

All districts RURAL

The ASER 2019 'Early Years' survey was conducted in 26 districts across 24 states in India. One rural district was surveyed in each state, except in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh where two districts were surveyed. The survey reached a total of 1,514 villages, 30,425 households, and 36,930 children in the age group 4 to 8. Sampled children's pre-school or school enrollment status was recorded. Children did a variety of cognitive, early language, and early numeracy tasks. Activities to assess children's social and emotional development were also undertaken. All tasks were done one-on-one with children in their homes.

In the following 'All districts' pages, data is presented in five sub-sections:

- **Overview (age 4-8):** This section provides a snapshot of all children in the ASER 'Early Years' sample in terms of their pre-school and school enrollment status, separately by age, sex, and pre-school/school type (this page).
- **Young children (age 4 and 5):** Ability levels and expectations of children in the pre-primary age group are very different than for older children. This section presents data on cognitive skills, early language, and early numeracy ability for children age 4 and 5 (pages 52 and 53). It also provides data on children's ability to identify emotions as a key indicator of social and emotional development.
- **Children in Std I:** Data is presented on the abilities of children in Std I, who have just entered the formal school system, focusing on the relationship between age and performance on early learning tasks (pages 54 and 55).
- **Children in early primary grades:** This section presents data on children's performance by grade for children in Std I, II and III, in order to look at the progression of children's ability levels over the first three years of primary school (pages 56 and 57).
- **Mothers:** The relationship between mothers' education and children's performance is presented as an example of the ways in which household exposure to education affects children's performance (page 58).

Overview: Pre-school and school enrollment (age 4-8)

Table 1: % Children age 4-8 enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools 2019

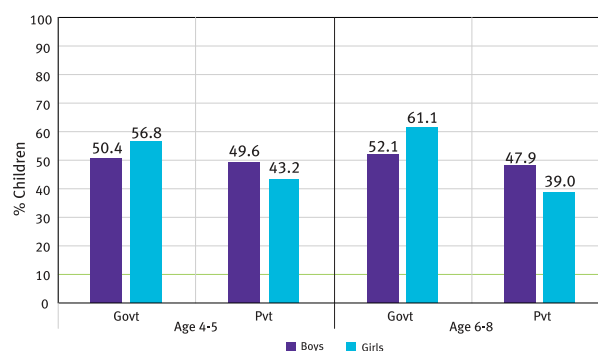
Age	Pre-school			School			Not enrolled	Total
	Angan-wadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 4	44.2	5.6	36.7	2.9	1.9	0.0	8.7	100
Age 5	26.2	5.3	40.6	16.7	7.2	0.0	4.0	100
Age 6	5.8	4.4	23.2	40.7	23.6	0.1	2.1	100
Age 7	1.0	1.0	8.3	54.3	34.5	0.1	0.8	100
Age 8	0.4	0.5	2.8	59.0	36.7	0.1	0.6	100

'Govt pre-primary' refers to pre-primary classes in government schools.

'Other' includes children going to any other kind of school.

'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or have dropped out.

Chart 1: % Children age 4-8 enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by sex 2019



Bars show the proportion of children in the age group 4-5 and 6-8 enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools, separately for each sex. For example, 50.4% boys age 4-5 are enrolled in government pre-school and schools as compared to 56.8% girls.

Table 2: Schooling status and age-grade distribution % Children age 4-8 by schooling status and grade 2019

Age	Not enrolled	Pre-primary	Std I	Std II	Std III	Std IV and above	Total
Age 4	8.4	83.5	5.9	2.2			100
Age 5	3.9	70.0	21.6	4.5			100
Age 6	2.1	32.8	46.4	16.1	2.6		100
Age 7	0.8	10.2	28.3	44.1	14.6	2.0	100
Age 8	0.6	3.6	8.3	27.1	45.4	15.0	100

'Pre-primary' includes children going to anganwadis, government pre-primary classes and private LKG/UKG.

This table shows the schooling status and grade distribution at each age. For example, of all 4-year-olds, 8.4% children are not enrolled, 83.5% are in a pre-primary class, 5.9% are in Std I, and 2.2% are in Std II or above.



Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

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Children age 4 to 5 years

National policy stipulates age 4 and 5 as the pre-primary age group. At this stage, children should be encouraged to develop a breadth of skills including cognitive, social and emotional skills as well as the conceptual foundations needed for formal schooling.

Table 3: % Children age 4-5 enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools 2019

Age	Pre-school			School		Not enrolled	Total
	Angan-wadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Govt	Pvt		
Age 4	44.2	5.6	36.7	2.9	1.9	8.7	100
Age 5	26.3	5.3	40.6	16.7	7.2	4.0	100

'Govt pre-primary' refers to pre-primary classes in government schools.
'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or have dropped out.

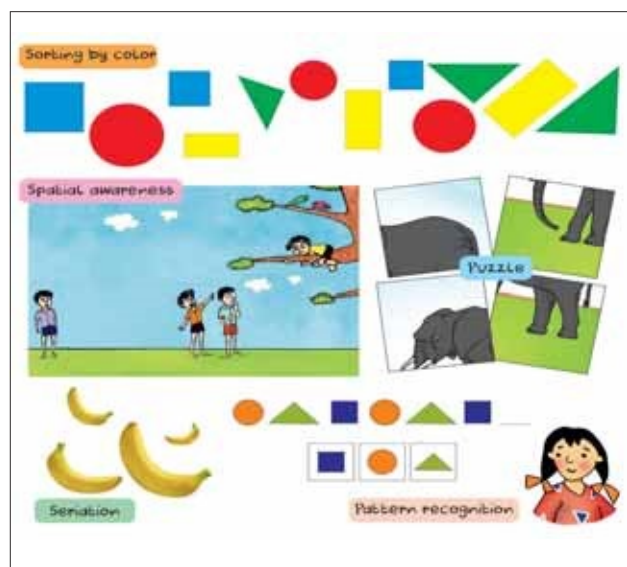


Table 4: % Children age 4-5 who can correctly do cognitive tasks by schooling status 2019

Task	Age 4			Age 5		
	Govt pre-school ¹	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Not enrolled	Govt pre-school ¹	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Not enrolled
Sorting	63.8	79.3	44.9	77.5	87.2	62.1
Spatial awareness	51.7	65.5	34.2	62.2	76.7	51.7
Seriation	39.4	49.5	22.6	41.2	58.8	29.7
Pattern recognition	38.8	43.4	30.7	43.4	49.9	30.1
Puzzle	31.0	47.1	16.3	45.0	58.9	23.0

4- and 5-year-olds were administered a 4-piece puzzle. This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly do cognitive tasks by age and schooling status. For example, of all 4-year-olds enrolled in government pre-school, 63.8% can do a sorting task, 51.7% can do a spatial awareness task, 39.4% can do a seriation task, and so on.

Table 5: % Children age 4-5 who can correctly do early language tasks by schooling status 2019

Task	Age 4			Age 5		
	Govt pre-school ¹	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Not enrolled	Govt pre-school ¹	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Not enrolled
Picture description	53.5	67.2	39.0	63.7	76.6	50.2
Listening comprehension	13.8	24.8	10.0	23.5	40.4	17.4

This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly do early language tasks by age and schooling status. For example, of all 4-year-olds enrolled in government pre-school, 53.5% can do a picture description task and 13.8% can do a listening comprehension task.



¹Govt pre-school' includes children enrolled in anganwadis and government pre-primary classes. Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

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Children age 4 to 5 years

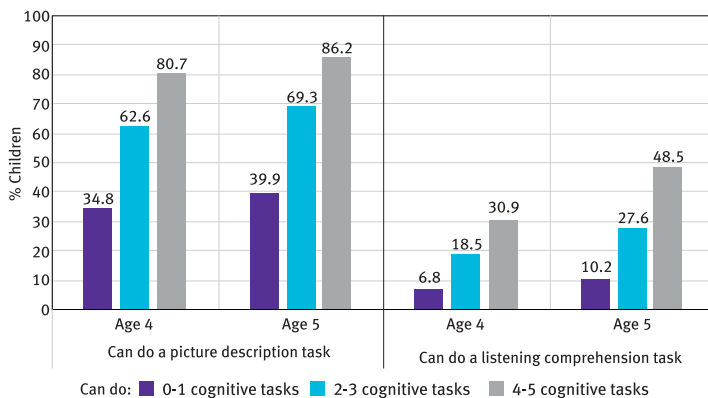
Table 6: % Children age 4-5 who can correctly do early numeracy tasks by schooling status 2019

Task	Age 4			Age 5		
	Govt pre-school	Pvt LKG/UKG	Not enrolled	Govt pre-school	Pvt LKG/UKG	Not enrolled
Counting objects	23.1	40.1	8.2	36.8	57.6	20.7
Relative comparison (objects)	37.3	51.3	21.7	53.8	71.2	37.8

'Govt pre-school' includes children enrolled in anganwadis and government pre-primary classes.

This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly do early numeracy tasks by age and schooling status. For example, of all 4-year-olds enrolled in government pre-schools, 23.1% can do a task involving counting of objects and 37.3% can do a task involving relative comparison of objects.

Chart 2: Relationship between performance on cognitive tasks and early language tasks (pre-school going children age 4-5) 2019



How to read this chart: At age 4, out of all pre-school going children who can correctly do 0-1 cognitive tasks, 34.8% can do a picture description task; of those who can correctly do 2-3 cognitive tasks, 62.6% can do a picture description task; and of those who can correctly do 4-5 cognitive tasks, 80.7% can do a picture description task.

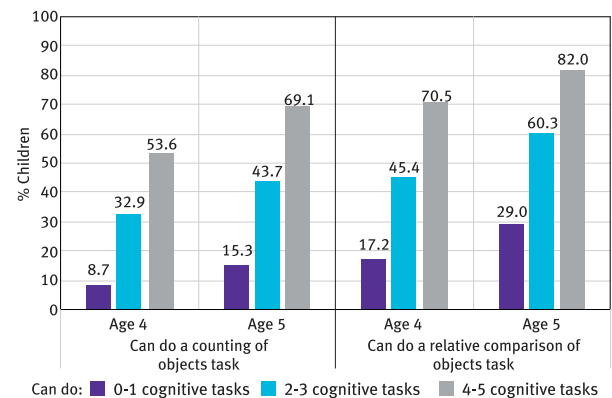
Table 7: % Children age 4-5 who can correctly identify emotions 2019

Age	Happy	Sad	Angry	Afraid	All 4 emotions
Age 4	62.2	43.3	47.7	47.4	24.0
Age 5	72.3	50.1	57.4	55.8	33.6

The ability to identify emotions is an important part of social and emotional development. In this task, the child is shown 4 face cards, each showing a different emotion. She is asked to point to the card that corresponds to each emotion. This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly identify each emotion and those who can correctly identify all 4 emotions.



Chart 3: Relationship between performance on cognitive tasks and early numeracy tasks (pre-school going children age 4-5) 2019



How to read this chart: At age 4, out of all pre-school going children who can correctly do 0-1 cognitive tasks, 8.7% can count objects; of those who can correctly do 2-3 cognitive tasks, 32.9% can count objects; and of those who can correctly do 4-5 cognitive tasks, 53.6% can count objects.

Key takeaways:

- As expected, children's performance on all tasks improves substantially between age 4 and age 5, regardless of schooling status.
- However, although 5-year-old children should be able to perform these simple tasks with ease, large proportions are not able to do so, especially among children who are not enrolled anywhere or enrolled in government pre-schools (anganwadis or government pre-primary classes).
- 5-year-olds are exposed to a very wide variety of environments and inputs, depending on where they are enrolled: 26.3% children are in anganwadis, 40.6% children are in private LKG or UKG classes, and 23.9% are in government or private school.
- At both age 4 and age 5, there is a clear relationship between pre-school going children's ability to do cognitive tasks and their performance on both early language and early numeracy tasks.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

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Children in Std I

Std I is children's point of entry to primary school, with the associated curriculum expectations for formal subject-specific learning. Although the Right to Education Act (2009) refers to age 6 as the first year of formal schooling, significant proportions of both younger and older children are enrolled in Std I

Table 8: % Children in Std I by age and school type 2019

Age	Govt	Pvt	All
Age 4	3.1	2.6	2.9
Age 5	23.0	13.1	19.0
Age 6	43.5	38.9	41.7
Age 7	25.3	32.8	28.3
Age 8	5.1	12.6	8.1
Total	100	100	100

This table shows the age distribution of children enrolled in Std I in different types of schools. For example, of all children enrolled in Std I in government schools, 3.1% are 4 years old, 23% are 5, 43.5% are 6, 25.3% are 7, and 5.1% are 8 years old.



Table 9: % Children in Std I who can correctly do cognitive tasks by age 2019

Age	Seriation	Pattern recognition	Puzzle
Age 4 and 5	50.6	49.6	53.5
Age 6	67.3	59.6	51.7
Age 7 and 8	74.5	63.7	57.5
All Std I	66.5	59.0	54.3

4- and 5-year-olds were administered a 4-piece puzzle and 6- to 8-year-olds were administered a 6-piece puzzle.

Within Std I, children's performance on cognitive tasks varies by age. For example, of all children in Std I, 50.6% children age 4 and 5, 67.3% children age 6, and 74.5% children age 7 and 8 can do a seriation task.

Table 10: % Children in Std I who can correctly do early language tasks by age 2019

Age	Picture description	Listening comprehension
Age 4 and 5	70.7	41.0
Age 6	80.1	55.2
Age 7 and 8	86.8	63.4
All Std I	80.6	55.3

Within Std I, children's performance on early language tasks varies by age. For example, of all children in Std I, 70.7% children age 4 and 5, 80.1% children age 6, and 86.8% children age 7 and 8 can do a picture description task.

Table 11: Distribution of children's reading ability in Std I by age 2019

Age	Not even letter	Letter	Word	Std I level text	Total	Of those who can read a Std I level text, % children who can answer both comprehension questions
Age 4 and 5	62.6	25.4	6.3	5.7	100	
Age 6	40.9	31.5	14.9	12.7	100	74.6
Age 7 and 8	23.5	29.8	20.7	26.0	100	80.3
All Std I	39.0	29.6	15.2	16.2	100	77.9

Early language tasks are progressive. Each row shows the variation in children's reading levels among Std I children of a given age. For example, among 4- and 5-year-olds in Std I, 62.6% children cannot even read letters, 25.4% can read letters but not words or higher, 6.3% can read words but not a Std I level text, and 5.7% can read a Std I level text or higher.



Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

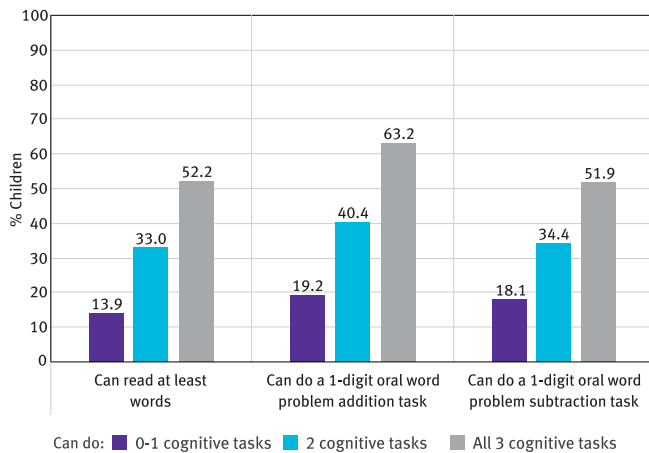
Children in Std I

Table 12: % Children in Std I who can correctly do 1-digit numeracy tasks by age 2019

Age	1-digit					
	Oral word problem addition	Oral word problem subtraction	Number recognition (1-9)	Relative comparison (1-9)	Numeric addition	Numeric subtraction
Age 4 and 5	22.2	21.1	51.9	30.3	25.6	18.0
Age 6	35.6	30.5	74.0	50.9	48.1	35.4
Age 7 and 8	53.5	44.2	86.5	67.2	66.9	55.4
All Std I	39.5	33.7	74.1	52.8	50.6	39.4

The performance of children in Std I on 1-digit numeracy tasks varies by age. For example, of all 4- and 5-year-olds in Std I, 22.2% can do an oral word addition problem, 21.1% can do an oral word subtraction problem, 51.9% can recognize numbers up to 9, and so on.

Chart 4: Relationship between performance on cognitive tasks and early language and numeracy tasks (Std I) 2019

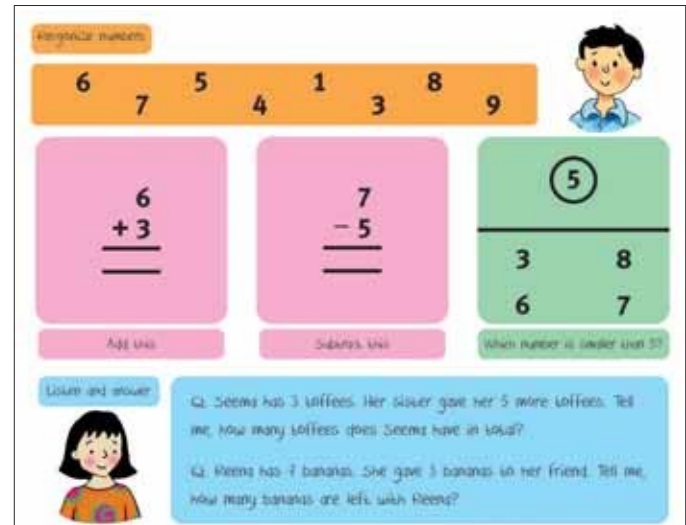


How to read this chart: In Std I, out of all children who can correctly do 0-1 cognitive tasks, 13.9% can read at least words; of those who can correctly do 2 cognitive tasks, 33% can read at least words; and of those who can correctly do all 3 cognitive tasks, 52.2% can read at least words.

Table 13: % Children in Std I who can correctly do early language and early numeracy tasks by age and school type 2019

Age	At least words		1-digit			
			Oral word problem addition		Oral word problem subtraction	
	Govt	Pvt	Govt	Pvt	Govt	Pvt
Age 4 and 5	6.7	24.1	16.5	35.3	16.8	31.1
Age 6	18.9	41.5	28.2	47.4	25.0	39.3
Age 7 and 8	39.1	54.3	45.9	61.0	35.8	52.5

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.



Key takeaways:

- Across this sample, 41.7% children in Std I are at the RTE-mandated age of 6 years old. 21.9% are younger and 36.4% are older. Children in Std I in private school are significantly older than those in the same class in government school.
- Age makes a substantial difference to learning. Even within a given school type, older children in Std I perform better than younger ones on every task.
- A clear relationship is visible between children's ability to do tasks measuring cognitive skills and those assessing early language and early numeracy.
- Irrespective of age, children in Std I do better in numeric arithmetic tasks (addition and subtraction problems presented in written numeric form) than oral word problems involving similar operations.

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Children in early primary grades (Std I-III)

In the first few years of primary school, children's progress towards developing foundational reading and arithmetic abilities should be consolidated, giving them a solid base on which to build. It is important that curriculum expectations and classroom activities are developed with this progression in mind.

Table 14: Age-grade distribution
% Children enrolled in each grade by age 2019

Std	Age 4 and 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	Total
Std I	21.9	41.7	28.3	8.1	100
Std II	4.0	15.8	50.3	29.9	100
Std III	0.4	3.3	24.0	72.3	100

This table shows the age distribution within each grade. For example, of all children enrolled in Std I, 21.9% children are 4 and 5 years old, 41.7% children are 6, 28.3% children are 7, and 8.1% are 8 years old.



Table 15: % Children who can correctly do all 3 cognitive tasks (seriation, pattern recognition, and puzzle) by age and grade 2019

Std	Age 4 and 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	All
Std I	22.5	31.1	36.7	37.2	31.4
Std II	19.5	35.1	46.7	50.9	45.1
Std III		35.3	50.2	60.0	56.7

4- and 5-year-olds were administered a 4-piece puzzle and 6- to 8-year-olds were administered a 6-piece puzzle.

This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly do all 3 cognitive tasks by age and grade. For example, in Std I, 22.5% children age 4 and 5, 31.1% children age 6, 36.7% children age 7, and 37.2% children age 8 can do all 3 cognitive tasks.

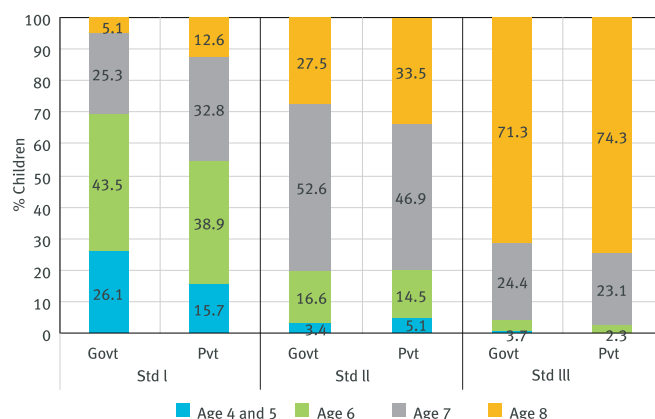
Table 17: % Children who can read at least a Std I level text by age and grade 2019

Std	Age 4 and 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8	All
Std I	5.7	12.7	24.4	31.6	16.2
Std II	8.6	26.0	34.5	43.1	34.8
Std III		29.4	46.1	53.4	50.8

This table shows the proportion of children who can read at least a Std I level text by age and grade. For example, in Std I, 5.7% children age 4 and 5, 12.7% children age 6, 24.4% children age 7, and 31.6% children age 8 can read at least a Std I level text.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

Chart 5: Age-grade distribution
% Children enrolled in each grade by age and school type 2019



This chart shows the proportion of children enrolled in different grades by age and school type. For example, of all children enrolled in Std I in government schools, 26.1% are 4 and 5 years old, 43.5% are 6, 25.3% are 7, and 5.1% are 8 years old.

Table 16: Distribution of children's reading ability within each grade 2019

Std	Not even letter	Letter	Word	Std I level text	Total	Of those who can read a Std I level text, % children who can answer both comprehension questions
Std I	39.0	29.6	15.2	16.2	100	77.9
Std II	22.3	23.5	19.4	34.8	100	80.5
Std III	14.7	18.1	16.5	50.8	100	85.1

Early language tasks are progressive. Each row shows the variation in children's reading levels within a given grade. For example, among children in Std I, 39% cannot even read letters, 29.6% can read letters but not words or higher, 15.2% can read words but not a Std I level text or higher, and 16.2% can read a Std I level text or higher.



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Children in early primary grades (Std I-III)

Table 18: Distribution of children's ability to recognize numbers within each grade 2019

Std	Not even 1-9	Number recognition (1-9)	Number recognition (11-99)	Total
Std I	26.9	32.0	41.1	100
Std II	11.6	27.1	61.3	100
Std III	5.6	22.2	72.2	100

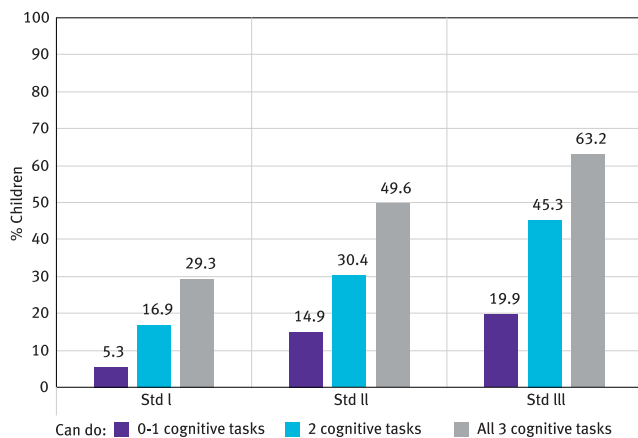
Early numeracy tasks are progressive. Each row shows the variation in children's number recognition ability within a given grade. For example, among children in Std I, 26.9% children cannot even recognize numbers 1-9, 32% children can recognize numbers up to 9 but cannot recognize numbers up to 99, and 41.1% can recognize numbers up to 99.

Table 19: % Children who can correctly do 1-digit and 2-digit numeracy tasks by grade 2019

Std	1-digit		2-digit		
	Oral word problem addition	Oral word problem subtraction	Relative comparison (11-99)	Numeric addition	Numeric subtraction
Std I	39.5	33.7	29.1	11.3	7.6
Std II	58.8	51.4	49.0	28.0	18.4
Std III	74.5	66.0	63.8	44.0	30.6

This table shows the proportion of children in each grade who can do selected numeracy tasks (1-digit and 2-digit). For example, among children in Std I, 39.5% children can do a 1-digit oral word addition problem task, 33.7% can do a 1-digit oral word subtraction problem task, 29.1% can do relative comparison (11-99) task, and so on.

Chart 6: Relationship between performance on cognitive tasks and ability to read a Std I level text by grade 2019



How to read this chart: In Std I, out of all children who can correctly do 0-1 cognitive tasks, 5.3% can read a Std I level text; of those who can correctly do 2 cognitive tasks, 16.9% can read a Std I level text; and of those who can correctly do all 3 cognitive tasks, 29.3% can read a Std I level text.



Table 20: % Children age 6-8 who can correctly identify emotions 2019

Age	Happy	Sad	Angry	Afraid	All 4 emotions
Age 6	77.6	56.7	67.2	66.1	44.6
Age 7	82.0	62.8	73.7	73.3	54.0
Age 8	83.8	68.2	78.0	78.6	60.5

The ability to identify emotions is an important part of social and emotional development. In this task, the child is shown 4 face cards, each showing a different emotion. She is asked to point to the card that corresponds to each emotion. This table shows the proportion of children who can correctly identify each emotion and those who can correctly identify all 4 emotions.

Key takeaways:

- Children's early language and early numeracy skills improve in each subsequent grade; but even in Std III, 49.2% children cannot read text at Std I level of difficulty and 27.8% children are unable to recognize 2-digit numbers. However, within each grade older children do better than younger ones.
- As in the case of Std I, there is a clear relationship between children's ability to do cognitive tasks and their performance on early language and early numeracy tasks.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

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Mothers' education and children's performance

Reducing equity gaps require extra support for children from less advantaged homes. This page shows the relationship between mothers' education level and children's performance in cognitive, early language, and early numeracy tasks.

Table 21: % Mothers by education level 2019

Education level	% Mothers
No schooling	22.7
Std I-V	12.2
Std VI-VIII	18.3
Std IX-X	24.2
Std XI or more	22.7
Total	100

Table 22: % Children age 4-8 enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools by mothers' education 2019

Mothers' education level	Pre-school		School		Not enrolled	Total
	Govt pre-school	Pvt LKG/UKG	Govt	Pvt		
No schooling	18.7	11.2	53.2	11.8	5.1	100
Std I-V	20.8	12.3	48.7	14.4	3.7	100
Std VI-VIII	19.8	17.9	40.9	18.1	3.3	100
Std IX-X	18.6	22.9	31.4	25.5	1.6	100
Std XI or more	11.1	37.8	14.3	35.3	1.5	100

'Govt pre-school' includes children enrolled in anganwadis and government pre-primary classes.

'Not enrolled' includes children who never enrolled or have dropped out.

This table shows the enrollment patterns of children by mothers' education. For example, among children whose mothers never went to school, 18.7% go to government pre-school, 11.2% go to private LKG/UKG, 53.2% go to government schools, 11.8% go to private schools, and 5.1% are not enrolled anywhere.

Table 23: % Children who can correctly do all 3 cognitive tasks (seriation, pattern recognition, and puzzle) by age and mothers' education 2019

Mothers' education level	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7	Age 8
No schooling	7.9	12.6	17.5	27.5	38.5
Std I-V	7.3	11.7	24.9	32.2	48.4
Std VI-VIII	11.8	15.5	24.6	39.7	52.3
Std IX-X	16.0	20.2	33.5	51.5	64.1
Std XI or more	18.9	29.7	41.3	57.1	70.3

4- and 5-year-olds were administered a 4-piece puzzle and 6- to 8-year-olds were administered a 6-piece puzzle.

This table shows the performance of children in all 3 cognitive tasks by age and mothers' education. For example, 7.9% of all 4-year-olds whose mothers never went to school can do all 3 cognitive tasks as compared to 16% of all children in the same age group whose mothers had completed Std XI or more.



Table 24: % Children who can correctly do early language and early numeracy tasks by grade and mothers' education 2019

Mothers' education level	Children in Std I			Children in Std III			
	At least words	1-digit		At least Std I level text	2-digit		
		Oral word problem addition	Oral word problem subtraction		Number recognition (11-99)	Numeric addition	Numeric subtraction
No schooling	14.7	28.6	24.5	35.6	53.1	29.2	20.5
Std I-V	22.3	27.5	25.8	41.9	63.6	34.0	23.6
Std VI-VIII	27.4	35.9	30.1	49.8	70.7	39.6	27.1
Std IX-X	37.9	43.7	37.1	60.1	84.6	54.0	37.8
Std XI or more	49.3	52.5	46.2	69.1	91.8	63.7	43.6

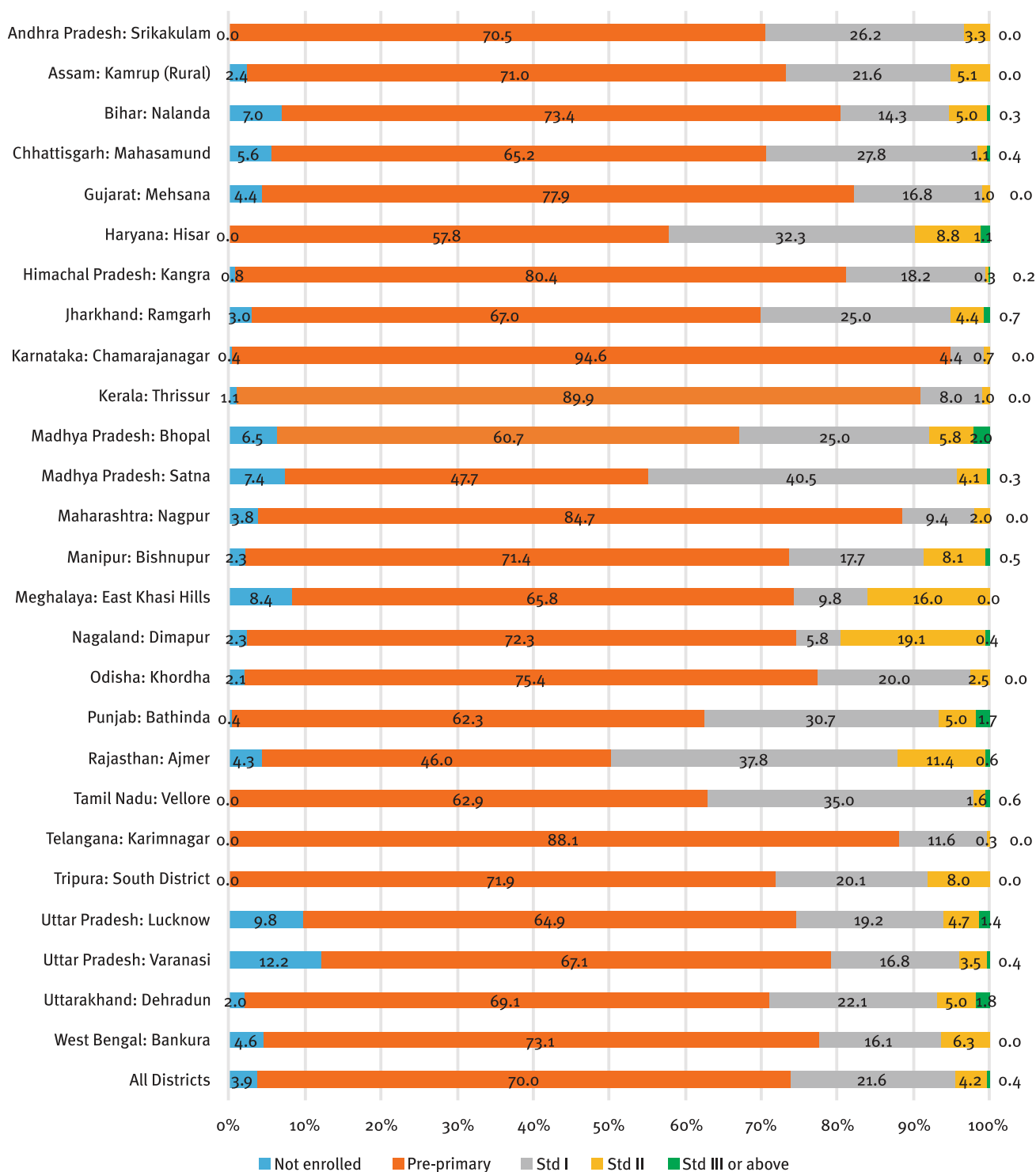
Each row shows the variation in children's ability to do early language and early numeracy tasks by grade and mothers' education. For example, among children in Std I whose mothers never went to school, 14.7% can read at least words, 28.6% can do a 1-digit oral word addition problem, 24.5% can do a 1-digit oral word subtraction problem, and so on.

Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

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Schooling status and grade distribution for 5-year-old children

% Children age 5 by schooling status and grade 2019



This chart shows the schooling status and grade distribution for 5-year-olds in each surveyed district. For example, in Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh all children age 5 are enrolled in some institution: 70.5% children are enrolled in an anganwadi or any other pre-primary class, 26.2% are in Std I, and 3.3% are in Std II.