



ASER Report 2018

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The **NGO Pratham** has released its **13th Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)- 2018**.

- ASER 2018 is a nation-wide household survey that provides a snapshot of children's schooling and learning for a representative sample of children across **rural India**.
- Children in the age group **3 to 16 are surveyed** to find out their enrollment status in school or pre-school. Children in the age group **5 to 16 are assessed one-on-one** to understand their basic reading and arithmetic abilities.
- ASER continues to be the only national source of information about children's foundational skills across the country.

Findings

- **Schooling Levels: Enrollment and Attendance**
 - **Overall enrollment (age 6-14):** The enrollment of children for the age group 6 to 14 has been above 95%, since 2017. Children **not enrolled in school has fallen below** 3% at 2.8% in 2018.
 - **Girls out of school:** In 2018, the overall proportion of girls in the 11 to 14 age group out of school has fallen to 4.1% from 10.3% in 2006. Further, in 2008, more than 20% of girls in the 15 to 16 age group were not enrolled in school. In 2018, this figure has decreased to 13.5%.
 - **Private school enrollment:** In 2016, proportion of children (age 6-14) enrolled in private school stood at 30.6% and is almost unchanged at 30.9% in 2018.
- **Learning levels: Foundational skills in reading and arithmetic**
 - **Reading**
 - **Std III-** The percentage of all children in Std III who can read at Std II level has increased from 21.6% in 2013 to 27.2% in 2018.
 - **Std V-** In 2018, 50.3% of Children enrolled in Std V can read at least a Std II level text. This figure has inched up from 47.9% in 2016
 - **Std VIII-** ASER 2018 data indicates that of all children enrolled in Std VIII in India, about 73% can read at least a Std II level text. This number is

unchanged from 2016.

- **Arithmetic**
 - **Std III-** The all India figure for children in Std III who are able to do **at least subtraction has not changed** much, from 27.6% in 2016 to 28.1% in 2018. For government school children, this figure was 20.3% in 2016 and 20.9% in 2018.
 - **Std V-** The proportion of children in Std V across India who are able to do division **has increased slightly**, from 26% in 2016 to 27.8% in 2018.
 - **Std VIII-** The overall performance of Std VIII in basic arithmetic **has not changed** much over time. Currently about 44% of all children in Std VIII can solve a 3-digit by 1-digit numerical division problem correctly.
- **Learning levels: 'Beyond Basics'**- In ASER 2018, children in the **age group 14 to 16** were given a few tasks which required calculations to be **done in everyday contexts**. Children were asked to **calculate time**, compute how many tablets would be required to purify water (**application of unitary method**), figure out where to **buy books given two different price** lists (financial decision making), and **compute a discount**.
 - Of the 14-16 year olds who could solve a numerical division problem, a little under half could compute the time question correctly, 52% could apply the unitary method to calculate how many tablets were needed to purify a given volume of water, about 37% were able to take the correct decision regarding the purchase of books, and less than 30% could compute the discount correctly.
 - In all cases, **fewer girls could solve questions** correctly as compared to boys.
- **Teacher and Student Attendance-** At the all India level, **no major change** is seen in students' and teachers' attendance. Average teacher attendance has hovered at around 85% and average student attendance at around 72% for the past several years in both primary and upper primary schools.
 - Nationally, substantial improvements are visible in 2018 in the **availability of many school facilities** mandated by **Right To Education (RTE)**.
 - The fraction of schools with **usable girls' toilets doubled from 2010**, reaching 66.4% in 2018.
 - The proportion of schools **with books other than textbooks** available increased from 62.6% to 74.2% over the same period (i.e. from 2010 to 2018)

The Right To Education (RTE) Act

- The Constitution (**Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002** inserted **Article 21-A** in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of **6 to 14 years as a Fundamental Right**.
- Subsequently, the **Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009** was enacted as envisaged under Article 21-A It came into **effect on 1 April 2010**.
- There is no separate budget for RTE, rather it is subsumed in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) through which it is effected.

- Section 3(1) of the RTE Act provides that every child of the age group of 6-14 years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of Elementary Education.
- The RTE Act provides for constitutionally created independent bodies like the National and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights.
- Recently, the Rajya Sabha has passed the Right of Children to Free & Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2018 which seeks to amend the Right to Education Act, 2009 to **abolish the no-detention policy in schools.**

Physical Education and Sports Facilities- This year, ASER introduced a series of questions on the availability of **sports infrastructure in schools.**

- In 2018, **about 8 out of 10 schools** had a playground available for students, either within the school premises or close by.
- Physical education teachers are scarce in schools across rural India. Only 5.8% of all primary schools and 30.8% of upper primary schools had a physical education teacher available. In majority of schools, another teacher was tasked with supervising physical education activities as well.
- **Sports equipment** of some kind was observed in 55.8% of primary schools and 71.5% of upper primary schools.

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)

- ASER 2018 included **almost all rural districts** in India and generated district, state, and national estimates of foundational reading and arithmetic abilities of children in the age group 5 to 16 years. It surveyed children in the age group of 3 to 16 years.
- ASER surveys use **Census 2011** as the sampling frame.
- **ASER 2016 followed the 'basic' model, sampling children age 3 to 16 for survey and testing reading, arithmetic, and English for children age 5 to 16.**
- In **2017, ASER** conducted the first alternate-year design known as **ASER 'Beyond Basics'**, focusing on **youth in the 14 to 18 age** group in 28 districts across India.
- ASER 2017 inquired about what youth are currently doing and aspiring to, in addition to assessing their foundational skills and their ability to apply these to everyday tasks.