

Young Children: Enrollment and Learning Status – Assam

Analysis based on data from households. 26 out of 27 districts were surveyed in ASER 2018.

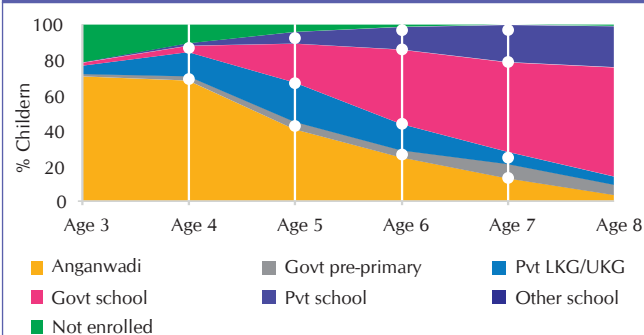
Early access to a supportive environment and exposure to developmentally appropriate activities can help children develop a solid foundation for future learning, both for school and for life. All major education policy and program documents in India now recognize this fact. However, recent ASER data shows major gaps between official norms and actual practice. These gaps are evident both when young children enter school and in what they are able to do in terms of foundational skills like reading and arithmetic. The gap between expectations and ground realities starts very early and needs to be addressed urgently. Once children fall behind, it is very difficult to catch up.

Age 3 to 8 years: Where are young children enrolled?

Table 1: % Children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age 2018

Age	Pre-school			School			Not enrolled	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	70.5	1.5	4.7	1.6	0.4	0.1	21.4	100
Age 4	68.1	2.6	13.7	3.5	1.4	0.0	10.7	100
Age 5	40.5	4.4	22.3	21.9	6.6	0.0	4.3	100
Age 6	24.6	4.3	14.9	42.0	12.8	0.0	1.5	100
Age 7	12.7	8.4	6.9	50.5	21.1	0.2	0.2	100
Age 8	3.4	6.1	4.7	61.5	23.3	0.1	0.9	100

Chart 1: % Children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age 2018



This table shows the proportion of children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by age. For example, at age 3, 70.5% children are enrolled in anganwadis, 1.5% in government pre-primary classes, 4.7% in private LKG/UKG, 1.6% in government schools, and 0.4% in private schools. 'Other' includes children going to any other type of institution. 21.4% children are not enrolled anywhere. Chart 1, a stacked area chart, is a visual representation of Table 1.

Key takeaways:

Children's pathways through pre-school and school do not always follow policy prescriptions or curriculum expectations.

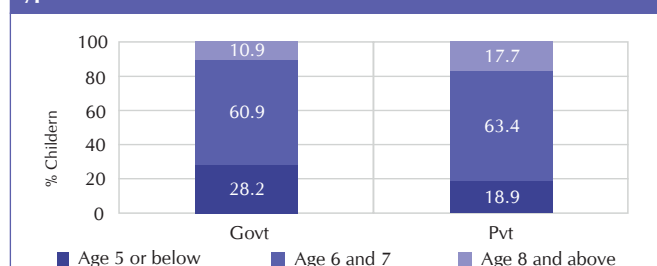
- **Some children not enrolled anywhere:** 21.4% of children at age 3 and 10.7% of children at age 4 are not enrolled anywhere. (Table 1)
- **High government institution enrollment across age groups:** There is high enrollment in government anganwadis for children at age 3 and 4 and in government schools for older age groups. Even in Std I, 71.4% children are enrolled in government schools. (Table 1 and Table 2)
- **Variation at age 5 in terms of enrollment and school type:** At age 5, 40.5% children are still in anganwadis, 22.3% are enrolled in private pre-schools and slightly under 30% children are going to school. This means that what is offered to and expected from these young children varies enormously depending on whether they are enrolled in pre-primary grades or in primary school. (Table 1)
- **Age makes a difference:** In Std I, a little over 60% of all children are 6 or 7 years old. Comparing performance by age even within the same type of school, it is clear that older children can do more. For example, among children in Std I in government schools, 45.6% of 5 year olds can read at least letters, as compared to 58.1% of 6-7 year olds and 64.7% children age 8 and above. (Chart 2 and Table 3)

Std I: Can young children read letters and recognize numbers?

Table 2: % Children enrolled in Std I by school type 2018

% Children in Std I enrolled in	Govt	Pvt	Total
	71.4	28.6	100

Chart 2: % Children enrolled in Std I by age and school type 2018



This chart shows the distribution of Std I children enrolled in different types of schools by age.

Table 3: Reading and arithmetic levels for Std I children by age and school type 2018

Age	% Children who	
	Can read at least letters	Can recognize at least numbers (1-9)
Government schools		
Age 5	45.6	51.0
Age 6 and 7	58.1	63.2
Age 8 and above	64.7	73.9
All	55.6	61.3
Private schools		
Age 5	63.1	76.0
Age 6 and 7	88.5	89.9
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient	
All	84.9	88.5

This table shows the proportion of children in Std I who can read at least letters and recognize at least numbers up to 9.

Age 4 to 8 years: Where are young boys and girls enrolled?

Table 4: % Children age 4-8 enrolled in Govt pre-schools/schools by sex 2018

Age	Enrolled in govt pre-schools/schools		Sex-wise difference in enrollment in percentage points
	Boys	Girls	
Age 4	72.9	75.2	2.3
Age 5	66.2	67.6	1.4
Age 6	65.8	76.1	10.2
Age 7	68.0	75.5	7.5
Age 8	67.9	73.8	5.8

Note: Government pre-schools/schools include anganwadis, government pre-primary classes and government primary schools.

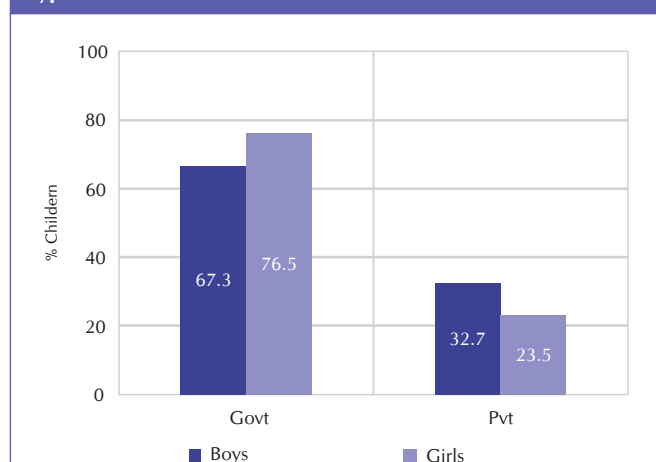


Key takeaways:

- **Sex-wise difference in enrollment:** In Assam, more than 65% of boys and girls attend government institutions in the age group of 4 to 8. For every age group between 4 and 8 years, more girls are enrolled in anganwadis and government schools than boys. Among older children (age 6 and higher), there is a bigger difference based on sex as compared to younger children (age 4 and 5). (Table 4)
- **Learning levels of girls increase significantly with age in Std I in government schools:** At age 5, 40.5% of girls can read at least letters as compared to 48.8% of boys. At age 6-7, 57.7% of girls can read at least letters as compared to 58.2% of boys. (Table 5)
- **Among children enrolled in Std I in private schools, learning levels of girls aged 6-7 and above are better than that of boys:** Learning levels of girls are higher than that of boys in terms of their ability to read letters and numbers. For example, 90.5% of girls aged 6 and 7 years can recognize at least single digit numbers as compared to 89.3% of boys. (Table 5)

Std I: Can young boys and girls read letters and recognize numbers?

Chart 3: % Children enrolled in Std I by sex and school type 2018



The chart shows the distribution of Std I children enrolled in different types of schools by sex. For example, of all boys enrolled in Std I, 67.3% of boys are enrolled in government schools and 32.7% of boys are enrolled in private schools. Of all girls enrolled in Std I, 76.5% of girls are enrolled in government schools and 23.5% of girls are enrolled in private schools.

Table 5: Reading and arithmetic levels for Std I children by age, sex, and school type 2018

Age	% Children who			
	Can read at least letters		Can recognize at least numbers (1-9)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Government schools				
Age 5	48.8	40.5	51.6	50.5
Age 6 and 7	58.2	57.7	66.6	60.3
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient			
All	55.5	55.3	62.7	59.8
Private schools				
Age 5	Data insufficient			
Age 6 and 7	88.4	89.1	89.3	90.5
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient			
All	84.5	85.7	87.0	90.5

This table shows the proportion of children in Std I who can read at least letters and recognize at least numbers up to 9. The data shows patterns by age and sex.