

Young Children: Enrollment and Learning Status – Madhya Pradesh

Analysis based on data from households. 50 out of 50 districts were surveyed in ASER 2018.

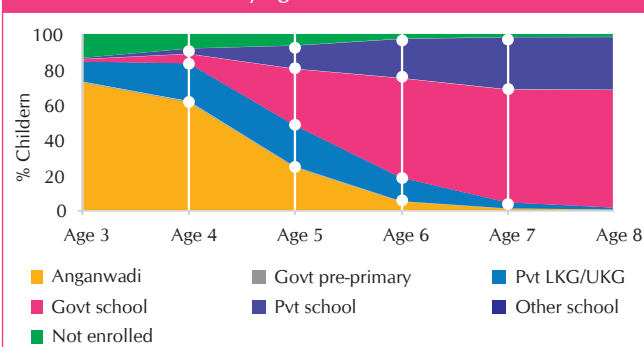
Early access to a supportive environment and exposure to developmentally appropriate activities can help children develop a solid foundation for future learning, both for school and for life. All major education policy and program documents in India now recognize this fact. However, recent ASER data 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	72.6	0.3	11.3	1.4	0.6	0.0	13.7	100
Age 4	61.4	0.4	21.5	5.3	3.0	0.0	8.4	100
Age 5	24.4	0.4	23.3	32.0	13.0	0.1	6.7	100
Age 6	5.0	0.3	13.4	56.3	22.1	0.1	2.9	100
Age 7	1.1	0.1	3.5	63.9	29.4	0.1	2.0	100
Age 8	0.5	0.1	1.1	66.6	29.8	0.1	1.9	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, 72.6% children are enrolled in anganwadis, 0.3% in government pre-primary classes, 11.3% in private LKG/UKG, 1.4% in government schools, and 0.6% in private schools. 'Other' includes children going to any other type of institution. 13.7% 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.

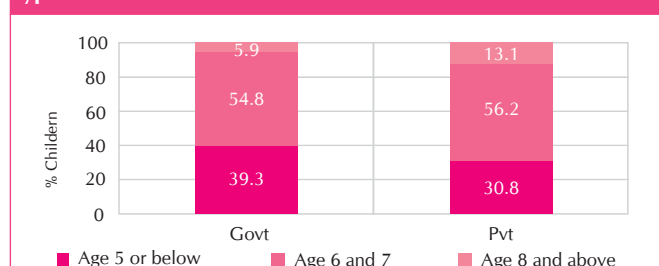
- **High enrollment in pre-school age group:** At age 3, more than 70% of children are enrolled in anganwadis. This number is slightly lower at 61.4% for children at age 4. Even at age 3 and 4, some children in rural Madhya Pradesh go to private pre-schools. (Table 1)
- **Variation at age 5 in terms of enrollment and school type:** At age 5, a quarter of all children are still in anganwadis. A similar proportion attend private pre-schools. Almost 45% are enrolled in 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:** 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, 40.1% of 6 and 7 year olds can recognize at least single digit numbers, as compared to 63.5% of children age 8 and above. (Table 3)
- **Private school learning levels in Std I higher than that in government schools:** The learning levels of children in all age groups in Std I in private schools are higher than those in government schools. For example, 56% of 5 year olds in private schools can read at least letters as compared to 25.5% in government schools. (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
	64.1	35.9	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	25.5	30.7
Age 6 and 7	33.2	40.1
Age 8 and above	57.6	63.5
All	32.0	38.3
Private schools		
Age 5	56.0	56.8
Age 6 and 7	75.0	78.8
Age 8 and above	85.7	88.2
All	71.5	74.3

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	65.8	68.7	2.8
Age 5	54.0	59.9	5.9
Age 6	56.9	66.5	9.6
Age 7	61.6	68.7	7.1
Age 8	64.1	70.4	6.3

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



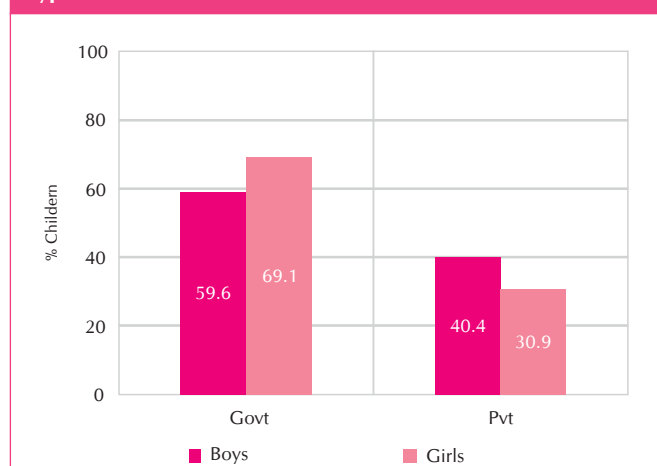
Key takeaways:

- **For all age groups, more girls are enrolled in government institutions:** For all age groups, more girls are enrolled in government pre-schools or schools as compared to boys. There is an indication that sex-wise difference in enrollment is higher among older children. In Std I, close to 60% of boys are enrolled in government schools. This figure for girls is approximately 70%. (Table 4 and Chart 3)
- **No clear trend in terms of sex as far as learning levels are concerned:** While there is a clear advantage by age, with older children doing better than younger children in the same grade, in Std I there is no clear or consistent boy-girl difference in learning levels. (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, 59.6% of boys are enrolled in government schools and 40.4% of boys are enrolled in private schools. Of all girls enrolled in Std I, 69.1% of girls are enrolled in government schools and 30.9% 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	24.1	26.8	28.4	32.7
Age 6 and 7	31.9	34.5	41.0	39.3
Age 8 and above	61.3		65.3	
All	31.1	32.9	38.4	38.3
Private schools				
Age 5	56.4	55.5	57.9	55.4
Age 6 and 7	75.8	73.9	78.5	79.3
Age 8 and above	84.5		86.5	
All	72.4	70.1	74.6	73.7

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.