

ASER 2024

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ASER 2024: The State of Education in Rural India

Context

The **Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024** is a comprehensive nationwide survey conducted by **Pratham**, a non-governmental organization, to assess the schooling status of children in rural India and their proficiency in basic reading and arithmetic skills.

Key aspects of ASER 2024:

- Covers three age groups: **Pre-primary (3-5 years)**, **Elementary (6-14 years)**, and **Older children (15-16 years)**.
 - Focuses on **learning recovery post-pandemic** and evaluates the impact of **recent educational reforms**.
 - Assesses **digital literacy** among teenagers for the first time.
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Key Findings from ASER 2024

1. Enrollment Trends

- **Overall school enrollment rate (6-14 years) remains high at 98.1%** in 2024, showing stability from **98.4% in 2022**.
- **Pre-school enrollment (ages 3-5) has increased significantly**, especially among 5-year-olds, rising from **58.5% in 2018 to 71.4% in 2024**.

2. Recovery in Reading Skills

- The **percentage of Class III students reading at a Class II level** has recovered from the

pandemic, improving from **20.5% in 2022 to 27.1% in 2024**.

- Among **Class V students**, **reading proficiency** has climbed to **48.7% in 2024**, nearing pre-pandemic levels (**50.4% in 2018**).

3. Progress in Arithmetic Skills

- **Basic subtraction skills among Class III students** have improved significantly, reaching **33.7% in 2024**, the highest in a decade.
- **Class V students' ability to perform division** increased to **30.7% in 2024**, surpassing the pre-pandemic level of **27.8% in 2018**.

4. Digital Literacy Insights

ASER 2024 assessed **digital literacy among 14-16-year-olds**, focusing on smartphone access, ownership, and usage:

- **Smartphone usage:** More boys (**85.5%**) than girls (**79.4%**) reported knowing how to use a smartphone.
- **Gender disparity in smartphone ownership:** **36.2% of boys own a smartphone**, compared to only **26.9% of girls**.
- **Usage patterns:** While nearly **90% of teenagers have smartphone access at home**, only **57% use them for education**, whereas **76% use them for social media**.

Performance of Government Schools

1. Enrollment Trends

- **Government school enrollment** has returned to near pre-pandemic levels at **66.8% in 2024**, compared to **65.6% in 2018** and **72.9% in 2022**.

2. Improvements in Learning Outcomes

- **Arithmetic skills in government schools** have shown remarkable improvement:
 - **Class III subtraction proficiency** rose by **36.6%** in government schools, compared to

only **10.2%** in private schools.

- **Reading skills among Class III students** in government schools increased from **16.3% in 2022 to 23.4% in 2024**.

3. Factors Behind the Improvement

- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020** has prioritized **Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN)**, significantly improving early learning.
- The **Nipun Bharat Mission**, launched by the **Union Education Ministry**, has played a vital role in enhancing learning outcomes in primary education.

State-Wise Progress

1. Remarkable Recovery in Low-Performing States

- **Uttar Pradesh (UP):** The percentage of **Class III government school students reading at a Class II level** rose from **12.3% in 2018 to 27.9% in 2024**.
- **Bihar:** The proportion of Class III students reading at a Class II level improved from **12.1% in 2018 to 20.1% in 2024**. Arithmetic proficiency also increased from **18% to 28.2%**.

2. Improvement in High-Performing States

- **Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Haryana, and Odisha** saw a **10-percentage point increase in reading proficiency** between 2022 and 2024.
- **Uttarakhand** recorded a sharp rise in **Class III reading proficiency**, from **24.7% in 2018 to 35.6% in 2024**.

School Infrastructure Developments

ASER 2024 also assessed progress in **Right to Education (RTE) indicators**, showing **slight improvements in school infrastructure**, including:

- **Functional girls' toilets**

- **Availability of drinking water facilities**
 - **Access to usable classrooms and playgrounds**
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Conclusion

ASER 2024 marks a **transformative shift in India's approach to foundational learning**, highlighting not just recovery but **significant progress in basic education**.

- The implementation of **NEP 2020** has set a unified goal for all states, enabling them to adopt customized strategies to improve FLN.
- The data reflects a **strong nationwide commitment to foundational literacy and numeracy**, signifying a **historic milestone in India's education system**.

