School Survey Major Findings



Sample description

The ASER 2021 school sample comprised the head teacher or another teacher of a government school with primary classes in each sampled village, and respondents from more than 7,000 government schools across 25 states were surveyed during September and October 2021. Each respondent was asked to select one grade about which they could provide information. In a few states, schools had not reopened during the course of the survey; but in the majority, schools had reopened either all grades or some grades for children to attend in person (see Annexure 2 for details). We refer to these schools as fully reopened and partially reopened schools respectively.

Table 39: Number of schools reached by grades offered and school reopening status. 2021

| Grades offered | Schools fully reopened | Schools partially reopened | Schools not reopened | Total |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Primary (Std I-IV/V) | 2466 | 41 | 1616 | 4123 |
| Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII) | 1286 | 854 | 734 | 2874 |
| Other | 206 | 19 | 77 | 302 |
| Total | 3958 | 914 | 2427 | 7299 |

Table 40: % School respondents by designation and school reopening status. 2021

| Designation | % Schools fully reopened | % Schools partially reopened | % Schools not reopened |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Head teacher | 44.9 | 55.1 | 52.3 |
| Teacher | 55.1 | 44.9 | 47.8 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Table 41: % School respondents by the grade they opted to provide information about. By grade and school reopening status. 2021

| Std | % Schools fully reopened | % Schools partially reopened | % Schools not reopened |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Std I-II | 20.0 | 2.8 | 21.7 |
| Std III-V | 57.9 | 12.7 | 56.6 |
| Std VI-VIII | 21.9 | 83.8 | 21.2 |
| Could not give information | 0.2 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Table 42: School reopening status reported by school respondents (%). By grades offered and reopening status.

| Grades offered | % Schools fully reopened | % Schools partially reopened | % Schools not reopened | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Primary (Std I-IV/V) | 98.4 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 100 |
| Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII) | 60.1 | 39.9 | 0.0 | 100 |
| All | 80.7 | 19.3 | 0.0 | 100 |

Enrollment

Table 43: School respondents reporting major changes in enrollment in recent years (%). By grade and school reopening status. 2021

| Std Incr | En | rollment in reo | pened schools | (%) | Enrollment in schools not reopened (%) | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|-------|--|-----------|-----------|-------|--|
| | Increased | Decreased | No change | Total | Increased | Decreased | No change | Total | |
| Std I-II | 72.2 | 7.2 | 20.6 | 100 | 51.9 | 11.4 | 36.7 | 100 | |
| Std III-V | 70.0 | 6.7 | 23.3 | 100 | 53.4 | 11.1 | 35.4 | 100 | |
| Std VI-VIII | 65.6 | 6.5 | 27.9 | 100 | 59.2 | 9.1 | 31.7 | 100 | |
| All | 68.9 | 6.7 | 24.4 | 100 | 54.3 | 10.8 | 34.9 | 100 | |

Table 44: Perceived reasons for major changes in enrollment in recent years, where these were reported (%). By grade and school reopening status. 2021

| | | | School re | eopened | | | School not reopened Marriage/ employment School Sc | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|------|---|--|--|-------|--|---------|--------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| Std | Migration | menť | Classes not being held in Pvt school | COVID caused financial distress | Free facilities in Govt schools | Other | Migration | employ- | not being held in Pvt | caused financial | facilities in Govt | Other |
| Std I-II | 13.1 | 3.5 | 34.8 | 58.2 | 49.5 | 18.0 | 13.2 | 3.9 | 35.4 | 48.4 | 45.1 | 14.1 |
| Std III-V | 13.3 | 5.3 | 39.8 | 62.5 | 50.9 | 14.3 | 11.6 | 3.2 | 27.2 | 49.6 | 45.2 | 15.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 20.5 | 6.5 | 44.5 | 64.5 | 46.0 | 12.5 | 14.8 | 2.8 | 30.7 | 51.1 | 46.9 | 12.5 |
| All | 15.5 | 5.3 | 40.4 | 62.4 | 49.1 | 14.4 | 12.7 | 3.2 | 29.7 | 49.7 | 45.6 | 14.7 |

Table 43 and 44 report whether school staff perceived unusual changes in enrollment patterns in recent years and the possible reasons for these. In all schools, the majority of respondents reported perceiving recent increases in enrollments, but the proportion of respondents reporting this outcome was significantly higher when schools had reopened (close to 70%) as compared to when they had not (54.3%).

Among both reopened and not reopened schools, COVID caused financial distress, free facilities provided by government schools and classes not being held in private schools were cited as the major reasons for this increase. More respondents in reopened schools reported these as reasons as compared to respondents in not reopened schools.

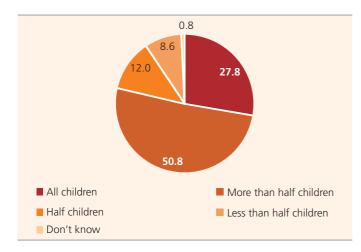




Schools reopened

Attendance

Chart 12: School respondents' estimate of children's attendance on last working day prior to survey (%). 2021



COVID prevention measures

Table 45: Measures for COVID prevention reported by respondents (%). By grades offered. 2021

| | % Schoo | % School respondents who reported: | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|
| Grades offered | Receiving notification for implementing measures | Inspection for COVID prevention measures | Taking at least one dose of COVID vaccine | | | |
| Primary (Std I-IV/V) | 92.6 | 61.9 | 98.2 | | | |
| Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII) | 94.6 | 69.5 | 99.3 | | | |
| Total | 93.5 | 65.4 | 98.7 | | | |

Table 46: COVID prevention facilities reported by respondents to be available in school (%). By grades offered. 2021

| Grades offered | Water | Soap | Sanitiser | Temperature gun | Extra masks | Quarantine room | COVID prevention guidelines displayed in schools | No facility |
|--------------------------------|-------|------|-----------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|--|-------------|
| Primary (Std I-IV/V) | 93.5 | 93.8 | 95.3 | 28.4 | 73.0 | 2.9 | 74.4 | 0.4 |
| Upper primary (Std I-VII/VIII) | 91.9 | 89.2 | 95.0 | 35.0 | 72.4 | 6.0 | 79.1 | 0.7 |
| Total | 92.8 | 91.7 | 95.1 | 31.4 | 72.7 | 4.3 | 76.5 | 0.5 |

Table 47: Training received by school respondents for implementation of COVID prevention measures (%). 2021

| | % School | Of those who received training, type of training received: | | | | | | |
|--|----------|--|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Std respondents wh received trainin | | Brief instructions (in person or online) | Series of in person/online training sessions | Enrolled in/ completed an online course | Other kinds of training | | | |
| Std I-II | 70.2 | 80.9 | 23.3 | 7.0 | 2.4 | | | |
| Std III-V | 71.8 | 79.3 | 27.2 | 10.5 | 2.2 | | | |
| Std VI-VIII | 76.3 | 85.5 | 27.2 | 8.3 | 1.0 | | | |
| All | 73.1 | 81.7 | 26.6 | 9.1 | 1.8 | | | |

Norms for children's attendance varied across schools and states, but only 27.8% of respondents reported that all children who were supposed to attend school on the working day prior to the survey actually did so (Chart 12).

ASER 2021 also asked about COVID prevention measures in reopened schools. Almost all respondents reported having taken at least one dose of the COVID vaccine (Table 45). Even though temperature guns and quarantine rooms were rare in schools, common provisions for COVID prevention were widely available, including water (92.8%), soap (91.7%), and sanitiser (95.1%). 73.1% respondents also reported receiving training/orientation for implementing COVID prevention measures in school (Table 47).

Teaching-learning activities in class

Table 48: Classroom activities reported by school respondents during the reference week (%). By grade. 2021

| Std | Regular curriculum | | | Other |
|-------------|-----------------------|------|------|-------|
| Std I-II | 65.9 | 45.7 | 51.9 | 12.6 |
| Std III-V | 68.7 | 42.1 | 55.3 | 12.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 84.4 | 40.0 | 43.5 | 6.9 |
| All | 73.5 | 42.0 | 50.8 | 10.8 |

Table 49: Materials used in class by school respondents during the reference week (%). By grade. 2021

| Std | Text- books | Work- sheets | Online recorded videos | Charts and models | Other |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------|
| Std I-II | 66.8 | 46.6 | 27.3 | 53.7 | 12.4 |
| Std III-V | 75.4 | 54.0 | 26.6 | 48.9 | 11.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 86.1 | 52.1 | 20.2 | 30.5 | 8.1 |
| All | 77.5 | 52.1 | 24.6 | 43.5 | 10.5 |

Table 50: Challenges faced by school respondents in teaching currently (%). By grade. 2021

| | % School | | If t | facing challenge | es, then type o | f challenges fac | ed: | |
|-------------|--|------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------|
| Std | respondents T facing sam challenges in r teaching | | Low attendance | Children unable to catch up with curriculum | Technical/ connectivity issues | Implementing COVID guidelines in class | Lack of support from parents | Other |
| Std I-II | 68.7 | 45.0 | 26.9 | 58.4 | 12.3 | 21.0 | 22.2 | 17.6 |
| Std III-V | 72.4 | 46.1 | 25.1 | 70.1 | 17.6 | 23.4 | 22.8 | 14.5 |
| Std VI-VIII | 67.8 | 46.5 | 36.6 | 61.8 | 33.8 | 22.4 | 26.8 | 12.2 |
| All | 70.2 | 46.0 | 29.1 | 65.4 | 22.0 | 22.7 | 24.0 | 14.3 |

Most teachers reported that children studied the regular curriculum in class during the reference week (73.5%), but patterns varied by grade. More respondents who provided information about Std VI-VIII reported teaching the regular curriculum in the classroom (84.4%), as compared to 65.9% for Std I-II. Teachers reported that children in lower grades did more extra-curricular activities as compared to children in higher grades (Table 48).

Across all grades, textbooks were reported as the most common material being used by respondents to teach in class (77.5%), with some variation by grade. More respondents reported using interactive materials like charts and models for children in lower grades as compared to their counterparts in higher grades (Table 49).

Close to three quarters of all respondents reported facing challenges in teaching their grade currently (Table 50). The most commonly reported challenge was that children were unable to catch up with their grade-level curriculum (65.4%).

Mid-day meal

Table 51: Status of mid-day meal provision reported by school respondents (%). By grade. 2021

| Std | Children eating mid-day meal in school | | | | Ration/fund given to students at least once in 3 months | | | | | |
|-------------|--|------------------|---------------|-------|---|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------|--|
| | All children | Some children | Not eating | Total | All children | Some children | Submitted list to Govt | Not distributed | Total | |
| Std I-II | 49.0 | 2.3 | 48.7 | 100 | 79.6 | 6.1 | 3.4 | 10.9 | 100 | |
| Std III-V | 52.5 | 1.8 | 45.6 | 100 | 80.0 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 10.4 | 100 | |
| Std VI-VIII | 13.5 | 2.2 | 84.4 | 100 | 77.0 | 12.1 | 3.5 | 7.4 | 100 | |
| All | 38.8 | 2.0 | 59.2 | 100 | 78.9 | 8.2 | 3.4 | 9.5 | 100 | |

Schools yet to reopen

Sharing materials/activities and contact

Table 52: Status of textbook distribution reported by school respondents (%). By grade. 2020 and 2021

| Std | | ASER | 2020 | | ASER 2021 | | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|-------|--------------|------------------|--------------------|-------|
| | All children | Some children | Not distributed | Total | All children | Some children | Not distributed | Total |
| Std I-II | 87.1 | 6.2 | 6.8 | 100 | 90.7 | 5.5 | 3.8 | 100 |
| Std III-V | 88.3 | 6.1 | 5.7 | 100 | 90.3 | 6.0 | 3.7 | 100 |
| Std VI-VIII | 83.5 | 7.3 | 9.2 | 100 | 89.1 | 7.4 | 3.5 | 100 |
| All | 86.8 | 6.4 | 6.8 | 100 | 90.1 | 6.2 | 3.7 | 100 |

Table 53: Status of sharing of additional learning materials/activities with children reported by school respondents (%). By grade and medium. 2020 and 2021

| Std | | | ASER 2021 | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|--|---------------|-------------------|-------|----------------------|--|---------------|-------------------|-------|
| | % School respondents | If shared materials/activities, then medium: | | | | 0/ 6 1 | If shared materials/activities, then medium: | | | |
| | | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other | % School respondents | WhatsApp | Phone call | Personal visit | Other |
| Std I-II | 65.4 | 80.8 | 25.5 | 64.8 | 7.6 | 67.5 | 68.7 | 24.2 | 62.5 | 4.5 |
| Std III-V | 66.8 | 79.8 | 26.9 | 59.8 | 10.6 | 74.1 | 72.3 | 24.4 | 64.9 | 6.8 |
| Std VI-VIII | 66.3 | 84.4 | 34.0 | 56.5 | 19.4 | 81.2 | 82.1 | 27.8 | 54.3 | 6.5 |
| All | 66.4 | 81.2 | 28.5 | 59.9 | 12.3 | 74.2 | 73.9 | 25.1 | 62.0 | 6.3 |

Table 54: School respondents' reported contact with parents and children during the reference week to discuss learning materials/activities, child's progress or wellbeing (%). By grade. 2020 and 2021

| Std | ASER | 2020 | ASER 2021 | | | |
|-------------|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| | Teacher visited or called parent/child | Parent/child visited or called teacher | Teacher visited or called parent/child | Parent/child visited or called teacher | | |
| Std I-II | 46.6 | 23.0 | 52.1 | 35.3 | | |
| Std III-V | 46.9 | 25.7 | 52.6 | 35.0 | | |
| Std VI-VIII | 47.2 | 29.9 | 51.9 | 37.4 | | |
| All | 46.9 | 26.3 | 52.3 | 35.6 | | |

In schools that had not reopened, respondents were asked whether they had distributed textbooks to children and whether they had provided any additional learning materials or activities during the reference week.

The majority of school respondents reported that textbooks had been given to all enrolled children across all grades (90.1%) (Table 52). Three quarters also reported sharing additional learning materials/activities with children, an increase of close to 8 percentage points over 2020; this was more often reported by respondents providing information for higher grades than by those giving information for lower grades. WhatsApp continues to be the most common medium for sharing learning materials and activities (73.9%), followed by personal visits (62%) (Table 53). More than half the respondents reported visiting or calling parents/children during the reference week to discuss learning materials or children's progress, a slight increase over 2020 levels (Table 54).