Maharashtra RURAL

ANALYSIS BASED ON DATA FROM HOUSEHOLDS. 33 OUT OF 33 DISTRICTS
Data is not presented where sample size is insufficient.

Annual Status of Education Report
असर ASER 2022 RURAL
Facilitated by PRATHAM

Young Children Age 3 to 8: Schooling and learning trends

Engaging in developmentally appropriate activities from a young age and growing up in a supportive environment helps children to develop a solid foundation for learning. All major policy documents in India now recognize this fact. Recent ASER data for the "foundational stage" (age 3 to age 8) can be helpful in understanding the current status of schooling and learning so that appropriate steps can be taken to ensure that children enter Std I at the right age and are ready for formal school.

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

Age	Pre-school			School			Not in pre-school or school	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	77.9	1.7	10.5	0.7	0.5	0.0	8.7	100
Age 4	72.4	2.9	20.8	0.7	0.5	0.0	2.7	100
Age 5	56.2	3.7	27.4	7.7	3.6	0.1	1.5	100
Age 6	13.0	0.9	9.0	59.0	17.3	0.1	0.8	100
Age 7	1.2	0.1	1.4	73.1	23.8	0.2	0.2	100
Age 8	0.2	0.2	0.7	77.1	21.6	0.1	0.2	100

Table 2: % Children enrolled in different types of pre-schools and schools. By age. 2022

Age	Pre-school			School			Not in pre-school or school	Total
	Anganwadi	Govt pre-primary	Pvt LKG/ UKG	Govt	Pvt	Other		
Age 3	82.6	3.9	7.4	1.2	1.0	0.0	4.0	100
Age 4	80.2	4.4	12.8	1.0	0.6	0.0	1.0	100
Age 5	61.2	6.4	21.1	7.4	2.7	0.0	1.2	100
Age 6	13.0	1.8	7.2	63.4	13.9	0.1	0.5	100
Age 7	0.8	0.1	0.7	82.5	15.2	0.1	0.6	100
Age 8	0.2	0.0	0.2	83.0	16.6	0.1	0.0	100

Key takeaways:

- **Increase in enrollment in government institutions:** Across all ages, in 2022, a higher proportion of children are enrolled in government institutions (anganwadis and government schools) than in 2018. For example, in Maharashtra, the percentage of children aged 5 enrolled in anganwadis increased from 56.2% in 2018 to 61.2% in 2022 (Table 1 and Table 2).
- **Different curricular expectations in different pre-school institutions:** At age 5, most children are already enrolled in some kind of educational institution (98.8%). They could be going to an anganwadi (61.2%), or to a private pre-school (21.1%), or to a school (10.1%) (Table 2). This means that what is offered to, and expected from these young children varies enormously across the state depending on whether they are enrolled in their pre-school years and for how long. These differences need to be understood and addressed once children are in Std I.
- **Variation in age composition in each grade:** In any given grade, there are considerable age variations. The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2010 and National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 deem age 6 as the appropriate age of entry to Std I. Table 3 shows that while 53.9% children enrolled in Std I are 6-years-old, 5.6% are age 5 or below and 40.5% children are age 7 or above.
- **Age makes a difference:** By the time a child enters formal schooling in Std I, she should have a strong foundation for learning. While school readiness rests on a breadth of skills, ASER can provide data on a few foundational literacy and numeracy skills such as letter and number recognition. For example, among children in Std I, 51.9% of 5-year-olds can read at least letters, as compared to 64% of 6 and 7-year-olds (Table 4). Thus, when children enroll in formal school at an appropriate age, it is more likely that they will be able to keep up with the progressing curriculum expectations.

Table 3: Distribution of children in each grade by age (%). 2022

Std	<=5	6	7	8	9	>=10	Total
I	5.6	53.9	37.3	2.3	0.3	0.6	100
II	1.8	3.2	37.6	51.7	4.6	1.2	100
III	0.3	0.2	3.1	35.4	54.7	6.3	100

How to read the table: This table shows the age distribution for each grade. For example, in Maharashtra, of all children in Std I, 53.9% children are 6 years old, but there are also 5.6% who are 5 or younger, 37.3% who are 7, 2.3% who are 8, 0.3% who are 9, and 0.6% who are 10 or older.

Table 4: Reading and arithmetic levels for Std I children. By age. 2022

Age group	% Children who	
	Can read at least letters	Can recognize at least numbers (1-9)
Age 5	51.9	60.8
Age 6 and 7	64.0	69.1
Age 8 and above	Data insufficient	
All	63.9	69.1

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