

17th Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for 2022

January 20, 2023

In news— The NGO Pratham has released the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2022 recently.

Key findings-

- **ASER is a household survey conducted across 616 rural districts and covers 6.9 lakh children in the age group of 3 to 16 years** to record their schooling status and assess their basic reading and arithmetic skills.
- **The report is being brought out after four years and records the impact of school closures in 2020 and 2021,** as well as the return to school of children in 2022.
- According to the report, as schools reopened after nearly two years of closure due to COVID-19, student enrolments increased to more than pre-pandemic levels but the learning gap widened for foundational skills in reading and arithmetic, reversing several years of improvement.
- **The national-level study shows that despite school closures during the pandemic, the overall enrolment figures, which have been above 95% for the past 15 years** for the 6 to 14 years age group, increased from 97.2% in 2018 to 98.4% in 2022.
- **The proportion of children in this (3-16 years) age group who are not currently enrolled also dropped to its lowest level ever** to 1.6% from 2.8% in 2018, when the last full-scale ASER survey was conducted.
- **Government schools have seen a sharp increase in children enrolled from 65.6% in 2018 to 72.9% in 2022,** reversing another trend of a steady decrease in student

enrolments seen since 2006, when it was at 73.4%.

- Despite the enthusiasm seen among parents and students towards schools, **children's basic literacy levels have taken a big hit**, with their reading ability as compared to numeracy skills worsening much more sharply and dropping to pre-2012 levels.
- The percentage of children in Class 3 in government or private schools who were able to read at the level of Class 2 dropped from 27.3% in 2018 to 20.5% in 2022. This decline is visible in every State, and for children in both government and private schools.
- **States showing a decline of more than 10 percentage points from 2018 levels include those that had higher reading levels in 2018**, such as Kerala (from 52.1% in 2018 to 38.7% in 2022), Himachal Pradesh (from 47.7% to 28.4%), and Haryana (from 46.4% to 31.5%).
- **Large drops are also visible in Andhra Pradesh** (from 22.6% to 10.3%) and Telangana (from 18.1% to 5.2%).
- Nationally, the proportion of children enrolled in Class 5 in government or private schools who can at least read a Class 2-level text fell from 50.5% in 2018 to 42.8% in 2022.
- **States showing a decrease of 15 percentage points or more include Andhra Pradesh**, Gujarat , and Himachal Pradesh.
- The drops in basic reading ability are smaller for Class 8 students, where 69.6% of children enrolled in government or private schools who could read at least basic text in 2022 falling from 73% in 2018.
- **The ASER reading test assesses whether a child can read letters, words, a simple paragraph** at Class 1 level of difficulty, or a story at Class 2 level of difficulty.
- Class 3 students who were able to do at least subtract dropped in 2022. While Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh maintained or improved slightly over 2018 levels, steep drops of more than 10 percentage points are visible in Tamil Nadu.

- The proportion of children in Class 5 across India who can carry out division has also fallen slightly in 2022.
- The performance of Class 8 students in basic arithmetic is more varied. Nationally, the proportion of children who can do division has increased slightly in 2022.
- This increase is driven by improved outcomes among girls as well as among children enrolled in government schools, whereas boys and children enrolled in private schools show a decline over 2018 levels.
- Children in Class 8 in government schools did significantly better in 2022 than in 2018 in Uttar Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, but were significantly worse off in Punjab.
- While families withdrew students from private schools to save money spent on tuition fees, they also invested in private tuition classes, which increased as the proportion of such students rose further from in 2022 in both private and government schools.
- This may also be the reason why learning gaps are sharper in reading because students typically choose to study maths and science in tuition classes.
- The report also lays to rest apprehensions about the pandemic forcing families to withdraw girls from schools and force them into early marriages.
- It finds that the percentage of girls in the age group of 11-14 years who were out of school declined to 2% from 4.1%.
- The decrease in the proportion of girls not enrolled in school is even sharper among older girls in the 15-16 years age group, which stood at 7.9% in 2022 as compared with 13.5% in 2018.

The key takeaways from ASER 2022

The findings of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2022 offer a view of how learning outcomes across India were impacted by the pandemic.

THE SURVEY
 796
 300,000 children
 10,000 villages
 Across 650 districts

TUITION CLASSES RISE

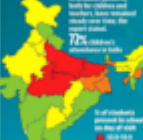
It is vital to ensure that the proportion of children who attend private tuition classes does not increase disproportionately.



States of India use the proportion of children attending tuition classes as a proxy for quality of education. States with high proportions include Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Uttar Pradesh.

Attendance stays stable

Attendance patterns remain stable, with 72% of children attending school in 2022, similar to 2021.



In all states, attendance remained stable in 2022 compared to 2021.

School facilities

70% of schools have electricity, 63.4% have internet, and 65.3% have a playground.



74.9% of schools have a library, and 45.1% have a computer.



Rise in presence of smartphones

74.9% of children use smartphones, up from 65.3% in 2021.

