

Young Children: Enrollment and Learning Status – Bihar

Analysis based on data from households. 38 out of 38 districts were surveyed in ASER 2018.

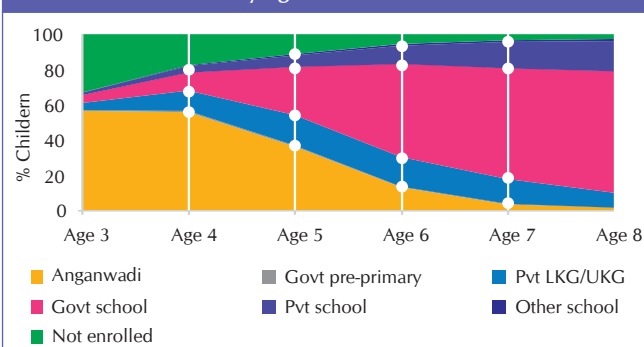
Early access to a supportive environment and exposure to developmentally appropriate activities can help children develop a solid foundation for future learning, both for school and for life. All major education policy and program documents in India now recognize this fact. However, recent ASER data 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	56.6	0.4	3.9	4.5	1.3	0.1	33.3	100
Age 4	55.8	0.8	11.3	10.3	3.5	0.5	17.8	100
Age 5	36.4	0.7	17.0	27.4	6.3	0.8	11.5	100
Age 6	13.3	0.5	16.5	52.9	10.1	1.0	5.7	100
Age 7	3.5	0.6	13.8	62.9	14.8	0.9	3.6	100
Age 8	1.7	0.2	8.3	68.9	16.9	1.2	2.9	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, 56.6% children are enrolled in anganwadis, 0.4% in government pre-primary classes, 3.9% in private LKG/UKG, 4.5% in government schools, and 1.3% in private schools. 'Other' includes children going to any other type of institution. 33.3% 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.

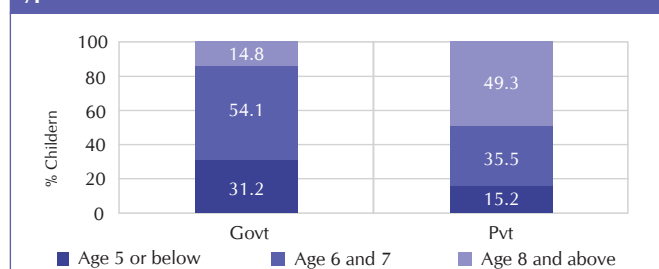
- **High proportion of young children are not enrolled anywhere:** Compared to many other states, Bihar has a substantial proportion of 3 and 4 year old children not enrolled anywhere (33.3% at age 3 and 17.8% at age 4). Even at age 5, more than 11% are not going to any kind of school or pre-school. At age 5, they could either be going to anganwadis (36.4%), or to primary schools (34.5%). 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)
- **Private school children enter school at an older age:** Children enrolled in private schools are older when they enter Std I as compared to children in government schools. 31.2% of children in Std I in government schools are 5 years or younger, whereas this figure is 16 percentage points lower in private schools (15.2%). However, expectations by grade are the same for all children regardless of age. (Chart 2)
- **Age makes a difference:** Comparing children in Std I in same type of school by age, it is clear that older children are able to do more. For example, among children in Std I in government schools, 30.5% of 5 year olds can recognize at least single digit numbers, as compared to 47.5% of 6-7 year olds and 68.1% children age 8 and above. (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
	74.3	25.7	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	23.9	30.5
Age 6 and 7	32.9	47.5
Age 8 and above	52.5	68.1
All	33.8	46.7
Private schools		
Age 5	47.5	61.0
Age 6 and 7	75.9	81.9
Age 8 and above	93.7	96.9
All	82.7	87.9

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

Young Children: Enrollment and Learning Status by Sex – Bihar

Analysis based on data from households. 38 out of 38 districts were surveyed in ASER 2018.

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	64.4	69.6	5.2
Age 5	60.4	68.5	8.1
Age 6	61.8	71.4	9.5
Age 7	61.6	72.8	11.2
Age 8	65.5	76.4	10.9

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



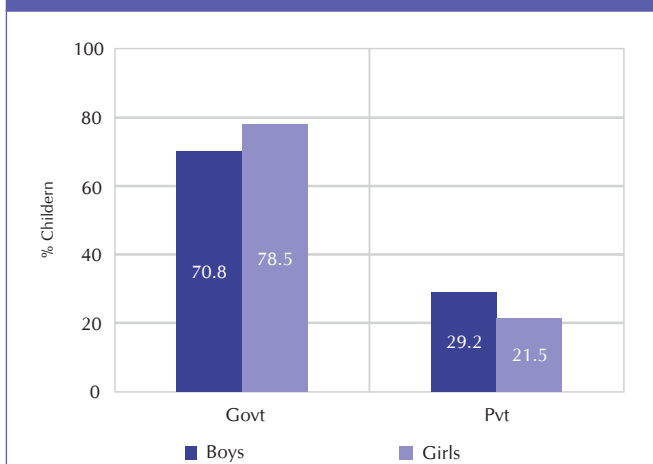
Key takeaways:

- **Sex-wise difference in enrollment:** In all age groups, a higher proportion of girls are enrolled in government institutions (anganwadis or pre-primary or primary grades in government schools) as compared to boys of the same age. The sex-wise difference in enrollment also increases with age. For example, at age 5, the percentage of girls enrolled in government institutions is 68.5% as compared to that of boys at 60.4%. There is an 8.1 percentage point difference in enrollment. By age 8, the sex-wise difference in enrollment has risen to 10.9 percentage points. (Table 4)
- **Boys perform better than girls in government schools:** In Std I, for all age groups in government schools, more boys are able to read at least letters and recognize at least single digit numbers as compared to girls. (Table 5)
- **Picture is mixed in private schools:** Among children in Std I, the proportion of boys in Bihar who go to private schools is 29.2%; about 21.5% of girls do the same. As far as learning levels are concerned, the picture is quite mixed with girls doing better at some tasks. (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, 70.8% of boys are enrolled in government schools and 29.2% of boys are enrolled in private schools. Of all girls enrolled in Std I, 78.5% of girls are enrolled in government schools and 21.5% 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	27.0	20.3	34.0	26.3
Age 6 and 7	32.6	33.1	48.6	46.2
Age 8 and above	54.0	50.6	68.2	67.7
All	34.7	32.8	48.3	44.9
Private schools				
Age 5	49.7		67.7	
Age 6 and 7	73.8	77.8	80.1	83.8
Age 8 and above	93.0	94.6	97.0	96.6
All	81.6	83.9	87.9	87.6

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.