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# Landscape of in-country funding options for students from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan to pursue higher education overseas

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# Executive summary

The number of students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh going abroad for further studies has grown in recent years and is likely to continue to grow in the future. Undertaking higher education abroad, especially in high-income countries like the UK and US, is an expensive endeavour, and access to funding affects the ability of South Asian students to make the most of opportunities to study abroad. Against that backdrop, the British Council commissioned Technopolis to undertake a study to investigate and collect information on the range of in-country funding options available to students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh to undertake higher education studies overseas, particularly in the UK.

The study used primary and secondary data collected via desk-based research, including a literature review and interviews with funding providers in the three countries in scope. Data analysis and triangulation across findings provided key insights regarding the funding landscape and sources associated with overseas higher education in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The main findings are highlighted below.

## Overseas study funding landscape in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh

Ambitions to improve access to quality higher education and to foster internationalisation underpin the Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi governments' interest in supporting students to undertake overseas study.

While many students from all three countries continue to be funded through personal savings and support from friends and family, India has a large and well-developed system of loans available for students pursuing overseas education, offered through public-sector banks and repayable over a set period with interest. Study-abroad loan schemes are also available in Bangladesh, but not in Pakistan where dedicated student loan products only appear to be available for domestic study.

Research shows that scholarships for study abroad are available in all three target countries. These are chiefly offered by government departments such as the Indian government's Department of Social Justice and Empowerment; the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan; and the Governance Innovation Unit under the Prime Minister's Office in Bangladesh; however, some scholarships are also provided by charitable foundations and trusts. Some of these foundations and trusts also offer support described as "loan scholarships", which combine elements of scholarships and loans – either by offering low- or zero-interest loans, or by providing partial scholarships combined with a low-interest loan to cover the student's remaining costs.

The scope of this research does not cover support provided by governments, HE providers or other organisations in the destination countries. However, government bodies in the sending countries reviewed, such as the Bangladesh government's University Grants Commission (UGC), play an important role in distributing scholarships from funders in the destination countries.



**While many students from all three countries continue to be funded through personal savings and support from friends and family, India has a large and well-developed system of loans available for students pursuing overseas education, offered through public-sector banks and repayable over a set period with interest.**

## Loans

- **Overview:** A loan covers the cost of tuition fees and other expenses related to the student's study and must be paid back, often within a certain time frame and with interest.
- **Providers:** Loan schemes for overseas study were identified in India and Bangladesh. Loans are primarily offered by the banking sector, but government departments and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) are also active in the Indian student loan market.
- **Scale:** Data provided by the Government of India shows that the number of loans issued for overseas study under the Indian Banks Association's Model Education Loan Scheme reached around 70,000 in 2021/22, with INR 75.8 billion (then GBP 740 Mn) lent by 12 different banks. The scale has seen continuous year-on-year growth from just over 20,000 students and INR 11.8 billion (then GBP 130 Mn) in 2012/13, except for a dip in 2020/21 due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> The scale of loans from other providers is far smaller. Data on the scale of student loans in Bangladesh was not available, while no dedicated loan schemes for overseas study were identified in Pakistan.
- **Coverage:** Most loans are available nationally for both undergraduate and postgraduate study, but special loan schemes or terms also exist for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. India also has government-run loan schemes targeting specific states and socially disadvantaged groups.
- **Eligibility criteria:** Eligibility criteria typically include secured admission at a foreign university. Some loan schemes also set requirements for the student's academic record and/or limit which overseas universities are eligible, generally based on international rankings.
- **Loan amount and costs covered:** The maximum amount of funding available from banks in Bangladesh (BDT 2.5 million or GBP 18,000)<sup>2</sup> is lower than some banks and non-bank financial companies in India (INR 20 million or GBP 191,000 for banks, while some NBFCs have no maximum loan limit). Most loans cover tuition fees, living expenses, and travel costs, with several also covering other costs such as books and equipment.
- **Interest rates:** Interest rates for most loans range from 3 to 15 per cent. Interest rates for government loans and loans targeting disadvantaged groups tend to be lower (3 per cent to 5 per cent). In India, some providers offer lower interest rates for women and the government provides an interest subsidy via the Dr Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme to students from relatively poorer backgrounds who have taken out a bank loan.
- **Security and repayment:** Most loans require a co-borrower or guarantor, usually a parent or guardian. A security/collateral is required for larger loans. Repayment periods can range from 4 to 15 years in India or 1 to 5 years in Bangladesh.

## Scholarships

- **Overview:** A scholarship is a non-repayable financial grant to support students studying overseas. Scholarships are typically limited to a small number of academically high-achieving students.
- **Providers:** Scholarships are largely provided by national and state/provincial government departments and bodies as well as philanthropic foundations and trusts such as the Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation (India) and the Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust (India). One university in Pakistan was identified as providing funding to support their academic staff to study abroad to augment their qualifications, such as by earning a PhD; it is possible that other HEIs in the region also offer similar incentives.
- **Scale:** The number of funders and scholarships on offer is limited – in the tens and hundreds per funder rather than thousands unlike loans.

1. Government of India, Ministry of Finance. Available at: <https://pqals.nic.in/annex/1711/AU1759.pdf> (Accessed: 19 June 2023); More Than 6-Fold Increase in The Amount of Loans Disbursed by PSBs For Study Abroad Between 2012-13 And 2021-22. Available at: <https://factly.in/data-more-than-6-fold-increase-in-the-amount-of-loans-disbursed-by-psbs-for-study-abroad-between-2012-13-and-2021-22/> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

2. Unless otherwise stated, the currency conversion rates used in this report are accurate as of 24th August 2023: 1 GBP = 105 INR = 380 PKR = 138 BDT

- **Coverage:** Scholarships are predominantly used to support postgraduate study. While most scholarships are available across the relevant country, some schemes initiated at the state (Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana in India) or province (Punjab in Pakistan) level only target local residents. Across the three countries reviewed there are scholarships that target economically disadvantaged students, but India was the only country where scholarship schemes were identified that targeted socially disadvantaged groups, minority communities, and women.
- **Funding amount and costs covered:** The scholarship amount varies greatly depending on the funder and costs covered. Some scholarships only cover part of a student's tuition fees, but many cover the full course fees and often provide funding for return airfare and at least partial coverage of living expenses.
- **Eligibility criteria:** Eligibility criteria include an excellent academic record – candidates need to have scored above a minimum mark threshold (e.g. 60 per cent) in the qualifying exam (higher secondary for undergraduate, bachelor's for postgraduate, and master's for PhD). A secured place in a top tier overseas higher education institution is required for several scholarship programmes.

## Loan scholarships

- **Overview:** Some funding schemes have elements of both loans and scholarships. These are structured as repayable loans but carry low or zero interest, and/or only require repayment of part of the money awarded to the student.
- **Providers:** Loan scholarships are generally provided by charitable trusts and foundations. Identified providers include the Aga Khan Foundation, which operates in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and India-based trusts and foundations such as the K.C. Mahindra Education Trust, Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation, and J. N. Tata Endowment.
- **Scale:** Loan scholarships are relatively few in number compared to loans and scholarships, with less than 100 awards per year per funder.
- **Coverage:** Loan scholarships are offered nationwide for postgraduate study abroad. The Aga Khan Foundation programme is aimed at supporting students in financial need.
- **Funding amount and costs covered:** The amount of funding available (maximum INR 1 million; GBP 9,500) is generally lower than that available from loan and scholarship schemes. Funders such as the Aga Khan Foundation expect students to secure additional funding on top of the awarded amount. Tuition fees, travel, and living expenses are covered either fully or partially.
- **Eligibility criteria:** Candidates need to have an excellent academic record, such as scores above 60 per cent or a first-class degree at their previous level of study. Funding is awarded subject to securing admission to a postgraduate course at a reputed university.
- **Security:** Some schemes require a guarantor but collateral is not required.
- **Interest rates:** 0 to 5 per cent. Two of the four identified loan scholarships operate as interest-free loans.
- **Repayment:** The loan repayment period ranges from 24 months after completion of the course to seven years depending on the scheme.

## Conclusions

**1. The policy motivations for and approach to funding overseas study are similar across the three countries.**

There are common ambitions to improve access to quality higher education and to foster internationalisation which underpin financial support for overseas study, with governments and foundations primarily offering scholarships, and loans mainly available through the banking sector.

**2. The overseas study funding sector is more mature in India, and incorporates a wider variety of funders and funding sources compared to Pakistan and Bangladesh.**

The student loan ecosystem is more mature in India than in the other two target countries, with a variety of banks offering loan products based on a common format (the IBA Model Education Loan Scheme) along with other loan funders such as NBFCs and state government departments, a system of interest rate subsidies for specific student groups, and loan scholarships offered via charitable foundations / trusts. This wider availability of student loans makes it comparatively easier to access options to go abroad for education, contributing to the large number of Indian students studying abroad in the UK and other destination countries.

**3. Loans are the most common of the profiled funding sources.**

The number of study-abroad loans issued in India alone is an order of magnitude higher than the number of scholarships on offer in Bangladesh and Pakistan combined – although still well below the total number of Indians going abroad to study, showing that many students are self-funded or rely on support from friends and family. Most loan products are available nationwide for both undergraduate and postgraduate study. There are also specialised loan schemes available for students from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds. Eligibility criteria for loans are also less onerous than for scholarships. Taken together, this means that loans support a wide range of students in terms of levels of study, geographies, and family background.

**4. Scholarships are limited in quantity and mainly target top students.**

Through scholarships, governments and foundations support the most talented students in their country to study abroad. Scholarships are limited in number and mostly support postgraduate study. Some scholarships are restricted to socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society or to women. As such, although scholarships are financially advantageous for students (as no repayment is required), they are also exclusive and not accessible to many students because of demanding eligibility requirements and tough competition.

**5. Further research is required to gain a comprehensive view of the overseas study funding landscape.**

While this research provides an overview of the home-country funding sources used by South Asian students to study abroad, quantitative data is not available for all types of funding sources across the region, making it difficult to provide a clear comparison. Future research could integrate data from other sources such as surveys of overseas students from the target countries as well as more complete information on awards and applications from funders.



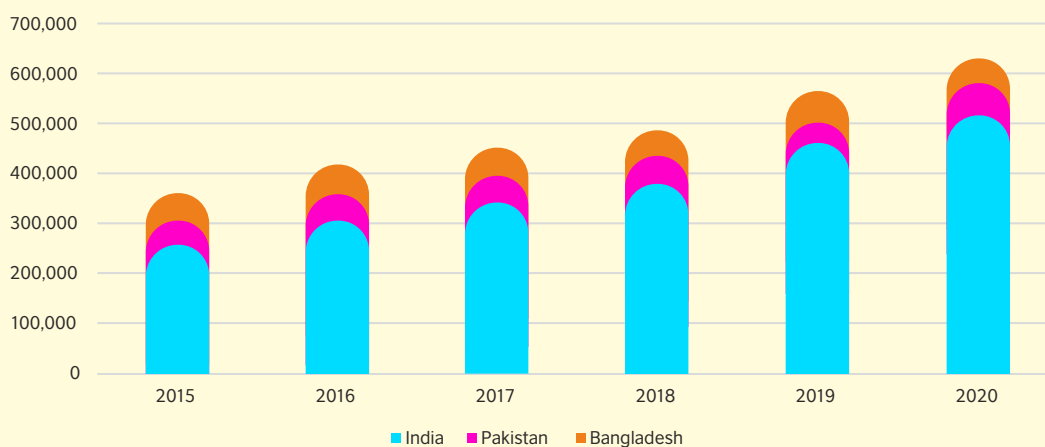
# Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the study

In an increasingly globalised world, studying abroad has become a key differentiating experience for students,<sup>3</sup> resulting in growth of the global education market. The number of international students in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries increased by 70 per cent between 2000 and 2021, reaching a total of 4.4 million international students.<sup>4</sup> China and India accounted for 22 per cent and 10 per cent of these international students respectively.

With nearly half its population under the age of 24<sup>5</sup> and a burgeoning middle class, South Asia has contributed substantially to the growth in the overseas education market in recent years. Data from UNESCO shows that the number of students going abroad from the three target countries (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) increased by 74 per cent over the five years to 2020.<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 1: Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi students studying abroad, 2015 to 2020**



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics

The UK is seeing an even stronger increase in international students from South Asia, with the number of enrolled students from Pakistan and Bangladesh almost doubling every year since 2019 (Figure 2) while India has also seen strong growth. Across the

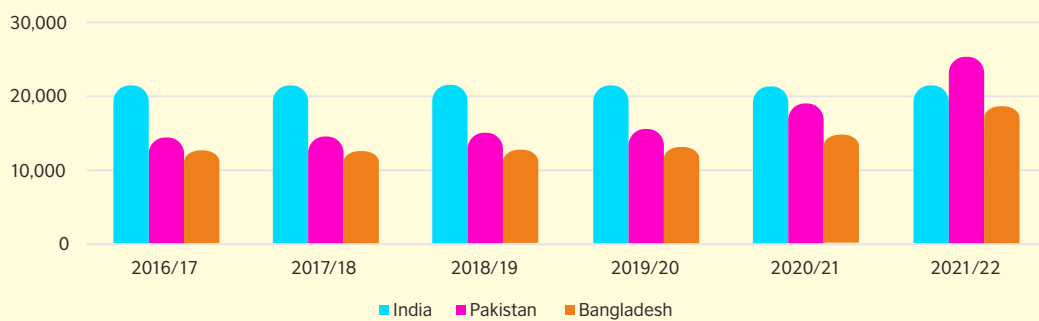
- Education at a Glance 2022. OECD Indicators (2022) OECD. Available at: [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2022\\_573e058e-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-at-a-glance-2022_573e058e-en) (Accessed: 19 June 2023).
- OECD consists of 38 countries, mostly high-income economies; Rising international student mobility (2022) OECD. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/en/data-insights/rising-international-student-mobility> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).
- Raiser, M. (2023) 'South Asia's human capital is the resilience it needs', World Bank Blogs, 3 March. Available at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/south-asias-human-capital-resilience-it-needs> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).
- Forecast projects 1.8 million Indian students abroad by 2024 (2022) ICEF. Available at: <https://monitor.icef.com/2022/08/forecast-projects-1-8-million-indian-students-abroad-by-2024/> (Accessed: 19 June 2023). More than 30 lakh Indian students went abroad for higher studies in 6 years (2023) Mint. Available at: <https://www.livemint.com/education/news/more-than-30-lakh-indian-students-went-abroad-for-higher-studies-in-6-years-11675733737392.html> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).



three target countries the total number of students studying at UK HEIs has increased by more than 500 per cent over the last five years. This growth continued even throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

India was the UK's second largest sending country in terms of HE student enrolments in the 2021/22 academic year, accounting for around 19 per cent of the over 679,000 international students studying in the country,<sup>7</sup> while in 2022 India overtook China to become the top sending country in terms of issued UK student visas.<sup>8</sup>

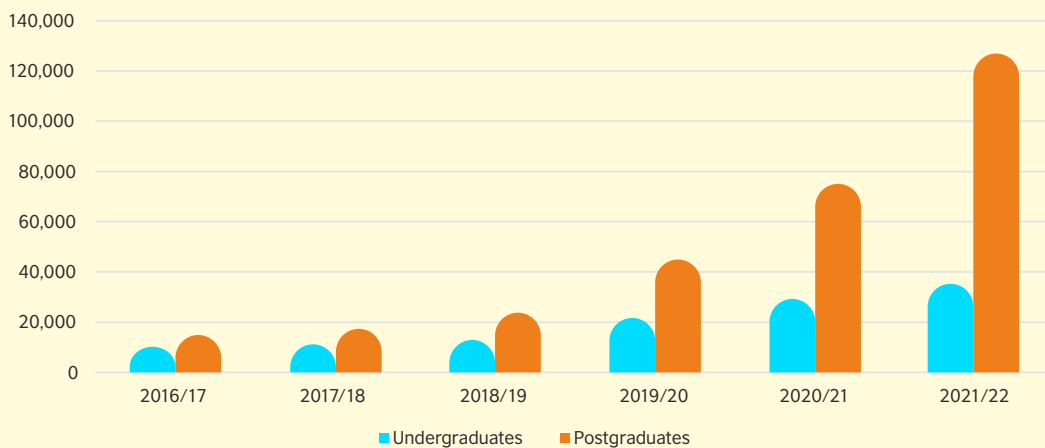
**Figure 2: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh domiciled HE students in the UK, 2016/17 to 2021/22**



Source: HESA

Most South Asian students come to the UK for postgraduate studies, while undergraduates only accounted for 22 per cent of the total in 2021/22. Even though the number of students from the three profiled countries undertaking undergraduate education in the UK has grown over the last five years, this growth has been significantly lower than the growth in postgraduate students, leading to an increase in the proportion of postgraduates across all three of these countries' students in the UK (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Undergraduate and postgraduate students from the target countries studying in the UK, 2016/17 to 2021/22**



Source: HESA

7. International Student Recruitment Data (2023) Universities UK. Available at: <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international/explore-uuki/international-student-recruitment/international-student-recruitment-data> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).

8. Immigration system statistics, year ending December 2022 (2023) Home Office. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-december-2022> (Accessed: 8 August 2023).

## 1.2 Objectives of the study

The study aimed to provide stakeholders with a comprehensive understanding of the funding options available to students in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh from their own countries to undertake higher education overseas - including, but not limited to, study in the UK.

This study sought to answer key questions regarding the following elements:

- Policy approaches to supporting outbound overseas study
- Funding sources for overseas study, including funding organisations (public, private, and philanthropic sector) and key features such as eligibility criteria, size, scale, and terms and conditions
- Challenges faced in accessing these funding sources
- Similarities and differences in the funding sources across the three countries, for example, in the type, size, and scope of funding sources on offer

The study focuses on funding sources within the target countries and does not give a detailed analysis of scholarships or fee waivers provided by UK or other overseas sources. It also does not look deeply into funding provided by family and friends, instead focusing on more formal funding channels such as scholarships and bank loans.

## 1.3 Methodology

The study drew on both primary and secondary data sources collected via desk research and qualitative interviews.

The **desk research** involved collecting and analysing secondary data, literature, documentation, strategic plans, monitoring data, and reports related to funding sources for overseas study available in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Online searches for relevant information were conducted using keywords relevant to the landscape and financing of overseas study in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, including specific types of funding sources (e.g., scholarships, loans, etc.) and funding organisations (e.g., national or state-level/provincial government agencies, banks, non-banking financial institutions, charities, foundations, and employers). Relevant information was extracted from sources including government and public sector reports, national and international studies, news articles, databases, and funder websites. Data on students studying overseas was collated from organisations such as UNESCO, OECD, the Indian Education Ministry, Universities UK, the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA), the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, and the Finance Division of the Government of Pakistan.

The **interview programme** was aimed at validating the findings of the desk research and filling any remaining data gaps. Specifically, they were designed to gain more in-depth information on the operating models of the different funding sources, successful and total applicant numbers, and any anticipated changes in the funding source.

A broad range of funding organisations in the three countries were contacted for interviews. Initial contact was made via email or telephone, and interviews were conducted remotely via phone or videoconference. Appendix A provides a list of the interviewees.

The **analysis and reporting** focused on bringing together the results of the desk research and interviews. A searchable database describing the various funding sources available in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh was created. An overview of the database is provided in Appendix B.

The database was analysed to understand the range of funding sources available to students in the three countries for studying abroad, the eligibility criteria that the students had to fulfil and the characteristics of the funding sources (e.g., amount of funding available, target group, loan repayment conditions, etc.). This information was then triangulated against the results of the interviews to understand the scale and spread of the funding sources in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The key findings from the analysis and triangulation have been summarised in this narrative report.

## 1.4 Limitations of the study

The ability to collate comprehensive and detailed information on the funding sources used by students in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh was impacted by the limited availability of information in the literature, in databases, and on funders' websites. Most of the funding organisations that were interviewed were unable to share data on the numbers of successful and unsuccessful applicants.

This report provides an overview of the types of funding sources and funders in the landscape with some examples, but does not cover the full range and scale of funding sources available within a country. For example, reliable data on the numbers of students funding their study using their own resources, support from family or informal lending were not available. In addition, it was difficult to get a reliable estimate of the proportion of students who use a particular funding source from the data available, e.g. the proportion of students who finance their study with scholarships as opposed to loans.



# Overview of the study funding landscape in the target countries

This section provides a brief overview of the overseas study funding landscape in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh with regard to the policy approach, main funders, and coverage. It draws from the mapping of indigenous funding sources for financing higher education abroad, which was undertaken as part of this study.

Table 1 provides an overview of the funding sources mapped and discussed within this section. In total 59 relevant funding sources were identified, including one which spans all three countries. It should be noted however that this is not an exhaustive list of all available funding sources in these countries. The full list of funding sources identified in this study can be found in Appendix B.

## 2.1 India

In 2020, the Indian government published the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020), which articulated the government's vision for transforming the Indian education system to one that provides high-quality education to all students and helps make India a global knowledge superpower.<sup>9</sup> The plan outlined the government's ambitions to foster internationalisation and “*provide greater mobility to students in India who may wish to visit, study at, transfer credits to, or carry out research at institutions abroad*”. The policy also strongly emphasises the role of education in achieving economic and social mobility, inclusion, and equality, and therefore the need for targeted initiatives to support students from “historically marginalised, disadvantaged, and underrepresented groups” to reach their full potential through education.

Perhaps due to this emphasis, all of the scholarships and loans identified by this study as coming directly from India's central and state governments target students from one or more marginalised or disadvantaged groups – for example, students belonging to scheduled castes or tribes, lower socioeconomic classes, minority religions, and low-income families. The Government of India also provides an interest subsidy on banks' study loans for overseas studies to students from what it terms the “other and economically backward classes” group, and acts as a guarantor for some loans issued to lower-income students.

9. National education policy 2020 (2020), Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. Available at: [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English.pdf) (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

In addition to the government, other India-based funders include banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and philanthropic foundations. This report separates Indian funding sources into three main types:

1. Scholarships, typically funded by governments and trusts/foundations;
2. Loans, typically provided by banks, non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), and government bodies; and
3. Loan scholarships, provided by charitable foundations, include an element of both types of funding. Some loan scholarship schemes offer low- or zero-interest repayable loans to high-performing students, while others provide a partial scholarship combined with a low-interest repayable loan to cover the student's remaining costs.

Data from the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) suggests that the overseas funding sources discussed above represent the main source of funds for just 4 per cent of Indian HE students studying in the UK, while the large majority of students are classed as self-funded (including those that receive support from family and friends). This data suggests that within the profiled overseas funding channels the most common are students' employers, followed by repayable loans. However, this data may not give a complete picture of Indian students' funding sources and is likely to underestimate the proportion of students funded by commercial bank loans as described in Appendix C. Desk research did not yield further evidence of Indian employers' support for overseas study and the students who benefit from it.

Most of the Indian funding organisations identified in this research (except for state government entities) operate at the national level and accept applications across all disciplines; hence, most funding sources can be accessed regardless of where students live or the subject they choose to study.

Loans are the most widely available funding source and are offered by a wide variety of public and private sector banks and NBFCs as well as some central and state government departments and bodies. Any interest paid on education loans can be deducted from total taxable income under Section 80E of the Indian Income Tax Act,<sup>10</sup> creating a financial incentive to use loans for funding education at home or abroad.

Although loans from banks and NBFCs can be used to fund both undergraduate and postgraduate study, funding from government and philanthropic foundations is often restricted to postgraduate courses (master's degrees and PhDs). This parallels Indian students' higher demand for postgraduate studies in overseas study destinations such as the UK, as described in Section 1.1.

10. Insertion of new section 80 E (1994) Income Tax Department, Government of India. Available at: <https://incometaxindia.gov.in/Acts/Finance%20Acts/1994/10212000000037757.htm>. (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

Table 1: Overview of the funding sources mapped and their key features as of May 2023

| Country           | Sources mapped  | Type of funder   | Geographical coverage  | Amount of funding available   | Eligible costs   | Eligibility criteria   | Level of study  | Target population  |
|-------------------|---|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|
| <b>India</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Loans - 18</li> <li>Scholarships - 8</li> <li>Loan scholarships - 4</li> <li>Interest subsidy - 1</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Sector Bank - 7</li> <li>Private Bank - 3</li> <li>Non-banking financial company - 3</li> <li>Government department/ ministry - 12</li> <li>Charity/ foundation - 6</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National - 22</li> <li>Specific states - 9</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From INR 100,000 (GBP 950) to unlimited</li> </ul>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fees</li> <li>In some cases, living and travel costs covered</li> <li>In rare cases, costs such as books, visas, and medical insurance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian citizens</li> <li>Most require confirmed university place</li> <li>Some have a qualifying mark threshold</li> <li>Most loans require a guarantor, some also need a collateral</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 for UG and PG levels</li> <li>15 for PG only</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indian nationals</li> <li>State-funded sources focus on state residents, usually from disadvantaged or minority communities</li> <li>Four national-level sources specifically aimed at disadvantaged or minority communities</li> </ul> |
| <b>Pakistan</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scholarships - 7</li> <li>Loan scholarships - 1</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government department/ ministry - 6</li> <li>Charity/ foundation - 1</li> <li>University - 1</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National - 6</li> <li>Province - 2</li> </ul>         | N/A   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fees</li> <li>In many cases, living and travel costs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pakistani citizens</li> <li>Most need a confirmed place</li> <li>Some have a qualifying mark threshold</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 for PG, of which 6 for PhD only</li> <li>1 for UG and</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pakistani nationals</li> <li>1 scheme specifically aimed at financially needy students</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Bangladesh</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loans - 8</li> <li>Scholarships - 3</li> <li>Loan scholarships - 1</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private sector banks - 8</li> <li>Government department/ ministry - 3</li> <li>Charity/ foundation - 1</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All national</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From BDT 50,000 (GBP 362) to BDT 20 million (GBP 145,000)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fees</li> <li>In most cases, funding also covers living and travel costs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bangladeshi citizens only</li> <li>Many require good academic track record</li> <li>Many loans require a guarantor or joint applicant</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8 for UG and PG</li> <li>4 only for PG</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bangladeshi nationals</li> <li>3 specifically aimed at financially needy communities</li> </ul>   |

Source: Analysis prepared for British Council by Technopolis

## 2.2 Pakistan

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, founded in 2002, is responsible for the development and internationalisation of higher education in Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> It provides Pakistani students with a range of scholarships to fund their higher education overseas,<sup>12</sup> as well as supporting internationalisation in other ways such as helping to negotiate agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with foreign universities to enhance faculty exchange, joint research collaborations, joint degree programmes, and study abroad opportunities. Examples of HEC scholarships include overseas scholarships for master's degree and PhD study as well as joint PhD scholarships with Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), Coventry University, and Royal Holloway University of London in the UK.<sup>13</sup>

While HEC remains the key scholarship funder in Pakistan, other government funders offering scholarships for overseas study include the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development at the national level and the Punjab Education Endowment Fund at the province level. The University of the Punjab Lahore – a public HEI – also offers scholarships to its faculty to earn PhD qualifications overseas.

Although the mapping of funding sources indicated that banks and charities/foundations in Pakistan offer education loans, further investigation revealed that current education loan schemes only cover studies within Pakistan and its provinces and do not support overseas study. Interviews with funders in Pakistan supported this conclusion. Data from HESA also suggests that repayable loans are a relatively minor overseas funding source for Pakistani students studying in the UK compared to employers, overseas governments, and overseas HEIs – although as noted in Appendix C this data should be interpreted with care, and it is possible that some students take out general commercial loans to fund overseas study in the absence of specialised student loan schemes.

Additional supporting information on funding sources other than scholarships was not readily available during the study. A more comprehensive and in-depth review of the funding landscape is required to fully understand to what extent Pakistani students make use of general commercial loans to fund overseas study, as well as funding from employers, and other funding sources.

The majority of mapped funding sources are available across Pakistan, with some province-level funders, such as the Punjab Education Endowment Fund, primarily funding students from their own region.<sup>14</sup> Most identified scholarship schemes support PhD studies across all disciplines, with a minority following a more targeted approach. For instance, the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation Scholarships are offered to students wanting to pursue undergraduate or postgraduate studies in science, technology, art, and management.

11. Jamil, H. and Jaffar, K. (2023) Institutional Policies and Initiatives for the Internationalization of HE: A Case of Southeast Asia and Pakistan. Available at: <https://www.intechopen.com/online-first/85758> (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

12. International Scholarships, HEC. Available at: <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/scholarshipsgrants/Pages/InternationalScholarships.aspx> (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

13. HEC scholarships for UK universities. Available at: <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/scholarshipsgrants/Guidelines/Pages/Guideline-for-UK.aspx> (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

14. Peef announces CM Merit Scholarship CMMS 2023, Eduvision. Available at: <https://www.eduvision.edu.pk/scholarships/peef-announces-cm-merit-scholarship-cmms-scholar-655#:~:text=CMMS%20scholarship%20is%20a%20fully,scholarship%20is%20April%2014%2C%202023> (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

## 2.3 Bangladesh

The University Grants Commission (UGC), founded in 1972, is responsible for distributing funds to government-funded universities and regulating the activities of private universities.<sup>15</sup> It supports the Ministry of Education in delivering its higher education strategy, and also promotes overseas study by facilitating collaborations between Bangladeshi universities and foreign institutions, including administering overseas-funded scholarships such as the UK's Commonwealth Scholarship. The Governance Innovation Unit in the Prime Minister's Office is the primary local provider of scholarships for overseas study in Bangladesh.

The government also aims to provide opportunities for university faculty to pursue higher degree programmes abroad to improve the quality of university teaching in Bangladesh. To support this goal, Bangladesh's Strategic Plan for Higher Education calls for links with overseas universities and scholarship providing bodies to be established and strengthened.

Apart from scholarships, Bangladeshi students have access to education loans for overseas study from banks such as the Eastern Bank, Grameen Bank, and Mercantile Bank. Currently, student loans are effectively consumer loans with high interest rates. Affordability of student loans is a concern for the government and hence initiatives such as the creation of a government-based student loan trust/company and/or influencing banks to provide low-interest loans with flexible repayment plans are being explored.<sup>16</sup>

All the funding sources discovered during the desk research had a national scope and covered all disciplines. While loans are available for both undergraduate and postgraduate study, scholarships usually cover only postgraduate courses.

As was observed for the other two countries, HESA data indicate that Bangladeshi students studying in the UK in 2021–2022 mostly undertook postgraduate studies. Bangladesh is also similar to the other two countries in that the overseas funding sources covered in this report account for a small minority of all Bangladeshi students, with the top three overseas funding sources being government funding, overseas (Bangladeshi) HEIs and funding from employers – although as with India and Pakistan, readers should note that this data may not fully cover all overseas funding sources as discussed in Appendix C.

15. University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, Bangladesh National Portal. Available at: <http://www.ugc.gov.bd/site/page/08e62928-6348-4349-9aa2-7b424eda2bbd/> (Accessed: 24 June 2023).

16. University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (2018) Strategic Plan for Higher Education in Bangladesh: 2018-2030. University Grants Commission, Dhaka.



# Funding sources for overseas study

This section provides an overview of the funding sources available for overseas study in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, broken down by broad funding type. This analysis covers the relevant funding types' prevalence in each country, their key characteristics, funders, eligibility criteria, geographical reach, target group, and costs covered. A cross-country comparison of each type of funding source is also presented.

## 3.1 Loans

Loans can be a valuable source of funding for studying abroad. A student may borrow money from a commercial or government lender to pay for the direct costs of education (tuition fees, computing equipment, lab fees, etc.) as well as other costs such as living expenses until they finish their studies. Many education loan schemes also provide an initial grace (moratorium) period, usually about six to twelve months after the course finishes, before the student must start paying back the amount borrowed over a specified repayment period.<sup>17</sup>

The overseas study loans identified through this research typically require a guarantor, usually a parent/guardian or close relative, with commercial lenders also requiring security/collateral for large loans.

The sections below cover the key features of loans available from India and Bangladesh. The research did not identify any dedicated loan schemes for overseas study aimed at students from Pakistan, although it may be possible that some students may fund their courses via more general commercial loan schemes.

Some funders combine loans with scholarships, either providing a partial scholarship along with a loan that covers the remainder of the cost of studying abroad, or providing a loan on a zero-interest basis. This type of funding is discussed separately in Section 3.3, Loan Scholarships.

### 3.1.1 India

#### Providers

Types of funders providing overseas study loans in India, include:

- **Private and public sector banks** (all governed by the central banking regulator) e.g., State Bank of India, Axis Bank, Bank of Baroda, ICICI Bank, IDFC First Bank, Punjab National Bank; Canara Bank. Education loans in India are typically offered under a model established by the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) known as the Model Education Loan Scheme, which provides more favourable terms than more general commercial loans. This model was initially introduced in 2001 but is updated from time to time, most recently in 2021.<sup>18</sup>

17. Salmi, J. (2003) 'Student Loans in an International Perspective: The World Bank Experience', The World Bank

18. Indian Banks' Association, 'IBA Model Educational Loan Scheme for Pursuing Higher Education in India and Abroad, 2021, February 2021 [https://www.iba.org.in/circulars/iba-model-educational-loan-scheme-for-pursuing-higher-education-in-india-and-abroad-2021\\_1062.html](https://www.iba.org.in/circulars/iba-model-educational-loan-scheme-for-pursuing-higher-education-in-india-and-abroad-2021_1062.html)

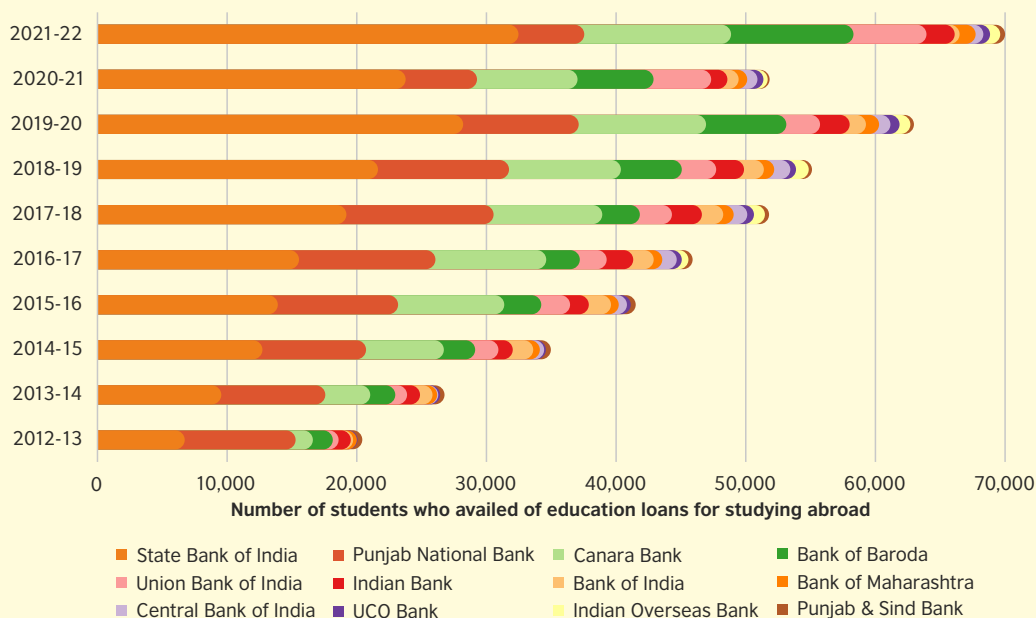
- **Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)** e.g., Avanse Financial Services, HDFC Credila Financial Services, Incred.
- **National and state government departments** (via their agencies and banks) e.g., National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation; Higher Education Promotion Fund, Government of Goa; Rajasthan Minority Finance and Development Co-operative Corporation.

## Scale

Data provided by the Government of India shows that between 2012/13 and 2021/22, a cumulative total of 461,017 students took out loans to study abroad from 12 public sector banks.<sup>19</sup> Except for a slight dip in student numbers in 2020/21 – probably due to the global COVID-19 pandemic – this period saw a continuous increase in the scale of overseas study loans, increasing from just over 20,000 students taking loans to study abroad in 2012/13 to around 70,000 students in 2021/22 (Figure 4).

In total, INR 75.8 billion (then GBP 740 Mn) was lent by scheduled commercial banks in 2021/22, representing a six-fold increase compared to the INR 11.8 billion disbursed in 2012/13 (then GBP 130 Mn).<sup>20</sup> The State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, and Canara Bank provided almost three quarters (74 per cent) of these loans (Figure 5). However, this data does not include any loans provided by non-bank financial companies (NBFCs).

**Figure 4: Total number of Indian students who took out study-abroad loans from 12 public sector banks between 2012-13 and 2021-22, by year**

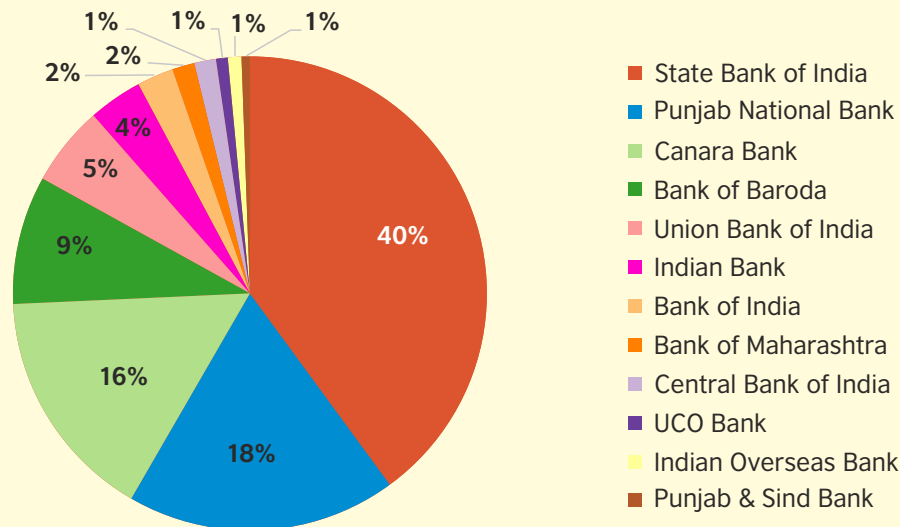


Source: Analysis provided for British Council by Technopolis. Based on data from the Ministry of Finance, Government of India to the Indian parliament (Lok Sabha) retrieved on 13th February 2023.

19. Government of India, Ministry of Finance. Available at: <https://pqals.nic.in/annex/1711/AU1759.pdf> (Accessed: 19 June 2023).

20. More Than 6-Fold Increase in The Amount of Loans Disbursed by PSBs For Study Abroad Between 2012-13 And 2021-22. Available at: <https://factly.in/data-more-than-6-fold-increase-in-the-amount-of-loans-disbursed-by-psbs-for-study-abroad-between-2012-13-and-2021-22/> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

**Figure 5: The proportion of study-abroad loans provided by 12 Indian public sector banks between 2012-13 and 2021-22**



Source: Analysis provided for British Council by Technopolis. Based on data from the Ministry of Finance, Government of India to the Indian parliament (Lok Sabha) retrieved on 13th February 2023.

### Coverage

- **Geographical coverage** – Most loans are available at the national level such as those from national public and private sector banks and NBFCs. State-level loan opportunities are typically available from government sources and appear to be few.
- **Level of study** – Most loan schemes cover both undergraduate and postgraduate study.
- **Disadvantaged or minority communities** – In addition to loans provided via banks and available to all students, there are also separate government-backed loan schemes targeting specific groups such as students who come from economically weak, socially disadvantaged (scheduled castes or tribes, other backward classes) or minority religion backgrounds. These are provided by both national (e.g., National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment) and state (e.g., Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Goa) level government bodies.

### Loan amount and costs covered

The average amount of an overseas study loan issued by scheduled commercial banks was INR 1.1 million (then GBP 10,800) in 2021/22, up from INR 600,000 (then GBP 6,800) in 2012/13. Bank loans (public and private sector) can range from INR 50,000 (GBP 480) to INR 20 million (GBP 191,000), while NBFCs such as Avanse and HDFC Credila do not have a maximum loan limit (see Appendix B). Compared to commercial loans, government loans have lower maximum limits, for instance, in the range of INR 1 to 3 million (GBP 9,500 to 28,600).

Loans offered under the Model Education Loan Scheme are intended to cover the expenses required to complete the course, including tuition fees, living expenses, travel costs, and other relevant costs such as books or equipment. Tuition fees and accommodation costs are often remitted directly to the university and landlord respectively.

### Eligibility criteria

- **Nationality/residency** – Loans are only available to Indian nationals and state government loans are only available to students resident in the relevant state.
- **Secured admission** – The majority of providers ask for secured admission in a recognised overseas HEI. Some providers only approve loans for studying in specific institutions. For example, ICICI Bank provides “funding for the top 200 universities/institutes” while Canara Bank’s education loan must be for studying in “one of the top 50 universities in the world”.<sup>21,22</sup>
- **Academic performance** – Some providers require students to have achieved a minimum mark in qualifying examinations (e.g. achieving a set percentage score in higher secondary examinations for undergraduate courses and undergraduate degree for postgraduate courses) to become eligible for a loan. For example, Axis Bank’s Education Loan is only available to students who have secured at least a 50 per cent score in higher secondary or graduation examinations<sup>23</sup> and several state education loans are available only to students who have at least 60 per cent on average in their qualifying examinations.

### Security

Most loans require a co-borrower or guarantor, usually a parent or guardian. In these cases, evidence of parents’ income is requested.

The need for a collateral or security can depend on the amount being loaned. Under the Model Education Loan Scheme, loans below INR 400,000 (GBP 3,800) do not require security, while this is required for borrowers of amounts over INR 750,000 (GBP 7,200). For amounts between these limits, security or guarantee requirements are at the discretion of the bank. Collateral security offered by a third party (other than parents) may also be accepted by some banks.

### Interest rates

Interest rates depend on the amount that is borrowed. For banks and NBFCs, interest rates range from 6.5 per cent to 15 per cent.<sup>24,25</sup> Some banks such as Bank of Baroda and State Bank of India offer lower interest rates for students from certain groups, often including a 0.5 per cent concession on the rate of interest for female students and in

21 Education Loan, ICICI Bank. Available at: <https://www.icicibank.com/personal-banking/loans/education-loan> (Accessed: 23 June 2023)

22 Education Loan and other Priority Sector Loans, Canara Bank. Available at: [https://canarabank.com/User\\_page.aspx?othlink=391](https://canarabank.com/User_page.aspx?othlink=391) (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

23 Education Loan Features, Axis Bank. Available at: <https://www.axisbank.com/retail/loans/education-loan/features-benefits> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

24 Education Loan Features, Axis Bank. Available at: <https://www.axisbank.com/retail/loans/education-loan/features-benefits> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

25 Student Loan Scheme Features, SBI. Available at: <https://sbi.co.in/web/personal-banking/loans/education-loans/student-loan-scheme> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

some cases also lower interest rates for “meritorious students”.

Loans offered under the IBA’s Model Education Loan Scheme offer interest subsidies to certain student groups, underwritten by the Ministry of Education under the Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme (CSIS). Students whose parents earn below INR 450,000 (GBP 4,300) per year are not charged interest during the course duration and any moratorium period before repayments commence (up to one year after course completion). Students in this group also have their loans guaranteed by the government up to a value of INR 750,000 (GBP 7,200), meaning that they do not have to provide any collateral security or guarantee for loans below this amount.<sup>26</sup>

Another subsidy scheme is the Dr Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Other Backward Classes and Economically Backward Classes which is still running and the Padho Pardesh interest subsidy scheme of the Ministry of Minority affairs which was discontinued in 2022. The Padho Pardesh interest subsidy scheme benefitted 9,753 students from minority religions over an eight-year period from 2014/15 to 2021/22, with the number of students benefitting steadily increasing year by year.<sup>27</sup>

Education loans from government sources either carry no interest (e.g., in Goa; assuming the loanees adhere to the repayment schedule) or low interest (typically 4 per cent for male students and 3.5 per cent for female students) (see Appendix B).

## Repayment

Bank loans for overseas study are typically offered with a maximum repayment period of 15 years, although there is often a moratorium period before which repayments are due. This period typically covers the course duration and a further 6 months to one year, although some banks offer a fixed 5-year moratorium period.

Interest continues to accumulate during the moratorium period. Some banks encourage students to pay the interest on their loan during this period by providing an additional 1 per cent discount on interest rates if the student chooses to pay interest during this period.<sup>28</sup>

Repayment periods for government sector loans range from 4 to 15 years with specific moratorium periods like the bank loans.

### 3.1.2 Pakistan

While several banks and charities/foundations in Pakistan offer education loans, further investigation revealed that current education loan schemes only cover studies within Pakistan and do not support overseas study.

To the extent that Pakistani students use loans to fund their overseas studies, this may be through use of general commercial loans rather than dedicated student loan schemes. However, data from HESA and interviews with funders suggest that it is not common for Pakistani students to take out loans to study abroad.

26 Ministry of Education, 'Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme', April 2018. [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/upload\\_document/CSIS%20-%20NewGuidelines.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/upload_document/CSIS%20-%20NewGuidelines.pdf)

27 Padho Pardesh Scheme, Edex Live. Available at: <https://www.edexlive.com/news/2023/apr/28/padho-pardesh-now-discontinued-this-scheme-benefitted-9753-minority-students-in-eight-years-34933.html> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

28 Model Education Loan Scheme, Bank of Maharashtra. Available at: <https://bankofmaharashtra.in/model-education-loan-scheme> (Accessed 18 August 2023)

### 3.1.3 Bangladesh

#### Providers

Loans for studying abroad are predominantly available from banks in Bangladesh such as Shahjalal Islami Bank Limited (SJIBL), Eastern Bank, Mercantile Bank, One Bank, Grameen Bank, and National Credit and Commerce (NCC) Bank.

#### Scale

It was not possible to obtain information from Bangladeshi banks on the number of loans issued or the number of applications, and this information was not readily available online.

#### Coverage

- **Geographical coverage** – All the banks providing overseas study loans are national banks.
- **Level of study** – All but one of the loan schemes identified cover both undergraduate and postgraduate study.
- **Disadvantaged or minority communities** – The Grameen Bank and NCC Bank have loan products aimed at the economically weaker sections of society.

#### Loan amount and costs covered

Loan amounts vary from BDT 50,000 (GBP 360) to BDT 2.5 million (GBP 18,000). Most loans cover course fees, living expenses and travel costs, while some also cover other costs such as books and equipment.

#### Eligibility criteria

- **Nationality** – Loans are only available to Bangladeshi nationals.
- **Secured admission** – The majority of banks do not ask for a secured admission place in a foreign university to qualify for a loan.
- **Academic performance** – Almost all banks cite good academic track record as a key eligibility criterion.
- **Family income** – The NCC Bank's loan product for Bangladeshi nationals from low-income families can only be accessed after providing evidence of income.<sup>29</sup>

#### Security

A personal guarantee, for example, from a parent/guardian and/or a security/collateral are required for larger loans.

#### Interest rates

Interest rates range from 3 per cent to 14 per cent.

#### Repayment

Repayment periods are typically up to 60 months (5 years), although some loans have a repayment period as low as one year. Banks in Bangladesh do not appear to offer a moratorium period on student loans.

<sup>29</sup> Education Loan, NCC Bank. Available at: <https://www.nccb.com.bd/NccbLoanProducts/educationLoan> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

### 3.1.3 How loans compare across countries

Dedicated loan schemes for overseas study were identified in India and Bangladesh, but not in Pakistan. The Indian market for overseas study loans appears more mature than that in Bangladesh with more numerous and varied lenders including government departments and NBFCs as well as banks (the loan providers in Bangladesh). Meanwhile bank loans in India are more standardised, with many banks offering education loan products according to the format specified by the IBA's Model Education Loan Scheme.

In both India and Bangladesh, loans are available for both undergraduate and postgraduate study, across the whole country and for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. India, however, also has loan schemes targeting specific states.

The maximum amount of funding available is greater in India, but interest rates are similar. There is also a substantial difference in repayment periods – In India this can be as long as 15 years, including a moratorium period during the course and for up to a year afterwards before repayment is required, whereas Bangladeshi banks set a narrower window of 1 to 5 years for repayment. Eligibility criteria are similar, and typically include secured admission and an excellent academic record. However, some loan schemes in India also specify eligible institutions.

Overall, loans are relatively widely available but requirements for guarantors and/or collateral may create barriers to access for students with a low family income. While special schemes are available for these students, these opportunities are limited.

#### Key Takeaways

- Study-abroad loans are widely available through banks in India and Bangladesh, but not in Pakistan. A wider range of lenders are active in the Indian overseas study loan market including government departments/agencies and NBFCs, thus providing better choice and more opportunities to find funding.
- Most loan providers are active at the national level, but in India, state-level government bodies offer low-interest loans to socially and/or economically disadvantaged groups.
- Eligibility criteria include nationality, secured admission to a foreign university, and an excellent academic record.
- Bank loans often require the student to provide a guarantor – typically a parent – and/or collateral as security for their loans.
- Interest rates for government loans or those targeting disadvantaged groups tend to be much lower (3 to 5 per cent) compared to those offered by commercial lenders (up to 15 per cent). In India, some providers offer lower interest rates for women and the government provides an interest subsidy to students from other or economically backward classes who have taken out a bank loan.

## 3.2 Scholarships

A scholarship is a financial award given to a student to support their higher education which does not need to be repaid. Scholarships are normally given on the basis of academic merit to students with excellent academic track records as a way to attract and nurture top talent.<sup>30</sup> Scholarship schemes tend to be competitive since only a limited number of awards can be made. As a result, selection may include stringent eligibility criteria, a detailed application (including a personal statement), academic references, and interview. Funding usually covers tuition fees but may also cover living and other costs such as travel.

This section discusses the features of scholarships available in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for overseas study.

### 3.2.1 India

#### Providers

In India, scholarships are mainly funded by charities/foundations and government departments (national and state). Examples include:

- Charities/foundations e.g., Tata Trusts, Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation.
- Government e.g., Government of India Department of Social Justice and Empowerment; State governments of Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana.

#### Scale

Funders have limited scholarships on offer every year, for example:

- For 2023/24, the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme of the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India offered a total of 125 scholarships for overseas study.<sup>31</sup>
- The Government of Telangana makes 300 scholarships available for backward classes per year, of which 33 per cent are reserved for women and 3 per cent are for physically challenged students. Telangana also offers up to 500 scholarships for students from minority communities (Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Jain, Buddhist, and Parsi).<sup>32</sup>
- The Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation provides on average 11-12 awards per year, while the Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust offers up to 10 scholarships per year.<sup>33,34</sup>

30 Scholarships, Grants and Bursaries: Academic Excellence and Merit. UCAS. Available at: <https://www.ucas.com/finance/scholarships-grants-and-bursaries/scholarships-grants-and-bursaries-academic-excellence-and-merit> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

31 National Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Scheduled Castes, Government of India. Available at: [https://nosmsje.gov.in/\(X\(1\)S\(og4vfuyqtpofnl4dpec4h1dj\)\)/Default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1](https://nosmsje.gov.in/(X(1)S(og4vfuyqtpofnl4dpec4h1dj))/Default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1) (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

32 Application Registration for Overseas Scholarships for SC Students, Government of India. Available at: <https://telanganaepass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

33 Scholarships, Inlaks Foundation. Available at: <https://www.inlaksfoundation.org/scholarships/> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

34 Scholarship Announcement, Tata Trusts. Available at: [https://www.tatatrusts.org/Upload/Content\\_Files/scholarship-announcement-2022-2023.pdf](https://www.tatatrusts.org/Upload/Content_Files/scholarship-announcement-2022-2023.pdf) (Accessed: 22 June 2023).



## Coverage

- *Geographical coverage* – National coverage unless funded by a state government in which case scholarships are restricted to the state.
- *Level of study* – Mainly for postgraduate study.
- *Disadvantaged or minority communities* – The Government of India's Department of Social Justice and Empowerment and state governments of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Jharkhand have scholarships specifically targeting socially disadvantaged (scheduled castes and tribes, other backward classes) or minority communities. The Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust scholarship is aimed at women who want to study overseas.<sup>35</sup>

A number of the scholarships are specifically focused on students in financial need (see Appendix B), for instance, the National Overseas Scholarship Scheme, the Jagananna Videshi Vidya Deevena Scholarship (Andhra Pradesh), and overseas study scholarships offered by the states of Jharkhand and Telangana.

## Funding amount and costs covered

There is a large variation in the amount of funding available. All scholarships cover at least part of the student's tuition fees, with many also covering living expenses and some covering airfare to the overseas institution. For example, the Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation provides up to USD 100,000 (GBP 79,000) to cover tuition as well as living expenses, healthcare, and one-way airfare, whilst the Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust provides between INR 300,000 and 600,000 (GBP 2,860 – 5,720) depending on "performance in interview".<sup>36,37</sup>

State-based scholarships (e.g. from Jharkhand and Telangana) provide amounts up to INR 2 million (GBP 19,000). In Andhra Pradesh, the Jagananna Videshi Vidya Deevena scholarship amount is linked to the world ranking of the institution of study – 100 per cent of tuition fees are covered for students attending institutions ranked in the worldwide top 100, while scholarships covering 50 per cent of tuition fees or INR 5 million (whichever is lower) are available for students enrolling in HEIs ranked between 101 and 200 worldwide.<sup>38</sup>

The Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Overseas Scholarship from Jharkhand state provides relevant tuition and visa fees plus a GBP 10,000 maintenance grant and GBP 1,400 for books, equipment, thesis binding, and local travel.<sup>39</sup>

## Eligibility criteria

- *Nationality, residency and age* – Scholarships are only available to Indian nationals. State-level scholarships require applicants to be resident in the relevant state. Applicants need to be under 35 or 30 years of age for specific scholarships.

35 The Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust awards scholarships, Postgraduate Studentships. Available at: <http://www.postgraduatestudentships.co.uk/opportunity/the-lady-meherbai-d-tata-education-awards/22064/> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

36 Scholarships, Inlaks Foundation. Available at: <https://www.inlaksfoundation.org/scholarships/> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

37 Scholarship Announcement, Tata Trusts. Available at: [https://www.tatatrusters.org/Upload/Content\\_Files/scholarship-announcement-2022-2023.pdf](https://www.tatatrusters.org/Upload/Content_Files/scholarship-announcement-2022-2023.pdf) (Accessed: 22 June 2023).

38 Jnana Bhumi, homepage. Available at: <https://jnanabhumi.apcfss.in> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

39 About the Scheme, Department of Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste, Minority and Backward Class Welfare. Available at: <https://mgos.jharkhand.gov.in> (Accessed: 23 June 2023).

- *Secured admission* – Most funders ask for a confirmed place at a foreign university.
- *Academic performance* – Scholarships are often based on a student's academic record. For example, only students who have scored above a minimum mark threshold (e.g. 60 per cent) may apply for some scholarships.
- *Family income* – The National Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Jagananna Videshi Vidya Deevena Scholarship (Andhra Pradesh) is available only to students whose total family income does not exceed INR 800,000 (GBP 7,630) per annum in the preceding financial year.<sup>40</sup> The Jharkhand and Telangana overseas scholarships are only available to students whose family income is below INR 1.2 million (GBP 11,400) and INR 500,000 (GBP 4,800) respectively.<sup>40,41</sup>

### 3.2.2 Pakistan

#### Providers

Scholarships are mainly funded by government bodies such as the HEC, Punjab Education Endowment Fund, and Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development. The HEC's scholarships for UK universities are based on MOUs with specific universities that require the UK partner to waive part of their tuition fee.

#### Scale

Pakistan's Finance Ministry's annual Economic Survey reports show that 716, 1,171, and 623 scholarships for overseas study were awarded in 2019-20, 2020-21, and 2021-22 respectively. The scholarships from 2019 to 2021 were for PhD studies abroad, but in 2021-22 scholarships were awarded for PhD, Master of Science, and undergraduate studies.<sup>42</sup>

#### Coverage

- *Geographical coverage* – National coverage, including scholarships offered by the Punjab Education Endowment Fund which allocates 10 per cent of scholarships to students from other provinces and territories
- *Level of study* – All but one of the identified scholarships exclusively target PhD study.
- *Disadvantaged or minority communities* – Some scholarships are specifically focused on students in financial need, in which case their family income needs to be below a maximum family income threshold.
- *Disciplines* – Some scholarships are restricted to specific subjects. For example, the Punjab Education Endowment Fund reserves 80 per cent of scholarships for

40 National Overseas Scholarship Scheme, Government of India. Available at:

<https://socialjustice.gov.in/schemes/28#:~:text=The%20Central%20Sector%20Scheme%20of,.%2C%20Master%20degree%20or%20Ph.> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

41 Overseas Study Scheme for Minorities Scholarship, Minority Welfare Department, Government of Tel

42 Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22. Finance Division, Government of Pakistan. Available at: [https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey\\_1920.html](https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey_1920.html), [https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey\\_2021.html](https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey_2021.html), [https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey\\_2022.html](https://www.finance.gov.pk/survey_2022.html) (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

science disciplines, and 20 per cent of scholarships for Social Sciences/Humanities and Arts, whereas the HEC-QMUL scholarship is for a PhD in specific subjects, mostly oriented towards the natural and social sciences.

### Funding amount and costs covered

Almost all scholarships identified cover tuition fees, living or maintenance costs (at least partially), and airfare.<sup>43</sup> Some also cover other costs such as health insurance.

Under cooperative agreements between UK universities and the HEC, UK universities registering Pakistani students for a PhD either waive the tuition fee or cover half of it, with the HEC covering any remaining tuition fee and providing a partial stipend or maintenance allowance (e.g., GBP 1,015 per month for QMUL and Coventry University). Students are requested to secure additional funding to cover other costs. The University of Punjab offers PKR 5 million (GBP 13,100) for its non-PhD teaching staff to study for a PhD in the UK or US.

### Eligibility criteria:

- *Secured admission* – Some scholarships, such as those offered by the Punjab Education Endowment Fund and the University of the Punjab Lahore, require students to have secured a place in a worldwide top 50<sup>44</sup> or top 100 university.
- *Academic performance* – The majority of scholarships are for students with an excellent academic record, for example, no less than 60 per cent marks throughout their academic career or first division in their previous degree. Others require a PhD offer from one of the top universities in the world for which a good academic record would be a prerequisite.
- *Family income* – The Punjab Education Endowment Fund scholarship is only offered to those with a declared monthly family income equal to, or less than, PKR 200,000 (GBP 530).

## 3.2.3 Bangladesh

### Providers

Relatively few overseas scholarship schemes funded from Bangladeshi sources were identified. The main funders were government departments including the Governance Innovation Unit (Prime Minister's Office) and the Secondary and Higher Secondary Division (Ministry of Education). However, Bangladesh's University Grants Commission (UGC) administers scholarships funded by overseas embassies and international development agencies, such as the UK's Commonwealth Scholarship.

### Scale

Information on the numbers of scholarships on offer was not available. However, the number is believed to be small compared to the number of Bangladeshi students studying overseas.

43 Scholarship Guidelines, HEC. Available at: <https://www.hec.gov.pk/english/scholarshipsgrants/Guidelines> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

44 Chief Minister Merit Scholarships, Punjab Education Endowment Fund. Available at: <https://www.peef.org.pk/cmms> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

### Coverage

- Geographical coverage – National coverage.
- Level of study – Mostly for postgraduate studies.
- Disadvantaged or minority communities – Most domestically-funded scholarships are open to all and are not specific to those who are in financial need.

### Funding amount and costs covered

Most of the scholarships available cover tuition fees, with some offering return airfare and a living allowance as well. The Prime Minister's Fellowship provides a maximum of BDT 6 million (GBP 43,400) of funding for a master's course and BDT 20 million (GBP 145,000) for a PhD.

### Eligibility criteria

- *Secured admission* – Some scholarships require an offer from one of the top universities in the world. For example, the Prime Minister's Fellowship is only available to candidates with an offer from one of the top 200 institutions according to the Times Higher Education World University Overall Rankings.<sup>45</sup>
- *Academic performance* – An excellent academic record is a prerequisite for most scholarships. The Prime Minister's Fellowship also requires the applicant to demonstrate English language proficiency.<sup>46</sup>

## 3.2.4 How scholarships compare across countries

In India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, scholarships function as a key mechanism for governments and charities/foundations to support the most academically gifted students to study abroad. All scholarships across the three countries cover at least part of the course's tuition fees, but in many cases, they also cover return airfare and a living allowance as well.

Fewer scholarships are available compared to loans – only a limited number are on offer. Consequently, scholarships are very competitive. Eligibility criteria include an excellent academic record, for instance, candidates need to have scored above a minimum mark threshold (e.g. 60 per cent) in the relevant qualifying exam (higher secondary for undergraduate, bachelor's for postgraduate, and master's for PhD). A secured place in a top tier HEI is also a commonly used eligibility criterion.

Most scholarships mapped in this study operate at the country level and support postgraduate study. Some schemes created at the state (India) or province (Pakistan) level only target residents of the relevant state or province. Across the three countries, there are scholarships that target economically disadvantaged students, and in India some scholarships also target socially disadvantaged groups or minority communities.

45 World University Rankings 2023. Available at: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

46 PM Fellowship Bangladesh. Available at: <https://pmfellowship.pmo.gov.bd> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

### Key Takeaways

- Scholarships for overseas study are available in all three countries. These are key funding sources used by governments and to some extent foundations to support academically high-achieving students in studying overseas without financial burden.
- Scholarships are predominantly used to support postgraduate study. The funding usually covers tuition fees as a minimum.
- Scholarships are limited in number and are highly competitive. Applicants must demonstrate strong academic performance, typically based on their scores in key national examinations, and often must have secured admission at a reputed foreign university.
- In India there are national government, state government, and philanthropic foundation funded scholarships to support talented students from socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society, including women.

## 3.3 Loan scholarships

A loan scholarship is a funding source that combines elements of a loan and a scholarship. This research identified two types of loan scholarships: those that provide part of the funding support as a scholarship, combined with a repayable loan to cover the remainder of the student's costs; and those that offer low- or zero-interest loans to a small number of students on a competitive basis.

This form of student support is provided by philanthropic foundations as opposed to other types of funding organisations. Four examples of loan scholarships were identified across the region, including three in India and one spanning several developing countries. This section provides more details on these funding sources.

### 3.3.1 Pan-national

#### Provider

The Aga Khan Foundation under its International Scholarship Programme (ISP) offers awards that are structured as a half grant and half loan.<sup>47</sup>

#### Coverage

- *Geographical coverage* – A range of developing countries including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.
- *Level of study* – The ISP supports postgraduate studies. Preference is given to master's courses.

47 Aga Khan Foundation, homepage. Available at: <https://the.akdn/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

- *Disadvantaged or minority communities* – The ISP is aimed at supporting students with genuine financial needs, that is, students who would not be able to take up an overseas course without ISP funding.

### **Funding amount and costs covered**

Financial assistance is provided according to the needs of individual students, with 50 per cent of the funding provided as a scholarship grant while the remaining half must be repaid. The amount awarded by the ISP covers the full costs of a master's degree course; however, for PhD students, the funding only covers the first two years of the programme after which students are expected to find funding from an alternative source. Both tuition fees and living expenses are covered.

### **Eligibility criteria**

- *Secured admission* – Admission to a reputable foreign postgraduate institution.
- *Academic performance* – The ISP aims to support 'gifted, outstanding students' as evidenced by excellent academic records.
- *Financial need* – Applicants must demonstrate that they have explored and secured multiple sources of funding.

### **Security**

The student's head of family, or another guarantor, is required to co-sign the loan agreement.

### **Interest rate**

50 per cent of the award amount must be paid back at an interest rate of 5 per cent.

### **Repayment**

The repayment period is five years, starting six months after the earliest of the following events: graduation, termination of studies or withdrawal of support following failure to meet the academic standards expected of ISP students.

## **3.3.2 India**

### **Providers**

Loan scholarships are offered by three trusts or foundations: the K.C. Mahindra Education Trust, Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation, and J. N. Tata Endowment. These schemes allow students to take out zero-interest or low-interest repayable loans for overseas studies. In addition to low-interest loans, the JN Tata Endowment also comments that high-performing students "may also be recommended for partial travel assistance and a gift award from our allied Trusts"; this support is non-repayable.

## Scale

Data from the Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation Scholarships shows that 22 students are supported every year through interest-free loans.<sup>48</sup> Meanwhile the J. N. Tata Endowment Loan Scholarship funded 97 students in 2022/23, out of a total of 1,567 applicants, meaning that only around one in 16 applications was successful. The majority of the successful applicants under this scheme went on to study in the US (61 of 97, 63 per cent) followed by the UK (21 of 97; 36 per cent).

## Coverage

- *Geographical coverage* – National coverage.
- *Level of study* – Postgraduate studies.
- *Disadvantaged or minority communities* – The loan scholarships on offer from India-based foundations do not target specific groups.

## Funding amount and costs covered

Amounts between INR 100,000 (GBP 950) and INR 1 million (GBP 9,500) are offered to cover programme tuition at least partially, while living expenses and travel are also covered in some programmes. J. N. Tata Endowment Loan Scholarship holders are also eligible for partial travel assistance (maximum of INR 50,000, GBP 480) or a gift award between INR 200,000 (GBP 1,910) and INR 750,000 (GBP 7,150) from allied Tata Trusts.<sup>49</sup>

## Eligibility criteria

- *Nationality and age* – Indian nationals below 30 or 45 years of age depending on the scheme.
- *Secured admission* – Funding is awarded subject to securing admission at a university abroad.
- *Academic performance* – Students require a good academic record to be successful in their applications. The J. N. Tata Endowment Loan Scholarship is available only to students who have at least 60 per cent on average in their qualifying examinations, while the K.C. Mahindra Education Trust only funds students with a first-class degree or equivalent.<sup>50</sup> Even if students meet these minimum requirements, access to loan scholarships is highly competitive.

## Security

Some schemes, e.g., the K. C. Mahindra Scholarship and the J. N. Tata Endowment Loan Scholarship, require a guarantor but no collateral.

## Interest rates

The J. N. Tata Endowment Loan Scholarship is repayable at 2 per cent rate of interest, while the other two loan scholarships are interest-free loans.

48 Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation, homepage. Available at: <https://pg.nsfoundation.co.in> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

49 JN Tata Foundation, homepage. Available at: <https://jntataendowment.org> (Accessed on 23 June 2023)

50 Scholarship Grants, KCMET. Available at: <https://www.kcmet.org/what-we-do-Scholarship-Grants.aspx> Accessed on 23 June 2023)

## Repayment

The loan repayment period ranges from 24 months after completion of the course to seven years depending on the scheme.

### 3.3.3 How loan scholarships compare across countries

The operating model of the loan scholarship combines elements from the selection processes of scholarships such as the emphasis on academic excellence and use of interviews with elements of loans such as repayment and requirements for guarantors. This operating model is used predominantly by foundations and trusts operating in India (including the Aga Khan Foundation).

The amount of funding offered through loan scholarships may not cover the full costs of studying for a degree overseas, and other sources of funding may need to be explored. Nevertheless, with recipients required to pay little or no interest, loan scholarships are a desirable source of funding for studying abroad. Moreover, it is a useful funding model for foundations/trusts as it allows them to replenish funds to offer more loan scholarships.

#### Key Takeaways

- Loan scholarships combine elements of loans and grants and are an operating model used by foundations and trusts to support postgraduate study abroad.
- Loan scholarships are relatively few compared to loans and scholarships. The amount of funding available (maximum INR 1 million or GBP 9,500) is also lower than what can be accessed in some loan and scholarship schemes.
- An excellent academic record is a key eligibility criterion and while a collateral is not requested, a guarantor may be required.
- The loan part of the funding must be repaid, but typically no or very little interest is charged.



# Conclusions

The number of students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh going abroad for further studies has been increasing in recent years and is likely to continue to increase in the future. Undertaking higher education abroad, especially in high-income countries like the UK and US, is an expensive endeavour, and availability of funding will affect the ability of South Asian students to make the most of opportunities to study abroad. Against that backdrop, this study was aimed at gaining a better understanding of in-country funding sources available in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

The key findings of this research are as follows:

## 1. The policy motivations for, and approach to, funding overseas study are similar across the three countries reviewed

Ambitions to improve access to quality higher education and to foster internationalisation underpin the Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi governments' interest in supporting students to undertake overseas study. Scholarships are the main funding modality employed by each of the governments, while specialised loan products for overseas study are available in India and Bangladesh through the banking sector.

The motivations and approach are unlikely to change significantly in the near future. However, new actors and funding modalities may enter the market. For example, the establishment of a student loan trust/company that provides low-interest loans with flexible repayment requirements is being explored in Bangladesh. Whether such a trust/company will offer loans to study abroad alongside loans to study in local universities remains to be seen.

## 2. The overseas study funding sector is more mature in India and incorporates a wider variety of funders and funding sources

The research conducted for this study shows that India has a comparatively more mature ecosystem to support overseas study, compared with Pakistan and Bangladesh. A greater number and wider variety of funders (e.g., NBFCs, state government departments and bodies) and funding sources (e.g., loan scholarships, interest subsidies) actively operate in India, offering students better choice and more opportunities to fund overseas study; meanwhile a variety of banks offer loan products based on a common format (the IBA Model Education Loan Scheme) with more favourable repayment terms than those available in Bangladesh. This makes it comparatively easier to access options to go abroad for education, contributing to the large number of Indian students studying abroad in the UK and other destination countries.

India has several examples of funding sources (scholarships, loans, and interest subsidies) that address the needs of students from marginalised or disadvantaged groups such as scheduled castes or tribes, other backward classes, minority religions, and low-income families, and support their access to overseas study. Other countries could use these examples to inform the design of their funding sources.

### 3. Loans are the most common of the profiled funding sources

The available evidence shows that loans are the most significant of the funding sources addressed in this study. The number of study-abroad loans issued in India alone is at least an order of magnitude higher than the number of scholarships on offer across the three countries combined, with around 70,000 loans issued in 2021/22 alone by a subset of Indian banks.<sup>51</sup> In contrast, the number of scholarships on offer is estimated to be in the hundreds or low thousands across the three target countries.

Loans in India and Bangladesh are available nationwide for both undergraduate and postgraduate study and for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. India also has loan schemes targeting specific states and socially disadvantaged groups. However, research did not find any specialised loan schemes in Pakistan that support overseas higher education (as opposed to those supporting domestic study), and discussions with funders in the country also suggest that loans are a relatively uncommon funding source for Pakistani students studying abroad.

In terms of loan providers, apart from banks, there are also instances of state governments and NBFCs offering loans in India. Thus, students have a variety of loan products to choose from and more opportunities to acquire the required funding support. Eligibility criteria for loans are also less onerous than for scholarships. Taken together, this means that loans can support a wider range of students in terms of levels of study, geographies, and family background as long as they are able to secure a place at a foreign HEI and provide any required guarantee/collateral.

Nonetheless, despite special loan schemes for students from some disadvantaged groups, requirements for guarantors and collateral mean that even in India there will be some prospective students that cannot take advantage of this option to support their overseas study plans.

### 4. Scholarships are limited in quantity and mainly target top students

This study shows that government funders and philanthropic foundations in South Asia award scholarships to support overseas study for specific student groups, particularly the most academically gifted students. By providing scholarships, governments and foundations help to remove financial barriers that may prevent these students from studying abroad. All profiled scholarships across the three countries cover at least part of the student's tuition fees, but some other expenses such as travel, living expenses and other costs may not be covered, meaning students sometimes must seek additional funding.

Scholarships are limited in number and hence competition is fierce. Students typically must demonstrate excellent academic performance at the preceding level of study to qualify for funding, with assessment also based on other sources such as application materials, references and/or interviews.

Most of the scholarships available to prospective overseas students from the target countries support postgraduate rather than undergraduate study. Some scholarships are restricted to students from socially and economically

disadvantaged sections of society or women. As such, while scholarships are financially advantageous for students (as no repayment required), they are also exclusive and not accessible to many students because of demanding eligibility requirements and tough competition.

## **5. Further research is required to gain a comprehensive view of the overseas study funding landscape**

While this research provides an overview of the home-country funding sources used by South Asian students to study abroad, quantitative data is not available for all types of funding sources across the region, making it more difficult to provide a clear comparison. Information on funding modalities other than scholarships, loans, and loan scholarships (e.g. employer funding, self-funding, informal lending) was not readily available in the public domain.

Although data from HESA suggests that employers are an important source of tuition fees for many Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi students in the UK (as discussed in Appendix C) only one example was identified of an employer (a Pakistani University) providing funding for its teaching staff to undertake a PhD abroad. It was therefore not possible to arrive at reliable conclusions regarding the scale and key features of this funding channel. In addition, while some data is available on the number of issued loans and scholarships, information on the number of unsuccessful applicants was not available, making it difficult to judge the extent to which volume is limited by availability vs student demand.

Future research based on a survey of students studying abroad, combined with data on awards and applications from funders, may help to build a broader understanding of the overseas study funding landscape in South Asia.

# Appendix A

## Interviewee profile

**Table 2:** Profile of providers contacted for interview

| Country      | Number of organisations contacted | Interviews conducted | Type of stakeholder contacted  |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| India        | 31                                | 2                    | Banks<br>Non-banking financial institutions<br>NGOs/foundation<br>Government departments |
| Pakistan     | 8                                 | 3                    |  |
| Bangladesh   | 15                                | 1                    |  |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>54</b>                         | <b>6</b>             |  |

### Organisations interviewed

- Axis Bank, India
- J. N. Tata Endowment Fund, India
- Al Khidmat Foundation, Pakistan
- Ishan Trust, Pakistan
- Overseas Pakistanis Foundation, Pakistan
- Chevening Scholarships, Bangladesh

# Appendix B

## Overview of funding sources by country

**Table 3:** Funding Sources in India

| Organisation  | Name of funding source                          | Key features  | Website   |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scholarships/Grants   |   |   |   |
| Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation  | Inlaks Shivdasani Foundation Scholarship        | Postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> They award up to USD 100,000 for programme tuition, scholars' living expenses, healthcare, and one-way airfare.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national with secured admission to a postgraduate course. English language certification document and two academic referees required.   | <a href="http://www.inlaksfoundation.org/scholarships">www.inlaksfoundation.org/scholarships</a>  |
| The Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust  | The Lady Meherbai D Tata Education Trust Awards | Postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> Approximately between INR 300,000 and INR 600,000 (GBP 2,860 - GBP 5,720) per selected student is awarded depending on the candidate's performance in the interview.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian women who graduated from a reputed university with a constant and remarkable academic record, have secured admission in an institution in the US, UK, or Europe, and have at least two years of work experience.   | <a href="https://www.tatatrusts.org/Upload/Content_Files/scholarship-document-22-23.pdf">https://www.tatatrusts.org/Upload/Content_Files/scholarship-document-22-23.pdf</a>   |
| Department of Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Government of India | National Overseas Scholarship Scheme            | Postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> Funding is dependent on tuition, living expenses and travel. It can also include visa fees and medical insurance premiums.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national not older than 35 from a low-income background. Total family income from all sources shall not exceed INR 800,000 (GBP 7,630) per annum in the preceding financial year. Should have obtained an unconditional offer of admission from a foreign institution/university in the list of top 500 ranked institutions/universities | <a href="https://nosmsje.gov.in/(X(1)S(og4vfuyqtpofnl4dpec4h1dj))/Default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1">https://nosmsje.gov.in/(X(1)S(og4vfuyqtpofnl4dpec4h1dj))/Default.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1</a> |

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Department of Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste, Minority and Backward Class, Government of Jharkhand | Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Overseas Scholarship Scheme | <p>Postgraduate (master's and MPhil courses)</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Relevant fees (tuition, visa) plus GBP 10,000 maintenance grant and GBP 1,400 for books, equipment, thesis binding, and local travel.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian students from the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, minority and Other Backward Communities belonging to and residing in the state; with 55% or more in their bachelor's degree; no more than 40 years old. Annual family income INR 1.2 million or less (GBP 11,400)</p>   | <a href="https://mgos.jharkhand.gov.in">https://mgos.jharkhand.gov.in</a>   |
| Government of Andhra Pradesh   | Jagananna Videshi Vidya Deevana                             | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> 100% of tuition fees are covered for those attending the top 100 institutions, 50% or INR 5 million (GBP 47,700) (whichever is less) for the top 101-200 universities. It also covers Visa fees.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Natives of Andhra Pradesh from backward classes, economically backward classes, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, or minority communities; family income must be less than INR 800,000 (GBP 7,630); not over 35 years; only one candidate per family; at least 60% in their degree, postgraduate degree, or intermediate/higher secondary grade.</p> | <a href="https://jnanabhum.i.apcfss.in">https://jnanabhum.i.apcfss.in</a>   |
| Government of Telangana  | Ambedkar Overseas Vidya Nidhi                               | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 2 million (GBP 19,100) to help with tuition fees and visa charges.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> For natives of Telangana belonging to scheduled castes and tribes; family Income should be less than INR 500,000 (GBP 4,800) per annum from all sources. Study in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Germany, New Zealand, Japan, France, and South Korea. Only one child from a family is eligible. 60% in graduation and eligible score in GRE/GMAT and English Proficiency Test.</p>  | <a href="https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp">https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp</a> |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Minority Welfare Department, Government of Telangana</p>         | <p>Chief Minister's Overseas Scholarship Scheme for Minorities</p> | <p>Postgraduate<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 2 million (GBP 19,100) to help with tuition fees and visa charges.<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Natives of Telangana no older than 35 belonging to minority communities, family income should be less than INR 500,000 (GBP 4,800) per annum from all sources. Study in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Germany, New Zealand, Japan, France and South Korea. Only one child from a family is eligible.<br/>                     60% in Graduation and eligible score in GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test and English Proficiency Test.</p> | <p><a href="https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp">https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp</a></p> |
| <p>Backward Classes Welfare Department, Government of Telangana</p> | <p>Mahatma Jyothiba Phule BC Overseas Vidya Nidhi</p>              | <p>Postgraduate<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 2 million (GBP 19,100) to help with tuition fees and visa charges.<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Natives of Telangana no older than 30 belonging to backward classes, Family Income should be less than INR 500,000 (GBP 4,800) per annum from all sources. Study in the USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Germany, New Zealand, Japan, France and South Korea. Only one child from a family is eligible. 60% in Graduation and eligible score in GRE (Graduate Record Examination) or GMAT (Graduate Management Admissions Test and English Proficiency Test.</p>                              | <p><a href="https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp">https://telanganapass.cgg.gov.in/OverseasLinks.jsp</a></p> |

**Loan scholarships**

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>The K. C. Mahindra Education Trust</p> | <p>K.C. Mahindra Scholarships for Post-Graduate Studies Abroad (interest-free loan)</p> | <p>Postgraduate (Only master's degree, master's diploma, master's certificate)<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> Maximum of INR 1 million (GBP 9,500) per scholar, awarded to the top 3 K.C. Mahindra Fellows. A maximum of INR 500,000 (GBP 4,800) per scholar is awarded to the remaining successful applicants.<br/> <b>Loan details:</b> Interest-free, and the scholarship amount must be repaid to the Trust within 24 months of the course completion or 48 months of receiving the scholarship, whichever is earlier.<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Indian nationals must possess a First-Class degree or equivalent diploma of similar standard from a recognised University and have secured admission or applied for admission in reputable foreign universities.</p> | <p><a href="http://www.kcmet.org/what-we-do-Scholarship-Grants.aspx">www.kcmet.org/what-we-do-Scholarship-Grants.aspx</a></p> |
|---|---|--|---|

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Narotam Sekhsaria Foundation                    | Narotam Sekhsaria's Scholarships (interest-free loan)                               | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Scholarships of up to INR 250,000 (GBP 2,400) per year (as well as 100% tuition fees) as interest-free loans to students aiming to pursue PG courses.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest-free, and the scholarship amount must be repaid:<br/>         1st year after completion = Nil<br/>         2nd year after completion = 30% of the total scholarship amount<br/>         3rd year after completion = 35% of the total scholarship amount<br/>         4th year after completion = 35% of the total scholarship amount</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Applicant must be an Indian national, residing in India; below 30 years of age; must have graduated from an accredited Indian university (students in their final year of the degree course or those awaiting results are also eligible); students planning to pursue postgraduate studies at top ranking institutions (the scholarship is awarded subject to securing admission)</p> | <a href="https://pg.nsfooundation.co.in">https://pg.nsfooundation.co.in</a>   |
| Aga Khan Foundation                                 | Aga Khan Foundation International Scholarship (half grant and half loan)            | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> The award covers the full cost of master's studies for the entire degree course duration. For PhD students, scholarships are awarded for the first two years, after which students are expected to find funding from alternative sources. The applicant must pay back 50% of the award amount within five years, at a 5% interest rate.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Economically disadvantaged Indian students with excellent academic records and strong professional experience.</p>  | <a href="https://the.akdn/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships">https://the.akdn/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships</a> |
| The JN Tata Endowment – Higher Education of Indians | Loan scholarship (low-interest loan plus potential additional non-repayable grants) | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> The amount of the loan scholarship ranges between INR 100,000 (GBP 950) and INR 1 million (GBP 9,500). In addition, scholars may also be recommended for partial travel assistance (a maximum of INR 50,000) (GBP 480) and non-repayable gift awards (up to INR 750,000; GBP 7,150) based on academic performance.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 2%, and the loan is repayable within seven years and is collected in five equal instalments.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national no older than 45 with an undergraduate qualification at a recognised Indian University and achieving at least 60% on average in their undergraduate and graduate studies</p>  | <a href="https://jntataendowment.org">https://jntataendowment.org</a>   |



**Loans/Interest subsidy**

|                           |                          |   |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| State Bank of India       | Education Loan           | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> From INR 750,000 (GBP 7,150) and up to INR 15 million (GBP 143,000).</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 11.15% with a repayment period of up to 15 years after the course period + 12 months of repayment holiday.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> A term loan granted to Indian nationals for pursuing higher education in India or abroad where admission has been secured. Must have tangible collateral security.</p>  | <p><a href="https://sbi.co.in/web/personal-banking/loans/education-loans/student-loan-scheme">https://sbi.co.in/web/personal-banking/loans/education-loans/student-loan-scheme</a></p> |
| Axis Bank                 | Axis Bank Education Loan | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Minimum INR 50,000 (GBP 480). Has a 'sub variant' for study abroad that is called 'Prime Abroad' which is an unsecured loan of up to INR 5 million (GBP 48,000).</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rates from 6.25% to 14.7% depending on the amount borrowed and up to 15-year loan tenure.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national who has secured at least 50% marks during Higher Secondary Certificate &amp; Graduation, has obtained admission to career-oriented courses, e.g., Medicine, Engineering, Management etc., either at the graduate or post-graduate level, has secured admission in India or Abroad through entrance test/merit-based selection process post completion of Higher Secondary Certificate (10+2) and has evidence of a regular income for the co-applicant (parents/sibling/guarantor).</p> | <p><a href="https://www.axisbank.com/retail/loans/education-loan/features-benefits">https://www.axisbank.com/retail/loans/education-loan/features-benefits</a></p>                     |
| Avanse Financial Services | Avanse Education Loan    | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> The overseas education loan will cover up to 100% of the tuition fee as decided by the university or institute; up to 75% of living expenses, including the purchase of books, computers, and other equipment; up to 100% of the building fund or caution deposit or refundable deposit as long as it does not exceed 10% of the tuition fee; and travel expenses or passage money up to INR 75,000 (GBP 720) for the student travelling abroad. Minimum loan amount – INR 100,000 (GBP 950), no maximum.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 14% with a repayment tenure between 12 months and 180 months (including the course duration).</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian nationals who are over 18 and have a confirmed admission. Before the final disbursement, a co-borrower who earns in India is needed.</p>         | <p><a href="http://www.avanse.com">www.avanse.com</a></p>  |

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|----------------|---|--|--|
| Bank of Baroda | Education loan for EDP at premium institutions abroad | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Maximum INR 8 million (GBP 76,000)</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at: 11.15% for up to INR 750,000 (GBP 7,150), for 11.50% up to INR 7.5 million (GBP 71,500).<br/>With a maximum repayment tenure of 15 years to be paid three months after course completion.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national with a secured admission in The Executive Development Programmes (part-time/online programmes/distant Learning programmes) being offered by premier institutions abroad who also should be gainfully employed and would continue to be in gainful employment during study.</p>   | <a href="http://www.bankofbaroda.in/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/baroda-education-loans-for-edp-being-offered-by-premier-institutions-abroad">www.bankofbaroda.in/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/baroda-education-loans-for-edp-being-offered-by-premier-institutions-abroad</a> |
| Bank of Baroda | Baroda Scholar  | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 15 million (GBP 143,000) for institutions in the List of Premier Institutions, up to INR 6 million (GBP 57,000) for institutions not on the List.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> 10.4% (premier institutions); 11.15% (non-premier institutions); 0.5% concession for female students; government subsidy schemes available to eligible students. Maximum repayment tenure of 15 years. Moratorium on repayment for one year after completion of the course.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national with secured admission to professional/technical courses abroad through an entrance test/merit-based selection process. For study at premier institutions (as listed by Bank of Baroda) or other institutions offering degrees in vocational/technical subjects, e.g., STEM, Medicine, Law, economics, management, art, design, etc.</p> | <a href="https://www.bankofbaroda.in/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/baroda-scholar">https://www.bankofbaroda.in/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/baroda-scholar</a>  |
| ICICI Bank     | ICICI Bank Education Loan                             | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 20 million (GBP 191,000) for international courses.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 10.85% and repayment tenure up to 8/10 years for Undergraduate and up to 10/12 years for Postgraduate; moratorium on payments: course period + 6 months.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Aspiring Indian nationals who pursue professional higher education in India and overseas. Should have secured an invite from an approved university, have completed 10 + 2 (12th standard)</p>  | <a href="https://www.icicibank.com/personal-banking/loans/education-loan">https://www.icicibank.com/personal-banking/loans/education-loan</a>  |

|                                 |  |  |   |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| IDFC First Bank                 | Higher Education Loan for Abroad Studies | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 7.5 million (GBP 71,500) unsecured and INR 10 million (GBP 95,000) with collateral.<br><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 9% to 15% per annum with a repayment tenure of 12 years. Discount of 0.5% interest for female students.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> An Indian National (Including NRI); 18 years old or above; Admitted to the desired institution after completing the prerequisite qualifications. IDFC First Bank's student loan for studying abroad could be availed for studying in several countries including USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Singapore, and others. | <a href="https://www.idfcfirstbank.com/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/education-loan-for-abroad-studies">https://www.idfcfirstbank.com/personal-banking/loans/education-loan/education-loan-for-abroad-studies</a> |
| Incred                          | Incred education loan                    | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 6 million (GBP 57,000). The InCred overseas education loan covers tuition fees, living and travel expenses, deposits, proof of funds and other education-related expenses.<br><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rates start from 12% per annum with a loan tenure of 10 years.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian Nationals who have a good academic record.  | <a href="http://www.incred.com/el/">www.incred.com/el/</a>  |
| HDFC Credila Financial Services | HDFC Credila Education Loan Online       | Postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> Minimum INR 100,000 (GBP 950), no maximum.<br><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rate at 13.3% per annum with a maximum repayment tenure of 12 years.<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Applicants and co-applicants must be Indian citizens and have a bank account in any bank in India with cheque writing facilities—confirmed admission in the institution before disbursement.   | <a href="https://www.hdfccredila.com/">https://www.hdfccredila.com/</a>   |
| Punjab National Bank            | PNB Education Loan                       | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br><b>Financial details:</b> The borrower needs to show a loan margin of 15% for loan amounts above INR 400,000 (GBP 3,800).<br><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rate from 10.75% to 11.5% per annum with a repayment tenure of 15 years,<br><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national who has obtained admission in eligible courses through a merit-based selection process. The admission is purely based on marks scored in qualifying examinations  | <a href="http://www.pnbindia.in/education-loan.html">www.pnbindia.in/education-loan.html</a>  |

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Canara Bank   | Canara Bank Education Loan                  | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> 100% finance on Tuition fees, Living expenses, and passage money.</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rate between 9.25% and 11.35%. Loan repayment in equated monthly Installments up to a maximum of 15 years excluding the moratorium period (i.e., course period plus one year).</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian national with secured admission at one of the top 50 universities in the world.</p>   | <a href="https://canarabank.com/User_page.aspx?othlink=391">https://canarabank.com/User_page.aspx?othlink=391</a>   |
| Rajasthan Minority Finance and Development Co-operative Corporation                                       | Educational Loan Scheme                     | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> up to INR 3 million (GBP 29,000) - INR 600,000 (GBP 5,700) per annum for up to 5 years</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rate at 3% for those whose family income is up to INR 81,000 (GBP 770) in Rural areas and INR 103,000 (GBP 980) in urban areas. 8% for male and 5% for female beneficiaries whose family income is up to INR 600,000 (GBP 5,700). The repayment tenure is a maximum of five years after completion of the course.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Residents of Rajasthan aged between 16 to 32 years who are Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Parsis and have low family income.</p> | <a href="https://minority.rajasthan.gov.in/rmfdcc/pdf/Educational%20Loan%20Scheme.pdf">https://minority.rajasthan.gov.in/rmfdcc/pdf/Educational%20Loan%20Scheme.pdf</a> |
| Gujarat Government  | Education Loan for Studying Abroad (SEBC)   | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> up to INR 1.5 million (GBP 13,000)</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest rate at 4% per annum.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Residents of Gujarat with secured admission to a foreign university or college. A minimum of 60% marks in 12th grade and a family income of less than INR 450,000 (GBP 4,300)</p>  | <a href="https://www.gyandhan.com/study-abroad-education-loans">https://www.gyandhan.com/study-abroad-education-loans</a>   |
| Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, National Backward Classes Finance and Development Cooperation | Education Loan Scheme for Backwards Classes | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate</p> <p><b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 2 million (GBP 19,000).</p> <p><b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 4% (3.5% for female students). Repayment is up to 10 years after a moratorium period of 5 years.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Indian nationals who are members of the Backward Classes as notified by the Central Government/State Government. Annual family income up to INR 300,000 (GBP 2,900). Secured admission to professional/technical courses in India or abroad through entrance test/merit-based selection process.</p>  | <a href="https://www.myscheme.gov.in/schemes/els">https://www.myscheme.gov.in/schemes/els</a>   |

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Higher Education Promotion Fund, Government of Goa</p>        | <p>Interest-Free Education Loan Scheme</p> | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> up to INR 1.6 million (GBP 15,000) – maximum of INR 800,000 (GBP 7,600) per annum.<br/> <b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 0% if the loanees adhere to the repayment schedule (4 to 5 years, corresponding to the loan's value).<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Residents of Goa under 30 years of age who have been a resident of Goa for 15 years. For studies abroad, has obtained 60% or more marks (threshold can be relaxed by 10% for scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, and other backward caste categories) in the qualifying examination. Total family income not exceeding INR 1.2 million (GBP 11,400) per annum for courses in approved disciplines under the Scheme. Only the top 500 Universities of the world or the top 100 Universities in a particular Continent.</p> | <p><a href="http://www.goa.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Interest-Free-Education-Loan-Scheme-.pdf">www.goa.gov.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Interest-Free-Education-Loan-Scheme-.pdf</a></p>   |
| <p>Department of Higher Education, Government of West Bengal</p> | <p>Student Credit Card Scheme</p>          | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> Up to INR 1 million (GBP 9,500).<br/> <b>Loan details:</b> Interest at 4% (1% interest concession if the interest is fully serviced during the study period). The repayment period is 15 years, including a moratorium/repayment holiday of one year after completion of the course or one year after getting employment, whichever is earlier.<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Students from West Bengal below 40 years old; Indian nationals and residents of West Bengal for the last ten years. Enrolled on a course in school, Madrasah, college, university, and other affiliated institutes within and outside India.</p>   | <p><a href="http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=web&amp;cd=&amp;ved=2ahUKEwiLpN3_m9z_AhUIhf0HHZ9CDIsQFn0ECBMQAQ&amp;url=https%3A%2F%2Fwbssc.wb.gov.in%2F&amp;usg=AOvVaw1M0JqLsJXqQm5lsinyxCB&amp;opi=89978449">www.google.com/url?sa=t&amp;rct=j&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=web&amp;cd=&amp;ved=2ahUKEwiLpN3_m9z_AhUIhf0HHZ9CDIsQFn0ECBMQAQ&amp;url=https%3A%2F%2Fwbssc.wb.gov.in%2F&amp;usg=AOvVaw1M0JqLsJXqQm5lsinyxCB&amp;opi=89978449</a></p> |

|  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p>Government of India, through banks under the Indian Banks Association (IBA)</p> | <p>Dr Ambedkar Central Sector Scheme of Interest Subsidy on Educational Loans for Overseas Studies for Other Backward Classes and Economically Backward Classes</p> | <p>Undergraduate and postgraduate<br/> <b>Financial details:</b> Interest subsidy of maximum INR 2 million (GBP 19,000)<br/> Interest subsidy details: Interest payable by the students availing the education loans of the IBA for the period of the moratorium (i.e., course period, plus one year or six months after getting a job, whichever is earlier) as prescribed under the Education Loan Scheme of the IBA, shall be borne by the Government of India.<br/> <b>Eligibility:</b> Indian nationals with secured admission abroad in specifically approved courses at master's, MPhil or PhD level. They should have availed of a loan from a scheduled bank of the IBA. For economically backward class candidates, the total income of the employed candidate or their parents/guardians in case of the unemployed candidate shall not exceed INR 250,000 (GBP 2,400) per annum.</p> | <p><a href="https://sbi.co.in/documents/16012/76857/Dr+Ambedkar+Scheme+-+For+website+-+10.04.2018.pdf">https://sbi.co.in/documents/16012/76857/Dr+Ambedkar+Scheme+-+For+website+-+10.04.2018.pdf</a></p> |
|--|---|---|--|

**Table 4:** Funding Sources in Pakistan

| Organisation                               | Name of funding source   | Key features   | Website  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Scholarships/Grants</b>                 |  |  |  |
| Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan | Pakistan HEC-QMUL (Queen Mary University of London, UK) PhD Scholarships             | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: It is jointly funded by the HEC and QMUL. The jointly funded scholarships cover the tuition fees and provide a stipend of GBP 1,015/month.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals with secured PhD admission from QMUL  | <a href="https://www.qmul.ac.uk/scholarships/items/pakistan-hec-qmul-phd-scholarships.html">https://www.qmul.ac.uk/scholarships/items/pakistan-hec-qmul-phd-scholarships.html</a>  |
| Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan | Royal Holloway-HEC PhD scholarships  | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: It is jointly funded by the HEC and Royal Holloway. The jointly funded scholarships will cover the tuition fees and provide a stipend of GBP 1,015/month.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals would be required to secure PhD admission from Royal Holloway by meeting the university standards and requirements | <a href="http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/fees-and-funding/research-degrees/sources-of-funding/international-research-funding/">www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/fees-and-funding/research-degrees/sources-of-funding/international-research-funding/</a>       |
| Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan | Coventry University UK PhD Scholarships  | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: It is jointly funded by the HEC and Coventry University (CU). CU offers tuition-free PhD Scholarships, while the HEC scholarship covers maintenance allowance, return airfare and Overseas Health Cover.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals with secured PhD admission from Coventry University                 | <a href="https://portals.au.edu.pk/ico/PDF/AU_Int%27I_Scholarship_Booklet_2022.pdf">https://portals.au.edu.pk/ico/PDF/AU_Int%27I_Scholarship_Booklet_2022.pdf</a>  |
| Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan | HEC and Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust UK PhD Scholarships | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: It is jointly funded by the HEC and The Cambridge Trust. University Composition Fee and maintenance is paid 50% by Cambridge Trust and 50% by HEC. HEC pays 100% of the return airfare and other costs.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals with secured PhD admission from Cambridge University                 | <a href="http://www.hec.gov.pk/english/scholarship-sgrants/Guidelines/Pages/Cambridge-Commonwealth,-European-and-International-Trust,-UK.aspx">www.hec.gov.pk/english/scholarship-sgrants/Guidelines/Pages/Cambridge-Commonwealth,-European-and-International-Trust,-UK.aspx</a> |

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Punjab Education Endowment Fund  | Chief Minister Merit Scholarships (CMMS) / PhD level Foreign Scholarships Programme | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: PhD Scholarships awarded under CMMS are fully funded and cover the following costs: 100% Tuition fees, boarding and lodging (as per approved rates), health insurance, and airfare.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals with a valid PhD admission offer from one of the Top 50 (Subject wise) Universities of the World (QS ranking) in preferred subject areas; must have scored at least 60% marks throughout the academic career; declared monthly family income equal to or less than PKR 200,000 (GBP 530) per year; maximum age of 35 years at the time of submission of application; not availed any foreign scholarship in the past. | <a href="http://www.peef.org.pk/peef-scholarships">www.peef.org.pk/peef-scholarships</a>  |
| Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development, Government of Pakistan | Overseas Pakistanis Foundation  | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Scholarships, stipends, or grants to the children of emigrants for studies in the field of science, technology, art, and management in Pakistan and abroad.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals who are interested in higher education.  | <a href="https://www.opf.org.pk/opf-educational-institutions/">https://www.opf.org.pk/opf-educational-institutions/</a>   |
| University of the Punjab Lahore  | Overseas PhD scholarships for Punjab University in-service non-PhD teachers         | Postgraduate (PhD only)<br>Financial details: Scholarships worth PNR 5 million (GBP 13,000) for studies in the US and UK.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani nationals and regular non-PhD faculty members of the University of the Punjab. Must have a minimum of 18 years of Education with MS/MPhil equivalent degree in a relevant subject. Must have three years of permanent and active university service. The maximum age limit is 40 years. Applicant should have secured admission to any top (100) ranking University.  | <a href="http://pu.edu.pk/page/show/Overseas-PhD-Scholarships-for_PU-in-Service-Non-PhD-Teachers.html">http://pu.edu.pk/page/show/Overseas-PhD-Scholarships-for_PU-in-Service-Non-PhD-Teachers.html</a> |

#### Loan scholarships

|                     |  |   |   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Aga Khan Foundation | Aga Khan Foundation International Scholarship (half grant and half loan) | Postgraduate<br>Financial details: The award covers the full cost of master's studies for the entire degree course duration. For PhD students, scholarships are awarded for the first two years, after which students are expected to find funding from alternative sources. The applicant must pay back 50% of the award amount within five years, at a 5% interest rate.<br>Eligibility: Pakistani students in financial need with excellent academic records and strong professional experience. | <a href="https://the.akan/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships">https://the.akan/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships</a> |
|---------------------|--|---|---|



**Table 5:** Funding Sources in Bangladesh

| Organisation   | Name of funding source      | Key features  | Website  |
|--|-----------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Scholarships/Grants</b>                                     |                             |   |  |
| University Grants Commission in Bangladesh (UGC)               | Commonwealth scholarships   | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p>Financial details: Most scholarships are fully funded, which means that as well as covering your tuition fees, you will also receive your airfare to and from the UK and a living allowance to support you while you are here.</p> <p>Eligibility: Bangladeshi national with an undergraduate honours degree of at least upper second class (2:1). For a PhD, an appropriate master's degree is required too. Applicants must be unable to afford to study in the UK without a scholarship.</p>  | <p><a href="https://ugc.gov.bd/site/page/b9155935-ff43-442d-98c5-6de90daaff76/কমনওয়েলথ-শিক্ষাবৃত্তি">https://ugc.gov.bd/site/page/b9155935-ff43-442d-98c5-6de90daaff76/কমনওয়েলথ-শিক্ষাবৃত্তি</a></p>   |
| Governance Innovation Unit, Prime Minister's Office Bangladesh | Prime Minister's fellowship | <p>Postgraduate</p> <p>Financial details: Under this programme, candidates for master's will get a fellowship for 18 months, and PhD applicants will get a maximum 4-year fellowship. Each candidate will get BDT 6 million (GBP 43,000) for the master's course and BDT 20 million (GBP 145,000) for the PhD course.</p> <p>Eligibility: Bangladeshi citizen who has not yet participated in any fellowship for a master's/PhD program can apply. An applicant must attach an unconditional offer letter (full-time) for the desired degree from the institution/University. The offer letter must be bought from the top 200 universities/educational institutions according to the Times Higher Education World University Overall Rankings 2021 (for master's in top 1 to 200 and for PhD in top 1 to 100 universities). Maximum age for PhD applicants is 45 years and for master's is 40 years.</p> | <p><a href="https://giupmo.gov.bd/site/notices/e52c1f7d-e5b1-4988-8c75-67a7f84b33bd/Prime-Minister-Fellowship-2023-24-Circular">https://giupmo.gov.bd/site/notices/e52c1f7d-e5b1-4988-8c75-67a7f84b33bd/Prime-Minister-Fellowship-2023-24-Circular</a></p> |

### Loan scholarships

|                     |  |   |   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Aga Khan Foundation | Aga Khan Foundation International Scholarship (half grant and half loan) | Postgraduate<br>Financial details: The award covers the full cost of master's studies for the entire degree course duration. For PhD students, scholarships are awarded for the first two years, after which students are expected to find funding from alternative sources. The applicant must pay back 50% of the award amount within five years, at a 5% interest rate.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi students in financial need with excellent academic records and strong professional experience. | <a href="https://the.akdn/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships">https://the.akdn/en/what-we-do/developing-human-capacity/education/international-scholarships</a> |
|---------------------|--|---|---|

### Loans

|                                       |   |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Shahjalal Islami Bank Limited (SJIBL) | Investment Scheme for Education                             | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Maximum BDT 1.5 million (GBP 11,000) for studies abroad<br>Loan details: Interest at 14% and repayment tenure 60 months.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi national with student file maintained with Shahjalal Islami Bank Ltd.  | <a href="https://sjiblb.com/investment_Education.php">https://sjiblb.com/investment_Education.php</a>                             |
| Eastern Bank Ltd                      | EduLoan Unsecured - Education Loan without Security Deposit | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Loan Amount: 100,000 (GBP 720) to 2 million BDT (GBP 14,500).<br>Loan details: Competitive interest rates and repayment tenure between 12 and 60 months.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi nationals who must have passed at least Higher Secondary School Certificate or equivalent must have a good academic track record.                                  | <a href="https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack">https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack</a> |
| Eastern Bank Ltd                      | EduLoan Secured - Education Loan with Security Deposit      | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Loan Amount: BDT 100,000 (GBP 720) to 2.5 million (GBP 18,000) or 90% of the security deposit.<br>Loan details: Competitive interest rates and repayment tenure between 12 and 60 months.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi nationals who must have passed at least Higher Secondary School Certificate or equivalent must have a good academic track record. | <a href="https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack">https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack</a> |

|                         |  |  |   |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|
| Eastern Bank Ltd        | EduLine – Credit Facility against Security Deposit | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Loan Amount: BDT 100,000 (GBP 720) to 2.5 million (GBP 18,000) or 90% of the security deposit.<br>Loan details: Interest rate against utilisation.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi nationals who must have passed at least Higher Secondary School Certificate or equivalent must have a good academic track record.  | <a href="https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack">https://ebl.com.bd/student-banking/Education-Finance-Pack</a>                 |
| Mercantile Bank Limited | Education Loan                                     | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Maximum BDT 500,000 (GBP 3,600) for studies in Bangladesh & Maximum BDT 2 million (GBP 14,500) for studies abroad.<br>Eligibility: Any student of Bangladeshi nationality who holds excellent results in SSC/HSC/O-level/A-level or equivalent from any recognized educational institution at home or abroad for pursuing undergraduate/postgraduate courses at home or abroad.           | <a href="https://www.mblbd.com/retail-loan/education-loan">https://www.mblbd.com/retail-loan/education-loan</a>                                   |
| One Bank Limited        | OBL Student Loan                                   | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Loan amount ranges from BDT 50,000 (GBP 360) to BDT 2 million (GBP 14,500)<br>Loan details: Interest rate at 12%, and repayment tenure is 60 months.<br>Eligibility: Any credit-worthy Bangladeshi nationals, Parents/guardians of students.<br>Minimum Gross Monthly Income: Salaried: BDT 25,000 (GBP 200) Professionals/Landlord/Lady/ Business Individuals: BDT 50,000 (GBP 400)      | <a href="https://www.onebank.com.bd/home/retail-banking/loan/student-loan/">https://www.onebank.com.bd/home/retail-banking/loan/student-loan/</a> |
| Grameen Bank            | Grameen Bank Student Loan                          | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi Nationals who are interested in higher education and economically disadvantaged.  | <a href="https://grameenbank.org/loan/higher-education-loan">https://grameenbank.org/loan/higher-education-loan</a>                               |
| NCC Bank                | NCC Bank Education Loan                            | Undergraduate and postgraduate<br>Financial details: Minimum: BDT 100,000 (GBP 720) and Maximum: BDT 1 million (GBP 7,200)<br>Loan details: Interest rate at 3-5%.<br>Eligibility: Bangladeshi national who is a bonafide student, completed at least the Higher Secondary Certificate, complied with all preconditions for getting admission and Visa formalities and has no bad reputation, e.g., Criminal Record, Political connection etc. | <a href="http://www.nccb.com.bd/NccbLoanProducts/educationLoan">www.nccb.com.bd/NccbLoanProducts/educationLoan</a>                                |

# Appendix C

## Analysis of HESA data on student funding sources

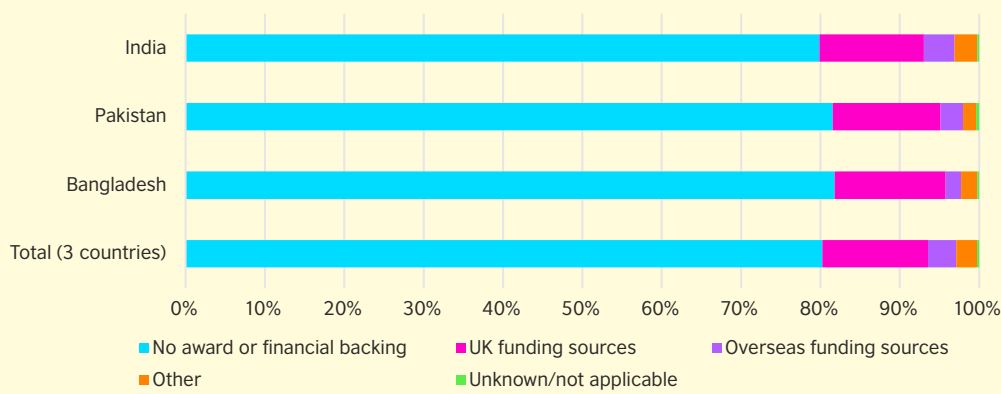
The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) works with UK higher education institutions to collect and publish data across a range of subjects such as student enrolments, staff, sources, performance indicators, income and expenditure. HESA's data on HE student enrolments includes information on students' major source of tuition fees, including categories such as employers, overseas governments, tuition fee waivers or UK funding councils.

While HESA statistics offer insightful information, it is crucial to note that this data does not give a complete understanding of the funding sources that students use, so relying solely on this data could give a misleading impression. While HESA provides reliable information on sources that interact directly with the university – such as the Student Loans Company in the UK – this may not always be the case for funding sources like loan providers that provide money to the student that is then used to pay fees. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of students from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan funded by private loans may be significantly higher than HESA's data would suggest.

Nevertheless, information from HESA may still be useful to indicate trends and broad differences between countries, and to provide information on students funded by scholarships and by UK funding sources.

In the 2021/22 academic year, HESA data classifies around 80 per cent of students from the three target countries (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) as having “no award or financial backing” (Figure 6), suggesting that these students were self-funded. Meanwhile around 13 per cent received funding from UK sources, including scholarships or fee waivers from their UK provider, funding from UK research councils, and UK government scholarships. The total proportion across several categories of overseas funding sources, described in more detail below, was 3.6 per cent overall, ranging from 1.9 per cent in Bangladesh to 3.8 per cent in India – although as noted above this may not account for situations where students receive scholarships or loans directly into their bank accounts or where relatives, family members, or private money lenders provide them with informal loans.

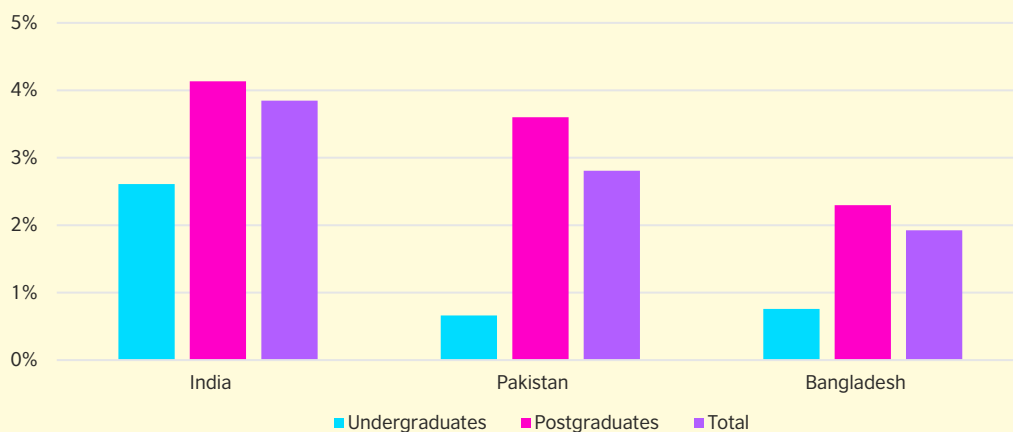
**Figure 6: Funding options used by students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for higher education studies in the UK in 2021/22 (broad categories)**



Source: Technopolis analysis of data from HESA

Breaking down the figures by level of study shows that postgraduate students are substantially more likely than undergraduates to be recorded as using overseas funding sources. This pattern holds across all three target countries and is particularly pronounced in Pakistan, where postgraduates are more than 5 times as likely to use these funding sources compared to undergraduates. Postgraduates are also more likely to receive funding from UK sources, particularly research funding councils, and correspondingly slightly less likely to be reported as self-funded (although self-funded students still accounts for a large majority of students at all levels).

**Figure 7: Proportion of undergraduates and postgraduates from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in the UK recorded as using overseas funding sources in 2021/22 (broad categories)**

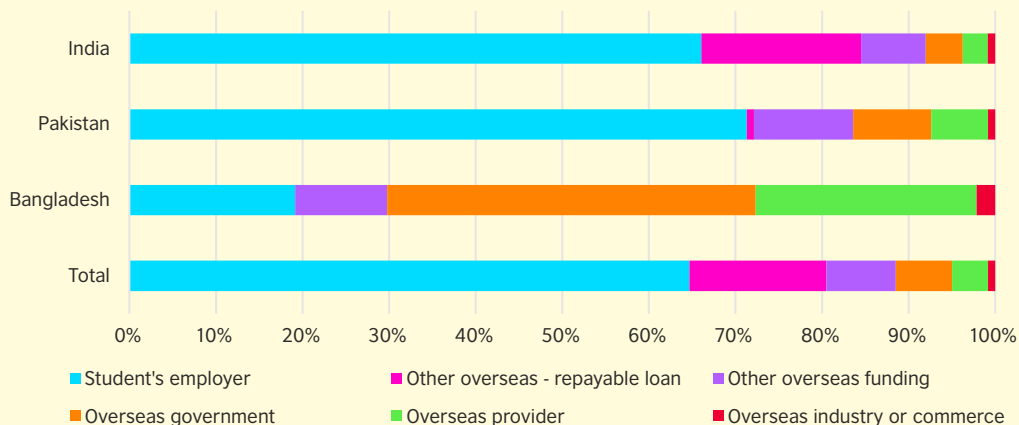


Source: Technopolis analysis of data from HESA

Looking more closely at overseas funding sources, almost two thirds of the students in this broad category – or around 2.3 per cent of all students across the three target countries – were funded by their employer. The second-largest group, consisting of 16 per cent of overseas-funded students, were funded by repayable loans, while 7 per cent received government scholarship funding, 4 per cent were funded by an overseas HE provider, and around 1 per cent received scholarships from corporate funders other than their own employer. The final 8 per cent were classified as “other overseas funding”, which may include categories such as charitable foundations.

Comparing this data by students' country of origin shows significant differences between the three target South Asian countries. Bangladesh-domiciled students are relatively more likely to have received a government scholarship or to be funded by their HE provider, but substantially less likely to have received funding from their employer. Meanwhile, virtually all students who are recorded as being funded by repayable loans in the region come from India, with less than one per cent of students from the other two target countries recorded as using this funding source.

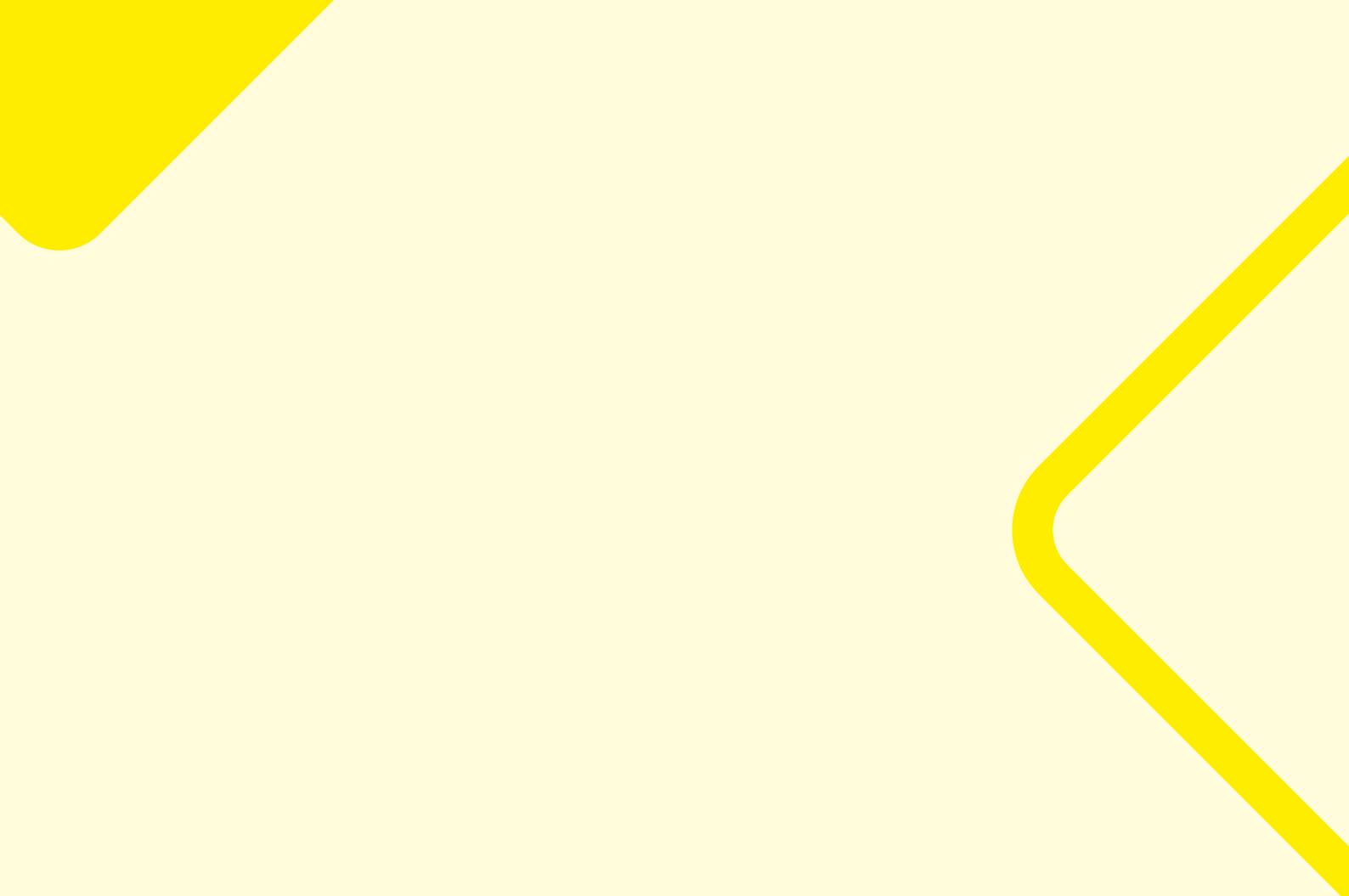
**Figure 8: Overseas funding sources used by students from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh for higher education studies in the UK in 2021/22 (as proportion of all students receiving overseas funding)**



Source: Analysis provided for British Council by Technopolis. Based on HESA data.

The chart above gives totals across all levels of study. There is relatively little difference between the types of overseas funding received by undergraduate and postgraduate students, with employer funding playing the dominant role at both levels – although as noted above, undergraduates are less likely to receive funding from overseas sources overall.





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