + Inadequate) still report deficiencies in access to professional development. It is concluded that while many principals perceive that the teachers of their schools receive sufficient teacher training, some still lack access, which could impact teacher performance and education quality.

**Item 05: Adequacy of Funding for Technological Resources**

**Table 9:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 05

Statistics	Value
Mean	2.60
SD	1.536

**Table 10:** Frequency Distribution for Item 05 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Inadequate	7	35.0%
Inadequate	4	20.0%
Undecided	2	10.0%
Adequate	4	20.0%
Very Adequate	3	15.0%

The mean of 2.60 indicates below-average adequacy of funding for technological resources as perceived by the principals. 55% (Very Inadequate + Inadequate) of schools face significant shortages in funding for technological resources. Only 35% (Adequate + Very Adequate) of schools report sufficient funding. The findings indicate that many schools lack sufficient funding for technological infrastructure, which could limit digital learning opportunities for students. The gap in access to technology is a concern that needs addressing to modernize Urdu medium education.

**Item 06: Adequacy of Fund Utilization in Schools**

**Table 11:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 06

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.90
SD	1.294

**Table 12:** Frequency Distribution for Item 06 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Very Inadequate	1	5.0%
Inadequate	3	15.0%
Undecided	2	10.0%
Adequate	5	25.0%
Very Adequate	9	45.0%

The mean of 3.90 indicates that most principals perceive that funds are being utilized effectively in their schools. 70% (Adequate + Very Adequate) of principals believe that their schools make good use of the available funds. However, 20% (Very Inadequate (5%) + Inadequate (15%)) feel that funds are not being utilized properly. The findings indicate that most schools seem to manage their funds effectively, but a small percentage still struggle with mismanagement or underutilization of financial resources.

**Item 07: Adequacy of Overall School Funding**

**Table 13:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 07

Statistics	Value
Mean	3.10
SD	0.986

**Table 14:** Frequency Distribution for Item 07 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Inadequate	8	40.0%
Undecided	2	10.0%
Adequate	10	50.0%

The mean of 3.10 suggests that overall school funding is only moderately adequate. 40% of principals rated funding as Inadequate, which shows that a significant proportion of schools struggle with funding shortages. However, 50% of principals rated funding as Adequate, meaning some schools receive sufficient funds while others do not. It is concluded that funding adequacy remains a divided issue, with some schools managing well and others facing significant constraints.

**Objective 2: To assess principals' perceptions of the impact of funding adequacy on school operations and educational quality**

To assess principals' perceptions of how funding adequacy influences school operations and educational quality, responses were analyzed for item 8, i.e., the frequency of classroom activity disruptions due to funding shortages and item 9, i.e., the overall impact of funding on educational quality. The analysis highlights the extent to which funding adequacy supports or hampers essential school functions, as perceived by the principals.

**Item 08: Frequency of Classroom Activity Disruptions Due to Funding Issues**

**Table 15:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 08

Statistics	Value
Mean	4.15
SD	.988

**Table 16:** Frequency Distribution for Item 08 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
Often	1	5.0%
Sometimes	5	25.0%
Rarely	4	20.0%
Never	10	50.0%

The mean score of 15 indicates that disruptions due to funding issues are relatively infrequent in most schools. 50% of principals reported that funding issues "Never" disrupt classroom activities, and 20% of respondents stated that disruptions "Rarely" occur. It indicates that a majority of schools operate without financial interruptions affecting their teaching and learning processes. Only 5% report "Often" and 25% report "sometimes" funding issues disrupt classroom activities, highlighting that some schools do experience occasional financial constraints affecting their operations. The results suggest that, in general, funding shortages do not frequently disrupt classroom activities or programs in most government Urdu medium schools. While the majority of schools seem to have stable classroom operations, it is essential to address the needs of schools that do face occasional or frequent disruptions to ensure an uninterrupted and effective learning environment for all students.

**Item 09: Impact of Funding on Education Quality (Reverse Coded: 4 = Not at all, 1 = To a Great Extent)**

**Table 17:** Descriptive Statistics for Item 09

Statistics	Value
Mean	2.90
SD	1.021

**Table 18:** Frequency Distribution for Item 09 Responses

Response	Frequency	Percent
To Great Extent	1	5.0%
To Moderate Extent	8	40.0%
To Small Extent	3	15.0%
Not At All	8	40.0%

A mean of 2.90 indicates that funding issues have a moderate impact on education quality according to the perception of the principals. 40% of respondents believe funding issues do not impact education at all. However, another 40% say it impacts education to a "Moderate Extent," meaning some schools face challenges due to insufficient funds. It is concluded that funding issues do not critically affect education quality in most schools, but some schools still experience moderate impacts.

**Conclusion**

The findings from the survey on funding adequacy in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad reveal both strengths and challenges in financial allocation and utilization in various aspects. While some schools receive adequate funding for basic operational needs, others struggle with resource shortages, particularly in critical areas such as student activities, technological resources and infrastructure maintenance. One of the major findings is the severe shortage of funding for student activities and extracurricular programs, with 65% of principals rating funding in this area as inadequate or very inadequate. The lack of financial support for extracurricular activities could hinder students'

holistic development, limiting their opportunities for skills enhancement beyond academics.

Another area of concern is funding for technological resources, where 55% of principals reported insufficient financial support. This suggests that many schools lack modern educational technology, potentially limiting students' exposure to digital learning tools and reducing their preparedness for higher education and employment in the digital era.

Despite these concerns, the study identified positive areas as well. Teacher training and professional development funding received relatively higher ratings, with 50% of principals considering it very adequate. Additionally, fund utilization in schools was rated favourably, with 70% of respondents perceiving effective management of available financial resources. Moreover, funding disruptions were found to be rare, with 50% of schools reporting "Never" experiencing funding delays.

Finally, the impact of funding issues on education quality appears to be moderate. While 40% of respondents reported no impact of funding issues on educational quality, another 40% indicated a moderate impact, suggesting that while financial constraints exist, they do not always directly hinder educational outcomes.

### Major Concerns

- Student activity funding is the most inadequate (Mean = 2.10).
- Technology funding is also low (Mean = 2.60).
- Infrastructure maintenance remains a challenge (Mean = 2.85).

### Positive Insights

- Teacher training is well-funded (Mean = 3.65).
- Funding disruptions are rare (Mean = 4.15).
- Most schools believe funding issues only moderately impact education quality (Mean = 2.90).

### Recommendations

Based on the findings regarding funding adequacy in government Urdu medium schools in Hyderabad, the following recommendations are proposed to address funding related issues:

- Allocate additional financial resources specifically for student activities to ensure holistic development.
- Establish partnerships with local organizations and NGOs to support extracurricular initiatives.
- Introduce targeted funding programs to equip schools with essential digital learning tools.
- Develop government-backed initiatives to provide subsidized or free access to digital infrastructure.
- Implement a structured funding model that ensures periodic maintenance of school facilities.
- Prioritize infrastructure grants based on school needs and severity of maintenance issues.
- Maintain the current level of funding for teacher training while exploring opportunities for expansion.
- Promote best practices in financial management to optimize resource allocation.
- Establish a streamlined fund disbursement process to prevent delays in financial allocations.
- Develop contingency funds for urgent school financial needs to avoid operational disruptions.

- Implement feedback mechanisms where principals can report funding-related challenges and suggest improvements.
- Use data-driven insights to guide future funding policies and allocations.

### Acknowledgement

The author received research funding from Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad, for which he expresses his sincere gratitude to the university.

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