

# Low on quality

Primary enrolment rates remain very high across the nation, but there is room for improvement in other metrics in several States.

By **RAMESH CHAKRAPANI**

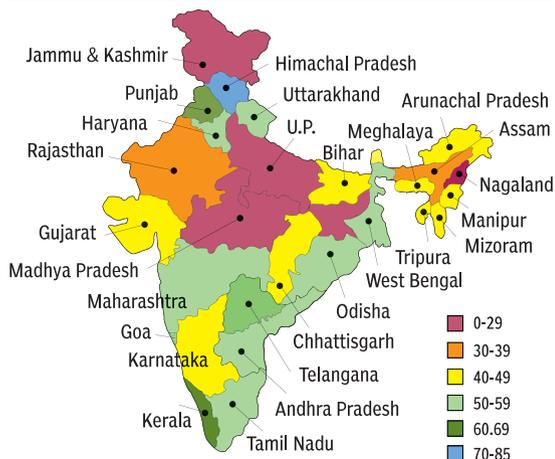
The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for 2014 from Pratham, a non-governmental organisation that has been publishing such reports since 2005, paints a mixed picture of the state of education in the country in terms of quality of instruction and learning and availability of essential amenities such as drinking water, toilets and library books.

The report says that India is close to universal enrolment for the age group 6-14, with enrolment levels at 96 per cent or more for the sixth year in a row in 2014. Encouraging as that is, the survey's findings on metrics such as children's ability to read and do basic arithmetic remain worrisome, with the number of children who pass muster still remaining dishearteningly low.

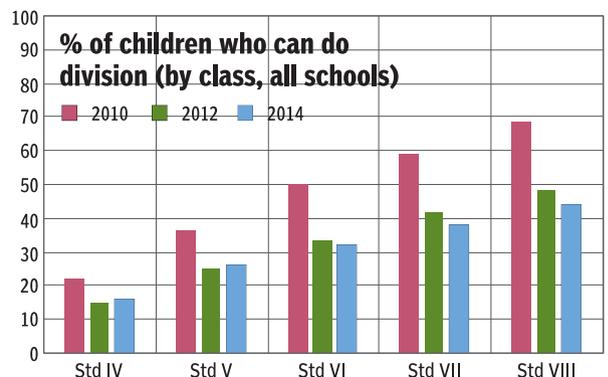
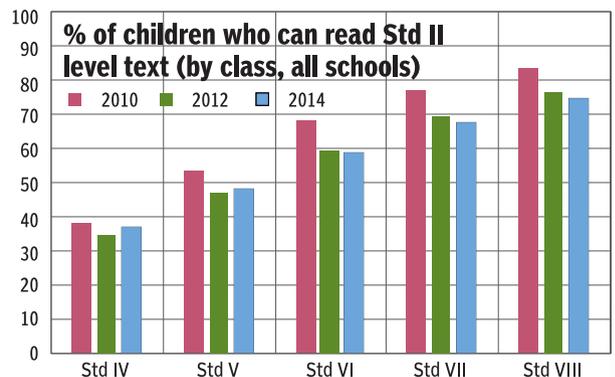
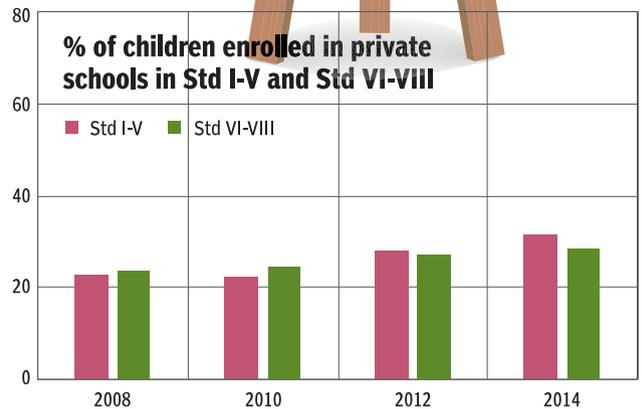
The report says: "Overall, the situation with basic reading continues to be extremely disheartening in India. In 2014, in Std III, only a fourth of all children can read a Std II text fluently. This number rises to just under half in Std V."

The report also found that several States were poor performers in the areas of providing drinking water and usable toilets and library books. ASER 2014 reached 577 rural districts across India. The survey was carried out in 16,497 villages, covering 341,070 households and 569,229 children.

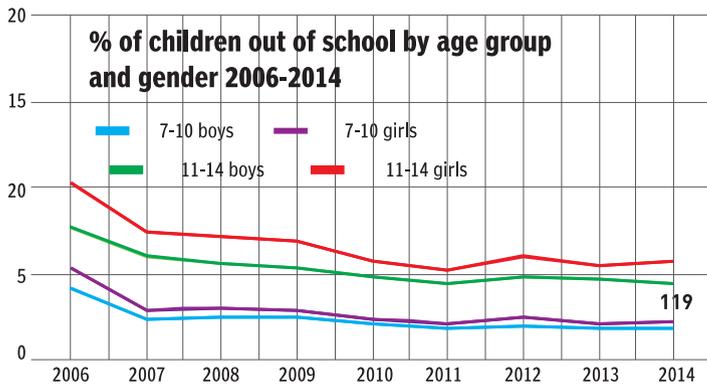
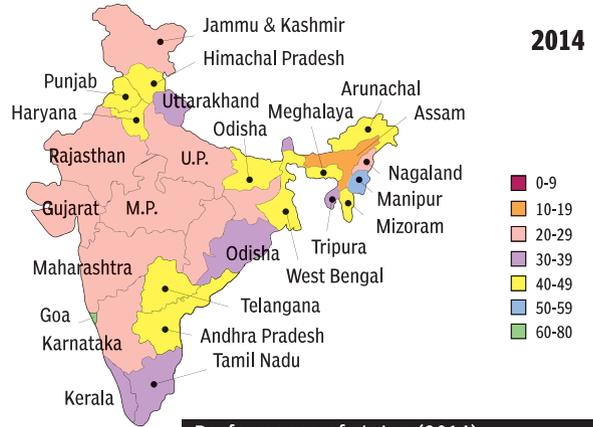
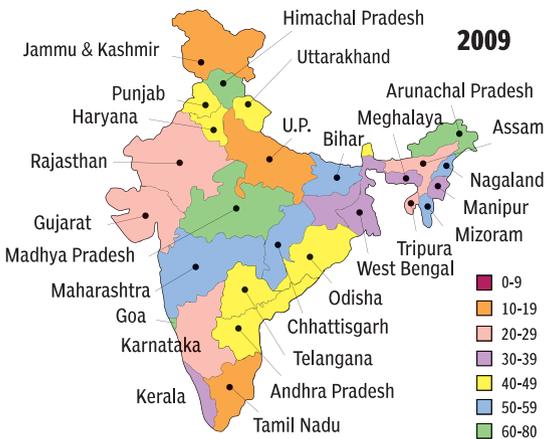
Statewise map showing percentage of government school children in Std V who can read Std II level text (2014)



Age group	Govt.	Pvt.	Others	Not in school	Total
6-14 all	64.9	30.8	1.0	3.3	100
7-16 all	63.0	30.5	1.0	5.6	100
7-10 all	65.1	31.8	1.1	2.0	100
7-10 boys	61.5	35.6	1.1	1.8	100
7-10 girls	68.9	27.7	1.2	2.2	100
11-14 all	64.4	29.8	0.9	5.0	100
11-14 boys	61.3	33.3	0.8	4.4	100
11-14 girls	67.5	25.9	1.0	5.7	100
15-16 all	53.8	28.9	0.7	16.6	100
15-16 boys	52.9	30.7	0.5	15.9	100
15-16 girls	54.6	27.2	0.9	17.3	100



Percentage of government school children in **Std V** who can do division



% of children by class and arithmetic level 2014						
Std	Not even 1-9	Recognise numbers 10-99	Recognise numbers 10-99	Can subtract	Can divide	Total
I	42.4	33.9	19.3	3.4	1.1	100
II	19.5	36.5	31.2	9.9	2.8	100
III	10.0	29.4	35.3	18.0	7.4	100
IV	5.3	21.2	33.3	24.1	16.1	100
V	3.9	15.4	30.1	24.5	26.1	100
VI	2.3	10.5	29.2	25.8	32.2	100
VII	1.7	7.5	28.5	24.4	37.8	100
VIII	1.3	5.4	26.1	23.2	44.1	100
Total	11.8	20.8	29.0	18.6	19.8	100

Performance of states (2014)

States	% of schools with usable toilet	% of schools with usable toilet for girls	% of schools with drinking water	% of schools with library books
Kerala	84.8	80.2	83.0	94.2
Tamil Nadu	79.8	68.7	79.8	86.5
A.P *	64.3	54.2	61.2	97.2
Karnataka	60.2	55.1	81.2	91.8

Assam and the Northeast

Sikkim	73.0	65.2	74.0	55.3
Nagaland	68.0	45.0	23.4	14.6
Assam	58.7	47.0	65.3	45.3
Tripura	58.7	57.1	56.2	60.0
Manipur	53.1	19.8	15.7	18.0
Meghalaya	38.8	16.8	16.5	23.6
Arunachal	35.1	24.5	53.5	25.0
Mizoram	33.7	28.1	68.5	16.9

Rest of India

U.P.	54.9	49.1	85.8	74.6
Uttarakhand	69.2	53.7	69.2	85.9
M.P.	55.4	40.5	75.1	84.2
Chhatisgarh	68.9	53.4	80.3	89.5
Bihar	60.6	46.2	90.4	76.3
Jharkhand	52.9	48.0	80.2	89.7
Rajasthan	81.5	73.7	73.4	87.8
Maharashtra	66.3	59.1	70.5	82.6
Gujarat	84.8	81.4	87.0	92.3
West Bengal	70.8	46.9	78.4	66.3
Punjab	79.2	71.6	81.0	88.7
Haryana	81.8	79.6	76.2	84.2
Himachal	87.6	86.2	87.7	95.7
J&K	58.1	46.7	51.6	54.4
Odisha	63.1	53.0	81.6	88.0

\* Undivided

