Research Unit
Press Information Bureau
Government of India

Leap in Rural School Enrollment

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024

Ministry of Education

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Introduction

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 is a **nationwide rural household survey** that reached **649,491 children** in **17,997 villages** across **605 rural districts** in India. Further, ASER surveyors visited **15,728 government schools** with primary sections. **8,504** were **primary** schools and **7,224** were schools which also had **upper primary** or **higher grades**.

Key Findings for Pre-primary (age group 3-5 years)

1. Enrollment in pre-primary institutions

- Among children aged **3-5 years**, enrollment in some type of pre-primary institution (Anganwadi centre, government pre-primary class, or private LKG/UKG) has **improved steadily** between 2018 and 2024.
- Among **3-year-olds**, enrollment in pre-primary institutions **increased** from 68.1% in 2018 to **77.4%** in **2024**. **Gujarat**, **Maharashtra**, **Odisha**, and **Telangana** have achieved near-universal enrollment for this age group.
- Among **4-year-olds**, the all-India figure for enrollment in pre-primary institutions increased from 76% in 2018 to **83.3%** in **2024**. In 2024, enrollment rates in pre-primary for this age **exceed 95%** in states like **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu**, and **Odisha**.
- Among **5-year-olds**, this figure also showed big increases, rising from 58.5% in 2018 to **71.4%** in **2024**. The states with enrollment **exceeding 90%** in pre-primary institutions for this age include **Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Kerala, and Nagaland.**

2. Type of pre-primary institution

- **Anganwadi centres** continue to be the **biggest provider** of services in pre-primary age group in India.
- Approximately **one-third** of all **5-year-olds** attend a **private school** or **pre-school** in 2024. This figure was 37.3% in 2018, fell to 30.8% in 2022, and returned to **37.5%** in **2024**.

3. Age of entry to Standard (Std) I

- The proportion of children who are "**underage**" (age 5 or below) is **decreasing over time**. In 2018, this figure was 25.6%, in 2022 it stood at 22.7%, and in **2024**, nationally the percentage of underage children in Std I was at its lowest ever at **16.7%.** On average, this proportion has either declined or remained stable across all states in India.

Key Findings for Elementary (age group 6-14 years)

1. Enrollment

- **Overall school enrollment rates** among the **6-14 age group** have **exceeded 95%** for close to 20 years. This proportion has stayed almost the same, from 98.4% in 2022 to **98.1%** in **2024**. Across all states, enrollment in this age group is above **95%** in **2024**.
- In 2018, 65.5% of children in the 6-14 age group in India were enrolled in government schools. By **2024**, the all-India figure **increased** to **66.8%.**

2. Reading

- **Std III**: The percentage of Std III children able to **read Std II level text** was 20.9% in 2018. This figure **increased** to **23.4%** in **2024**. The **improvement in government schools is higher** than the corresponding recovery for private schools. Following a decline in Std III reading levels in government schools in most states in 2022, **all states have shown a recovery in 2024**. States with more than a 10-percentage point increase in this proportion between 2022 and 2024 in government schools include **Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Odisha, and Maharashtra.**
- **Std V:** Reading levels **improved substantially** among Std V children, especially for those who are enrolled in government schools. The proportion of Std V children in government schools who can read a Std II level text fell from 44.2% in 2018 to 38.5% in 2022 and then **recovered to 44.8% in 2024**. In 2024, **Mizoram (64.9%)** and **Himachal Pradesh (64.8%)** had the highest proportions of Std V children in government schools able to read Std II level text. States with over a 10-percentage point increase in this proportion in government schools include **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu.**
- **Std VIII:** Reading levels increased among children enrolled in Std VIII in government schools, which fell from 69% in 2018 to 66.2% in 2022 but then **rose to 67.5% in 2024**. Government schools in states such as **Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh,** and **Sikkim** show notable improvements.

3. Arithmetic

- **Std III:** The all-India figure for children in Std III who are able to do a **numerical subtraction problem** was 28.2%. This figure has **increased** to **33.7%** in **2024**. Among government school students, this figure went from 20.9% in 2018 to **27.6%** in **2024**. For private school students, this number showed a **smaller improvement** since 2022. Government schools across most states have shown gains since 2022, with over **15-percentage point** increases recorded in states like **Tamil Nadu** and **Himachal Pradesh.**
- **Std V:** At the all-India level, the proportion of children in Std V who can do a **numerical division problem** has also **improved**. This figure was 27.9% in 2018 and then rose to **30.7%** in **2024**. This change is also driven **mainly by government schools**. States with the showing most improvement (**more than 10-percentage points**) in government schools include **Punjab** and **Uttarakhand**.
- **Std VIII:** The performance of Std VIII students in **basic arithmetic** remains similar to earlier levels, going from 44.1% in 2018 to **45.8%** in **2024**.

Key Findings for Older children (age group 15-16 years)

1. Enrollment

- The proportion of **15-16-year-old** children who are not enrolled in school **dropped sharply** from 13.1% in 2018 to **7.9%** in **2024** at the all-India level.

2. Digital literacy

- **Access to smartphones** is **close to universal** among the **14-16 age group**. Almost **90%** of both girls and boys report having a smartphone at home. More than **80%** report knowing how to use a smartphone.

- Of the children who could use a smartphone, **27%** of **14-year-olds** and **37.8%** of **16-year-olds** reported having their own phone.
- **82.2%** of all children in the **14-16 age group** reported knowing how to use a smartphone. Of these, **57%** reported using it for an **educational activity** in the preceding week while 76% said that they had used it for social media during the same period. While the use of a smartphone for educational activities was similar among girls and boys, girls were less likely than boys to report using social media (78.8% of boys as compared to 73.4% of girls). **Kerala** stands out in this respect, with over 80% children who reported that they used the smartphone for educational activity and over 90% using it for social media.
- Among children who used social media, **knowledge** of **basic ways** to **protect** themselves **online** was **relatively high**. **62%** knew how to **block** or **report** a profile, 55.2% knew how to make a profile private, and 57.7% knew how to change a password.

Table 1: % Children enrolled in different types of schools. By age group and sex. 2024

Age group and sex	Govt	Pvt	Other	Not in school	Total
Age 6-14: All	66.8	30.6	0.7	1.9	100
Age 7-16: All	66.0	30.8	0.7	2.5	100
Age 7-10: All	67.5	30.7	0.7	1.2	100
Age 7-10: Boys	64.3	33.8	0.7	1.2	100
Age 7-10: Girls	70.7	27.4	0.6	1.3	100
Age 11-14: All	66.5	30.8	0.7	2.1	100
Age 11-14: Boys	63.4	34.1	0.7	1.9	100
Age 11-14: Girls	69.6	27.5	0.7	2.3	100
Age 15-16: All	60.3	31.3	0.6	7.9	100
Age 15-16: Boys	57.9	33.8	0.6	7.7	100
Age 15-16: Girls	62.4	28.9	0.6	8.1	100

'Other' includes children going to Madarsa or EGS.
'Not in school' includes children who never enrolled or have dropped out.

Key Findings of School Observations

1. **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) activities**

- Over **80%** of schools had received a directive from the government to implement **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy** (**FLN) activities** with Std I-II/III, both in the previous as well as in the current academic year. A similar proportion had at least **one teacher** who had received **in-person training** on FLN.
- **More than 75%** schools had received **Teaching Learning Material (TLM)** and/or funds to make or purchase TLM for FLN activities.
- **More than 75%** schools reported implementing a **school readiness program** for students prior to entering Std I, in both the previous and the current academic year.
- **More than 95%** schools reported having **distributed textbooks** to all grades in the school, a substantial increase over 2022 levels.

2. **Student and teacher attendance**

- Student and teacher attendance in government primary schools show small but **consistent**

improvements since 2018. **Average student attendance increased** from 72.4% in 2018 to **75.9%** in **2024**.

- **Average teacher attendance increased** from 85.1% in 2018 to **87.5%** in **2024**. This trend is largely driven by changes in teacher and student attendance in **Uttar Pradesh**.

3. **Small schools and multigrade classrooms**

- The proportion of government primary schools with less than 60 students enrolled shows a **sharp increase**, rising from 44% in 2022 to **52.1%** in **2024**. **More than 80%** primary schools in these states are small schools: **Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Nagaland,** and **Karnataka. Himachal Pradesh** has the **highest proportion** of **small Upper primary schools** at **75%**.
- **Two-thirds** of Std I and Std II classrooms in primary schools were **multigrade**, with students from more than one grade sitting together.

4. **School facilities**

- Nationally, all **Right to Education-related indicators** included in ASER have shown **small improvements** between 2018 and 2024 levels. For example, the fraction of schools with **useable girls' toilets increased** from 66.4% in 2018 to **72%** in **2024**.
- The proportion of schools with **drinking water** available **increased** from 74.8% to **77.7%,** and the proportion of schools with **books other than textbooks** being used by students **increased** from 36.9% to **51.3%** over the same period.
- **Sports-related indicators remain at close** to the levels observed in 2018. For example, in 2024, 66.2% schools have a playground, similar to 66.5% in 2018.

References

https://asercentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/ASER_2024_Final-Report_25_1_24.pdf

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