

Understanding UDISE+ 2023-24 Enrolment Ratios under Samagra Shiksha

An Analysis of UDISEPlus 2020-21 to 2023-24 Data

Its Implications on Universal School Education by 2030 Envisaged in NEP 2020

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Net Enrolment Ratio at:

- *Primary Level declined to 79.0% in 2023-24 from 92.7% in the year 2020-21*
- *Upper Primary Level declined to 74.1% in 2023-24 from 66.0% in the year 2020-21*
- *Elementary Level declined to 92.1% in 2023-24 from 83.3% in the year 2020-21*
- *Secondary Level declined to 52.5% in 2023-24 from 48.3% in the year 2020-21*
- *Higher Secondary Level declined to 34.7% in 2023-24 from 33.8% in the year 2020-21*

1. Introduction

Education enrolment patterns serve as key indicators of a nation's progress toward universal education, reflecting access and participation across different segments of society. With its vast and diverse educational landscape, India has made significant improvement in improving educational access over the decades, yet challenges persist in achieving universalization. This article critically analyzes enrolment trends in India from 2020-21 to 2023-24, a period significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recovery efforts.

The analysis examines various enrolment indicators—Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER), and Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER) - across primary, upper primary, elementary, secondary, & higher secondary education levels of education. Each metric offers unique insights into educational participation

patterns, with individual strengths and limitations in capturing the complex reality of education access and retention. By examining these complementary measures, we can better understand progress toward universalizing school education in India.

2. Conceptual Framework of Enrolment Ratios

2.1 Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)

Meaning and Computation

The Gross Enrolment Ratio represents the total enrolment in a specific education level, irrespective of age, expressed as a percentage of the official age-specific child population corresponding to that level.

$$GER = (Total\ enrolment\ at\ a\ specific\ level \div Total\ population\ of\ the\ official\ age\ group) \times 100$$

Data Requirements

Computing GER requires two principal data points: the total number of students enrolled at a specific educational level (numerator) and the total population in the corresponding official age group (denominator). The former comes from educational administrative records (UDISE+), while the latter relies on population projections based on Census data.

Implications for Universalization

GER is a broad measure of a system's capacity to accommodate students at different educational levels and is considered a crude indicator of children's participation. A GER exceeding 100% indicates that a country has, in theory, the infrastructural capacity to accommodate all children in the relevant age group. However, this can mask significant issues such as grade repetition, overage and underage enrolment, and out-of-school children in the official age group.

2.2 Net Enrolment Ratio (NER)

Meaning and Computation

The Net Enrolment Ratio measures enrolment of the official age group for a given education level as a percentage of the corresponding population.

$$NER = (Students\ of\ the\ official\ age\ group\ enrolled\ at\ the\ specific\ level \div population\ of\ the\ official\ age\ group) \times 100$$

Data Requirements

NER calculation requires age-specific enrolment/age & grade matrix data at each education level and corresponding age-specific population figures; this necessitates more detailed administrative data collection, including accurate age recording of enrolled students.

Improvement over GER

Unlike GER, NER cannot exceed 100% and provides a more precise measure of participation among the intended age group. It filters out over-age and under-age students, offering a clearer picture of whether children are enrolled at their age-appropriate levels and considered a better indicator of children's participation in educational programs.

2.3 Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER)

Meaning and Computation

The Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio includes students of the official age group for a given level who are enrolled either at that level or at higher levels.

ANER = (Students of the official age group enrolled at the given level OR higher levels ÷ Population of the official age group) × 100

Data Requirements

ANER requires comprehensive age-specific enrolment data across all education levels/grades, allowing for the tracking of age-appropriate children who may have progressed to higher levels.

Improvement over NER

ANER addresses a key limitation of standard NER by accounting for early entrants who have advanced beyond their age-appropriate level; this provides a more comprehensive measure of school participation among the official age group.

2.4 Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER)

Meaning and Computation

The Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio measures the percentage of a specific age group enrolled in any level of education.

ASER = (Students of a specific age enrolled at any level ÷ Population of that particular age) × 100

Data Requirements

ASER calculation requires detailed age-specific enrolment data across all education levels and accurate population projections for specific age cohorts.

The improvement over Previous Ratios

ASER overcomes the level-specific limitations of other indicators by focusing exclusively on age groups, regardless of the education level; this provides valuable insights into overall educational participation by age, capturing children who might be enrolled below their age-appropriate level. One hundred minus ASER gives the percentage of out-of-school children, which can be applied to the child population to obtain out-of-school children in a given year.

Table 6: Enrolment Ratio: All-India, 2020-21 to 2023-24

Level	GER				NER			
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Primary	103.3	103.4	96.2	93.0	92.7	88.6	80.6	79.0
Upper	92.2	94.7	90.2	89.7	74.1	71.3	64.8	66.0
Elementary	99.1	100.1	93.9	91.7	92.1	90.5	85.5	83.3
Secondary	79.8	79.6	79.2	77.4	52.5	47.9	47.6	48.3
Higher	53.8	57.6	56.8	56.2	34.7	34.2	33.8	33.8
Level	Adjusted NER				ASER*			
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Primary	98.6	99.1	89.1	85.9	98.6	99.1 (6-10 years)	89.1	85.3
Upper	84.4	87.3	77.8	76.2	91.6	92.2 (11-13 years)	89.9	89.2
Elementary	96.0	96.5	89.4	87.2	96.0	96.5 (6-13 years)	89.4	86.7
Secondary	61.8	64.7	60.9	60.5	73.4	72.8 (14-15 years)	76.3	77.0
Higher	-	-	-	-	46.3	42.4 (16-17 years)	46.8	75.5

Source: UDISE+ different years *ASER: Age-specific enrolment ratio.

3. Critical Analysis of Enrolment Trends: UDISEPlus 2020-21 to 2023-24

3.1 Gross Enrolment Ratio Analysis: All-India Level

Primary Level

Primary-level GER exhibited a downward trend, declining from 103.3% in 2020-21 to 93.0% in 2023-24 - a substantial 10.3 percentage point decrease. This significant drop suggests a reduction in system capacity or participation at this foundational level, which is particularly concerning given that universalization at the primary level had previously been considered primarily

achieved. From 2020-21 to 2023-24, enrolment at the primary level (Grades I to V) declined by more than 14 million, which is said to be declined because of the change in data collection methodology.

Upper Primary Level

Upper primary GER showed a brief improvement from 92.2% (2020-21) to 94.7% (2021-22), followed by a decline to 89.7% by 2023-24. The overall decrease of 2.5 percentage points, while less dramatic than at the primary level, still indicates challenges in maintaining enrolment momentum at this transitional stage.

Elementary Level

The combined elementary GER rose to 100.1% in 2021-22, suggesting momentary achievement of theoretical universal capacity before declining substantially to 91.7% by 2023-24. This pattern suggests a post-pandemic recovery followed by systemic challenges that eroded earlier gains.

Secondary Level

Secondary education steadily declined GER from 79.8% to 77.4% over the four years. The relatively consistent but persistently lower GER compared to elementary levels highlights the ongoing challenge of transitioning students to secondary education.

Higher Secondary Level

Higher secondary GER initially showed the most positive trend, increasing from 53.8% to 57.6% between 2020-21 and 2021-22, before declining marginally to 56.2% by 2023-24. Despite this partial recovery, the substantially lower GER at this level compared to earlier stages underscores the significant bottleneck in educational progression at higher levels.

Table 2: Gender-Specific Gross Enrollment Ratios, 2023-24

Level	GER, 2023-24		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary: Grades I to V	91.8	94.3	93.0
Upper Primary: Grades VI to VIII	88.9	90.6	89.7
Elementary: Grades I to VIII	90.7	92.9	91.7
Secondary: Grades IX & X	76.8	78.0	77.4
Higher Secondary: Grades XI & XII	54.4	58.2	56.2

Source: UDISEPlus 2023-24

Gender Analysis

The gender-disaggregated GER data for 2023-24 (Table 2) reveals a notable pattern: girls consistently outperform boys across all education levels. The gender gap is particularly pronounced at the higher secondary level (girls: 58.2%, boys: 54.4%), suggesting that once enrolled, girls tend to progress through the education system more effectively than boys. However, this does not account for overall participation rates or out-of-school children by gender.

3.2 Net Enrolment Ratio Analysis

Primary Level

Primary-level NER decreased from 92.7% in 2020-21 to 88.6% in 2021-22 (Table 1). This decline is particularly troubling as it indicates a reduction in age-appropriate enrolment at the foundational level of education. The significant gap between GER and NER (approximately 15 percentage points in 2021-22) suggests substantial over-age or under-age enrolment at this level. NER stands at 79 percent in 2023-24.

Upper Primary Level

Upper primary NER declined from 74.1% to 71.3% over the two years compared to 64.8 percent in 2022-23 compared to 66 percent in 2023-24. The lower NER compared to GER (66.0 % versus 89.7% in 2023-24) indicates significant enrolment of non-age-appropriate students at this level, potentially reflecting grade repetition or delayed entry.

Elementary Level

Elementary NER decreased from 92.1% in 2020-21 to 90.5% in 2022-23, showing greater resilience than individual primary and upper primary levels. However, the decline still indicates worsening age-appropriate participation in basic education. In the latest year, 2023-24, NER at the elementary level stands at 83.3 percent, thus indicating that a significant percentage of children aged 6 to 13 years were unenrolled in the corresponding Grades I to VIII.

Secondary Level

Secondary education showed a substantial NER decline from 52.5% to 48.3%, indicating that less than half of the relevant age group was enrolled at the appropriate level by 2023-24. The 30.9 percentage point gap between GER (79.2%) and NER (48.3%) in 2021-22 reveals extensive over-age enrolment at this level.

Higher Secondary Level

Higher secondary NER decreased marginally from 34.7% in 2020-21 to 33.8% in 2023-24, with the low figure indicating that only about one-third of the age-appropriate population was enrolled

at this level. The substantial gap between GER and NER (approximately 22 percentage points) again indicates significant over-age enrolment.

3.3 Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio Analysis

Primary Level

Primary ANER increased slightly from 98.6% to 99.1% in 2021-22, dropping drastically to 85.9% by 2023-24. This concerning decline suggests that fewer age-appropriate children were participating in any level of education, pointing to increased educational exclusion.

Upper Primary Level

Upper primary ANER improved from 84.4% to 87.3% in 2021-22, significantly declining to 76.2% by 2023-24. The substantial gap between ANER and NER (approximately 16 percentage points in 2021-22) indicates that many age-appropriate children were enrolled at higher levels, reflecting early advancement; these children entered the education system much earlier than the prescribed age.

Elementary Level

Elementary ANER showed greater stability, increasing slightly from 96.0% to 96.5% in 2021-22 before declining to 87.2% by 2023-24. This 9.3 percentage point drop over two years reflects serious challenges in maintaining educational participation among the 6-13 age group, which is crucial because of the goal of attaining universal school education by 2030.

Secondary Level

Secondary ANER improved from 61.8% to 64.7% in 2021-22 before declining to 60.5% by 2023-24. The significant gap between ANER and NER (approximately 16.8 percentage points in 2021-22) suggests considerable early advancement to higher secondary among the secondary school-age population.

3.4 Age-Specific Enrolment Ratio Analysis

Primary Age Group (6-10 years)

The ASER for the 6-10 age group improved slightly from 98.6% to 99.1% between 2020-21 and 2021-22, indicating near-universal educational participation among this age group, regardless of level. However, the same declined to 85.3% in 2023-24, indicating that a significant percentage of children of this age group were not enrolled because of the steep decline in enrolment at this level of education since 2021-22 and thereafter.

Upper Primary Age Group (11-13 years)

The 11-13 age group ASER increased from 91.6% in 2020-21 to 92.2% in 2021-22, showing high but not universal participation. ASER in 2023-24 was 89.2%, thus indicating that about 11% of children of this age group were not enrolled. The gap between this figure and elementary NER suggests that some children in this age group were enrolled at the primary rather than upper primary level.

Elementary Age Group (6-13 years)

The combined 6-13 age group ASER improved marginally from 96.0% to 96.5%, reflecting overall high participation among school-age children during this period, but significantly declined to 86.7% in 2023-24, indicating that around 13% of children of this age group were not enrolled.

Secondary Age Group (14-15 years)

The 14-15 age group ASER decreased slightly from 73.4% in 2020-21 to 72.8% in 2021-22 and slightly increased to 77% in 2023-24, indicating that a little less than a quarter of children in this age group were not participating in education at any level.

Higher Secondary Age Group (16-17 years)

The 16-17 age group experienced a significant ASER decline from 46.3% in 2020-21 to 42.4% in 2022-23, suggesting that educational participation drops substantially as children approach young adulthood, but the same dramatically increased to 75.5%, which beneficiates recheck of enrolment figures at this level of education.

In the next section, we view state-specific enrolment ratios at different levels of school education in the current year 2023-24, which is also based on UDISEPlus data.

4. State-wise Analysis of Enrolment Ratios: 2023-24

4.1 Primary Level (2023-24)

The state-wise data on enrolment ratios at the primary level for 2023-24 provides critical insights into the regional disparities in educational access and participation across India. Primary education forms the foundation of the education system, and universal access at this level is a prerequisite for achieving broader educational goals. This analysis examines the variations in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER), Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio (ANER), and Age-specific Enrolment Ratio (ASER) across states and union territories to assess progress toward universal primary education

States Approaching Primary Education Universalization

Several states and union territories of India demonstrate strong performance across enrolment indicators:

Table 2: Enrolment Ratio at Primary Level, 2023-24

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 6 to 10 Years
All India	93.0	79.0	85.9	85.3
A & N Islands	86.7	80.6	96.4	95.4
Andhra Pradesh	96.3	85.2	87.9	87.1
Arunachal Pradesh	114.6	88.2	100.4	99.8
Assam	110.5	81.7	82.4	81.9
Bihar	83.4	70.3	77.1	75.4
Chandigarh	100.6	95.5	109.0	100.0
Chhattisgarh	89.4	77.6	86.4	86.2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	107.7	96.8	106.2	100.0
Delhi	102.6	96.3	96.8	97.7
Goa	121.6	100.0	106.1	100.0
Gujarat	80.4	73.8	74.0	76.4
Haryana	91.0	76.4	79.4	79.2
Himachal Pradesh	106.1	84.8	110.3	100.0
Jammu and Kashmir	114.2	97.5	113.2	100.0
Jharkhand	92.6	69.1	70.0	70.3
Karnataka	106.8	92.9	93.0	91.7
Kerala	95.4	83.2	83.5	83.1
Ladakh	106.8	90.0	93.0	92.0
Lakshadweep	99.2	91.9	98.6	98.0
Madhya Pradesh	78.9	64.3	73.6	73.2
Maharashtra	103.3	90.1	104.3	100.0
Manipur	136.8	100.0	128.9	100.0
Meghalaya	178.4	100.0	133.8	100.0
Mizoram	151.8	100.0	121.2	100.0
Nagaland	93.8	76.3	82.2	81.7
Odisha	95.8	82.0	96.5	95.9
Puducherry	97.1	92.4	95.8	94.8
Punjab	107.5	91.7	104.6	100.0
Rajasthan	95.1	79.9	83.0	81.7
Sikkim	98.3	79.8	91.4	90.8
Tamil Nadu	95.8	85.0	86.1	84.6
Telangana	111.2	94.4	96.7	97.5
Tripura	120.9	100.0	113.9	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	82.9	67.0	77.7	77.2
Uttarakhand	113.3	93.0	96.0	96.2
West Bengal	109.6	100.0	113.5	100.0

Source: UDISE+ 2023-24

Complete or Near-Complete Coverage (NER ≥ 95%)

- **Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, and West Bengal:** All show NER of 100%, suggesting complete enrolment of age-appropriate children at the primary level
- **Chandigarh (95.5%), Delhi (96.3%), Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (96.8%), and Jammu and Kashmir (97.5%):** These territories show near-universal age-appropriate enrolment

Strong Overall Participation (High ANER and ASER)

- **Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Maharashtra, Punjab, and West Bengal:** All show ASER of 100%, indicating complete participation of the 6-10 age group in education
- **Arunachal Pradesh (ANER: 100.4%), Chandigarh (ANER: 109.0%), and Himachal Pradesh (ANER: 110.3%):** These states/UTs show exceptional coverage when accounting for early advancement; they are also required to recheck their input data on enrolment and child population.

These states have effectively addressed fundamental access challenges at the primary level and serve as models for educational inclusion strategies.

States Requiring Significant Intervention

Several states show concerning gaps in primary education coverage:

Critical Enrolment Gaps (NER < 70%)

- **Uttar Pradesh (NER: 67.0%):** India's most populous state shows that one-third of age-appropriate children are not enrolled at the primary level
- **Madhya Pradesh (NER: 64.3%):** Shows the lowest NER among central states, with over 35% of age-appropriate children not enrolled at the correct level
- **Jharkhand (NER: 69.1%):** Demonstrates significant challenges in enrolling children at the appropriate age.

Low Overall Participation (Low ANER and ASER)

- **Gujarat (ANER: 74.0%, ASER: 76.4%):** Shows concerning gaps in overall educational participation for the primary age group
- **Jharkhand (ANER: 70.0%, ASER: 70.3%):** Approximately 30% of children aged 6-10 years are not participating in education
- **Bihar (ANER: 77.1%, ASER: 75.4%)** Shows significant challenges in overall educational inclusion.

These states require urgent, targeted interventions to address fundamental barriers to primary education access, without which India is unlikely to attain the status of universal school education by 2030.

States with Unusual Patterns

Several states exhibit unusual patterns that warrant closer examination:

Table 3: Enrolment Ratio at Upper Primary Level, 2023-24

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 11 to 13 Years
All India	89.7	66	76.2	89.2
A & N Islands	93.9	67.4	94	95
Andhra Pradesh	102.4	81.9	86.2	98.9
Arunachal Pradesh	89.3	54.4	69.3	79.4
Assam	92.3	52.8	53.7	89.9
Bihar	68.4	48.1	54.8	65.5
Chandigarh	121.1	94.6	117.5	100
Chhattisgarh	90.2	71.2	85.6	92.5
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	107.7	84.5	100.5	100.0
Delhi	116.9	100	102.3	100
Goa	115.8	93.3	93.4	100
Gujarat	92.1	82.7	83	97.4
Haryana	101	75.3	78.6	100
Himachal Pradesh	103.8	63.2	104.7	100
Jammu and Kashmir	77	52.4	71.1	69.8
Jharkhand	83.3	47.8	48.8	80.7
Karnataka	105	85	85.5	100
Kerala	100.6	81.6	82.2	100
Ladakh	89.4	64.8	69.2	89.5
Lakshadweep	80.3	69.7	77.8	77.7
Madhya Pradesh	82.4	58.7	72.3	82
Maharashtra	98.2	73.9	97.3	97.5
Manipur	91.2	60.3	79.7	84.5
Meghalaya	115.3	70.1	77.3	100
Mizoram	113.7	85.1	93.1	100
Nagaland	72	50.9	57.8	65.7
Odisha	96.7	70.1	91.3	92.7
Puducherry	101	92.9	98.8	100
Punjab	102.5	75.1	97.4	100
Rajasthan	90.9	66.1	71.8	92.9
Sikkim	78	55.2	69.3	70.8
Tamil Nadu	102.6	85.9	88.7	100
Telangana	110.6	84.4	88.2	100
Tripura	97.6	84	90.7	91.7
Uttar Pradesh	78.8	49.4	64.4	78.7
Uttarakhand	104.5	78.8	84.4	100
West Bengal	102.2	85.7	98	98.1

Source: UDISE+ 2023-24 * Including Daman & Diu

High GER with Moderate NER

- **Meghalaya** (GER: 178.4%, NER: 100.0%): The extremely high GER suggests substantial over-age enrolment
- **Mizoram** (GER: 151.8%, NER: 100.0%): Similar pattern of high over-age enrolment
- **Manipur** (GER: 136.8%, NER: 100.0%): Significant age-grade misalignment despite complete age-appropriate enrolment

Moderate GER with Low NER

- **Maharashtra** (GER: 103.3%, NER: 90.1%): The gap suggests moderate age-grade misalignment
- **Karnataka** (GER: 106.8%, NER: 92.9%): Similar pattern indicating potential grade repetition or late entry

These patterns highlight the complex challenges in ensuring enrollment and age-appropriate educational progression.

Regional Patterns

The data reveals distinct regional patterns:

Northeastern States: Most northeastern states show high GER values (often exceeding 100%) but more variable NER figures, suggesting high overall participation but challenges in age-appropriate enrolment. Meghalaya (GER: 178.4%), Mizoram (GER: 151.8%), and Manipur (GER: 136.8%) show exceptionally high GER values, indicating significant over-age enrolment.

Northern States: Northern states show mixed performance. Himachal Pradesh (GER: 106.1%, ANER: 110.3%) and Jammu and Kashmir (GER: 114.2%, NER: 97.5%) demonstrate strong outcomes, while Uttar Pradesh (GER: 82.9%, NER: 67.0%) faces significant challenges.

Western States: Western states show variable performance. Maharashtra performs relatively well (GER: 103.3%, NER: 90.1%), while Gujarat shows concerning gaps (GER: 80.4%, NER: 73.8%).

Central States: Central states generally show lower enrolment indicators. Madhya Pradesh (GER: 78.9%, NER: 64.3%) indicates particularly concerning figures, suggesting fundamental access challenges.

Southern States: Southern states generally show moderate to firm performance. Karnataka (GER: 106.8%, NER: 92.9%) and Telangana (GER: 111.2%, NER: 94.4%) show relatively strong indicators, while Kerala's figures (GER: 95.4%, NER: 83.2%) are surprisingly lower than might be expected given its historical educational advantage.

Union Territories: Most union territories show strong enrolment indicators, with Delhi (GER: 102.6%, NER: 96.3%), Chandigarh (GER: 100.6%, NER: 95.5%), and Puducherry (GER: 97.1%, NER: 92.4%) approaching universalization.

Table 4: Enrolment Ratio at Elementary Level, 2023-24

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment Ratio: 6 to 13 Years
All India	91.7	83.3	87.2	86.7
A & N Islands	89.5	85.8	96.3	95.2
Andhra Pradesh	98.6	90.5	92.1	91.6
Arunachal Pradesh	104.2	87.9	94.1	91.1
Assam	103.5	85.8	86.2	85.1
Bihar	77.7	70.6	73.2	71.6
Chandigarh	108.4	100.0	113.6	100.0
Chhattisgarh	89.7	82.8	88.1	88.5
Dadra and Nagar Haveli*	107.7		106.9	
Delhi	108.0	100.0	102.6	100.0
Goa	119.3	100.0	110.0	100.0
Gujarat	84.8	100.0	81.3	100.0
Haryana	94.7	81.2	87.1	84.1
Himachal Pradesh	105.2	85.8	108.9	87.2
Jammu and Kashmir	97.7	92.6	97.0	100.0
Jharkhand	89.0	88.8	74.6	91.3
Karnataka	106.1	74.2	98.5	74.4
Kerala	97.4	98.3	90.1	97.6
Ladakh	100.1	89.9	92.0	89.7
Lakshadweep	91.7	90.3	90.5	91.0
Madhya Pradesh	80.2	87.2	76.1	89.9
Maharashtra	101.3	71.1	102.3	76.3
Manipur	117.7	93.2	112.8	100.0
Meghalaya	153.0	100.0	128.4	100.0
Mizoram	136.4	100.0	121.3	100.0
Nagaland	84.7	100.0	77.3	100.0
Odisha	96.1	74.5	95.4	74.8
Puducherry	98.7	87.3	98.1	94.7
Punjab	105.6	95.8	104.8	97.0
Rajasthan	93.6	96.3	86.7	100.0
Sikkim	89.5	84.5	84.6	85.9
Tamil Nadu	98.4	78.4	93.4	81.7
Telangana	111.0	92.3	101.7	92.2
Tripura	111.1	100.0	107.3	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	81.4	100.0	77.5	100.0
Uttarakhand	109.9	72.0	101.5	77.7
West Bengal	106.7	99.3	108.3	100.0

Source: UDISE+ 2023-24 * Including Daman & Diu

4.2 Upper Primary Enrolment

The Unified District Information System for Education Plus 2023-24 data provides critical insights into the current state of upper primary education (ages 11-13) across India.

High-Performing States/UTs

Several states and union territories demonstrate promising enrolment metrics:

1. **Chandigarh, Delhi, and Goa** show exceptional performance across all indicators, near or above 100% in most metrics. Delhi's NER of 100% is particularly noteworthy, suggesting complete enrolment of age-appropriate children.
2. **Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Punjab** exhibit strong GER (over 100%) and relatively high NER values (75-86%), indicating robust educational systems with high retention rates.

Low-Performing States

Several states face significant challenges:

1. **Bihar** shows the most concerning metrics with a GER of 68.4% and NER of 48.1%, indicating that over half of age-appropriate children are not enrolled at the upper primary level.
2. **Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Assam, and Nagaland** exhibit NER values below 53%, suggesting substantial educational access issues despite varying GER figures.
3. **Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, and Ladakh** present moderate to significant challenges across multiple metrics.

4.3 Elementary Level

The elementary-level metrics are noticeably more substantial than the upper primary figures alone. There is a 17.3 percentage point difference between elementary NER (83.3%) and upper primary NER (66%). However, states are at different levels of development, details of which are presented below:

High-Performing States/UTs

Several regions demonstrate exceptional performance:

1. **Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram** report 100% NER, indicating complete enrolment of age-appropriate children.
2. **Meghalaya** shows an exceptionally high GER (153%), suggesting significant over-age and under-age enrolment.
3. **West Bengal** (99.3% NER), **Punjab** (95.8% NER), and **Manipur** (93.2% NER) demonstrate strong performance approaching universal enrolment.

Despite overall improvement, significant challenges remain:

Table 5: Enrolment Ratio at Secondary Level, 2023-24

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	Adjusted-NER	Age-specific Enrolment: Ratio: 15 to 16 Years
All India	77.4	48.3	60.5	77.0
A & N Islands	91.9	50.2	87.3	89.4
Andhra Pradesh	95.9	67.2	71.6	92.9
Arunachal Pradesh	67.8	34.7	49.4	67.2
Assam	76.7	33.8	34.2	81.4
Bihar	45.6	27.8	37.5	49.6
Chandigarh	109.7	72.2	106.8	100.0
Chhattisgarh	76.2	49.1	63.2	69.2
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	105.0	71.4	87.4	98.4
Delhi	102.9	81.6	83.5	100.0
Goa	108.1	77.1	77.2	100.0
Gujarat	74.4	64.4	67.6	83.5
Haryana	89.9	59.8	64.4	93.5
Himachal Pradesh	100.1	39.0	91.7	92.3
Jammu and Kashmir	65.4	34.4	52.7	56.7
Jharkhand	62.2	30.6	32.2	77.0
Karnataka	100.9	72.8	73.2	100.0
Kerala	98.9	71.5	72.3	98.7
Ladakh	85.9	48.2	50.5	75.9
Lakshadweep	72.7	59.7	74.1	74.4
Madhya Pradesh	67.0	39.8	53.4	64.1
Maharashtra	92.6	55.3	80.8	82.5
Manipur	75.9	43.2	61.4	68.8
Meghalaya	84.7	41.5	46.4	88.9
Mizoram	98.1	61.7	67.6	93.0
Nagaland	60.2	37.1	43.5	57.5
Odisha	82.1	47.4	69.9	73.7
Puducherry	99.5	86.9	94.3	97.4
Punjab	92.1	53.3	82.0	90.2
Rajasthan	80.2	49.1	57.8	85.7
Sikkim	74.2	43.5	58.4	66.4
Tamil Nadu	97.5	74.2	78.7	99.7
Telangana	97.2	66.4	71.2	100.0
Tripura	79.2	61.6	68.5	74.8
Uttar Pradesh	63.8	30.7	50.7	64.9
Uttarakhand	93.0	63.3	72.0	98.0
West Bengal	101.3	68.1	79.5	84.4

Source: UDISE+ 2023-24 * Including Daman & Diu

1. **Bihar** continues to show the lowest performance with a GER of 77.7% and NER of 70.6%, although these figures represent an improvement over its upper primary metrics.

2. **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat** show an interesting pattern of 100% NER despite relatively low GER values, which requires further investigation as it may indicate data anomalies.
3. **Maharashtra** (71.1% NER) and **Uttarakhand** (72% NER) show surprisingly low NER values despite GER values over 100%, suggesting significant age-grade misalignment.

Analysis of Data Inconsistencies

Several data points warrant careful interpretation:

1. **Uttar Pradesh** shows 100% NER despite having 81.4% GER, which is mathematically unusual as NER is typically lower than GER; this suggests potential data collection or reporting issues and
2. **Gujarat, Nagaland,** and several other states show similar patterns of NER exceeding or equaling GER, which contradicts the expected relationship between these metrics.

4.4 Analysis of Secondary Level

The UDISE+ 2023-24 data for secondary education (ages 14-15, typically grades 9-10) reveals concerning trends in educational participation. The figures indicate a significant decline in enrolment metrics compared to elementary and upper primary levels, highlighting a critical challenge in retaining students through the secondary education phase.

High-Performing States/UTs

1. **Puducherry** emerges as the top performer with an NER of 86.9%, followed by **Delhi** (81.6%) and **Goa** (77.1%).
2. **Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala** maintain strong performance with NER values above 70%, continuing their pattern of educational strength.
3. **Dadra & Nagar Haveli** (71.4% NER) shows notably strong performance for a region with historically moderate educational outcomes.

States of Concern

1. **Bihar** shows the most alarming metrics with a NER of 27.8% and a GER of 45.6%, indicating that nearly three-quarters of age-appropriate children are not enrolled in secondary education.
2. **Assam** (33.8% NER), **Uttar Pradesh** (30.7% NER), and **Jharkhand** (30.6% NER) demonstrate similarly concerning enrolment patterns.
3. **Himachal Pradesh** presents an unusual case with a GER of 100.1% but a NER of only 39%, suggesting significant age-grade misalignment despite high overall enrolment.

NER-GER Gap Analysis

The substantial gap between GER and NER (29.1 percentage points nationally) reveals extensive age-grade misalignment at the secondary level, which suggests:

Table 6: Enrolment Ratio at Higher Secondary Level: 2023-24

State/ UT	Gross Enrolment Ratio	Net Enrolment Ratio	ASER: Age 16 to 17 Years		
			Boys	Girls	Total
All India	56.2	33.8	74.3	76.7	75.5
A & N Islands	85.2	44.7	44.8	50.7	47.5
Andhra Pradesh	65.4	43.3	64.4	64.2	64.3
Arunachal Pradesh	45.9	22.8	38	39.1	38.5
Assam	37.6	18.2	54.2	64.7	59.4
Bihar	30	16.2	22.8	26.9	24.7
Chandigarh	109.3	71.2	71	82.5	75.8
Chhattisgarh	51.9	34.1	35.9	43.1	39.4
Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	54.5	33.9	35.6	53.4	42.5
Delhi	83.2	65	80.6	88.4	84.2
Goa	92.2	65.3	90.4	100	95.6
Gujarat	43.9	34.7	44.5	47	45.7
Haryana	65.6	44.1	69.7	69.2	69.5
Himachal Pradesh	81.6	29.5	31.5	29.8	30.7
Jammu and Kashmir	42.8	21.7	26.7	27.1	26.9
Jharkhand	41.3	19.3	49.2	51	50.1
Karnataka	58.5	42	64.9	72.7	68.6
Kerala	88.1	64.2	89.1	92.3	90.7
Ladakh	46.4	26.3	53.9	59.3	56.6
Lakshadweep	71.6	54.5	58.8	50.9	54.8
Madhya Pradesh	43.9	25.7	32.5	33.5	33
Maharashtra	69.2	40.4	44	42.2	43.2
Manipur	56.4	33.9	40.7	40.3	40.5
Meghalaya	39.8	20.2	47.4	61.3	54.2
Mizoram	53.3	35.8	57	60.9	58.9
Nagaland	40.4	25.5	36.6	41.4	38.9
Odisha	58.6	32	34.9	35.8	35.4
Puducherry	90.9	79.1	76.4	89.1	82.4
Punjab	79.2	45	53	50	51.7
Rajasthan	62	37.4	61.4	58.5	60
Sikkim	57.4	33.5	43.1	45.8	44.4
Tamil Nadu	82.9	63.4	77.6	85.5	81.5
Telangana	72.3	46.8	70.7	72.1	71.3
Tripura	56.6	44.5	49.2	54.6	51.8
Uttar Pradesh	53.2	23.8	35.2	33.7	34.5
Uttarakhand	77.5	53.5	72.2	76.5	74.1
West Bengal	66.1	43.6	50.8	59.9	55.2

Source: UDISE+ 2023-24 * Including Daman & Diu

1. High rates of grade repetition
2. Delayed enrolment in secondary education
3. Significant over-age attendance
4. Potential systemic inefficiencies in education progression

4.5 Analysis of Higher Secondary

The UDISE+ 2023-24 data for higher secondary education (grades 11-12, typically ages 16-17) reveals a further decline in enrolment compared to previous educational levels. The figures indicate that while approximately three-quarters of 16-17-year-olds are enrolled in some form of education, only one-third are in age-appropriate higher secondary classes.

The national higher secondary NER (33.8%) represents a further 14.5 percentage point drop from the secondary level NER (48.3%), continuing the pattern of declining enrolment as students progress through the education system; the consistent pattern reveals systemic challenges in educational progression and retention across India.

High-Performing States/UTs

1. **Puducherry** maintains its leadership position with a 79.1% NER, significantly outperforming all other regions.
2. **Delhi** (65% NER), **Goa** (65.3% NER), and **Kerala** (64.2% NER) continue to demonstrate strong educational outcomes.
3. **Tamil Nadu** (63.4% NER) and **Chandigarh** (71.2% NER) complete the list of top performers.

States with Significant Challenges

1. **Bihar** shows extremely concerning metrics with just 16.2% NER, indicating that less than one-fifth of age-appropriate students are enrolled in higher secondary education.
2. **Assam** (18.2% NER), **Jharkhand** (19.3% NER), and **Jammu and Kashmir** (21.7% NER) demonstrate similarly alarming enrolment patterns.
3. **Himachal Pradesh** continues its unusual pattern with a relatively high GER (81.6%) but low NER (29.5%), suggesting persistent age-grade misalignment issues.

GER-NER Gap Analysis

The substantial gap between GER and NER (22.4 percentage points nationally) continues to indicate widespread age-grade misalignment, particularly:

1. The gap is most pronounced in states like Himachal Pradesh (52.1 percentage points), indicating severe progression inefficiencies
2. Even high-performing states show significant gaps, suggesting systemic rather than state-specific challenges
3. The widening gap at higher educational levels points to cumulative inefficiencies throughout the educational journey

Table 7: Age-specific Projected Child Population

Year	6 to 10 Years			11 to 13 years		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2019-20	62093000	56354000	118446400	37587800	34760400	72346800
2020-21	62147000	55998000	118144200	37063400	34386200	71448400
2021-22	62201000	55642000	117842000	36539000	34012000	70550000
2022-23	62278594	54618540	116897134	36978787	33420625	70402494
2023-24	61250534	54763343	116013877	36806827	33541400	70348227
Change over the Previous Year			-8,83,257			-54,267
	14 to 15 Years		Total	Total 16 to 17 Years		
2020-21			48900200	50056400		
2021-22			48425000	49647000		
2022-23			47919989	48887349		
2023-24			47636171	48295923		
Change over the Previous Year			-2,83,818	-5,91,426		

Source: UDISE+ various years reports, DoSE&L, Ministry of Education

The higher secondary education metrics present the most challenging picture for achieving universalization by 2030:

1. With a national NER of only 33.8%, approximately two-thirds of age-appropriate youth remain outside higher secondary education.
2. The consistent pattern of declining enrolment through educational levels suggests deeply embedded systemic challenges.
3. Even high-performing states like Kerala and Tamil Nadu have not achieved NER values above 65%, indicating that universal higher secondary education faces challenges across all regions.

Given current trajectories, achieving universal higher secondary education by 2030 appears highly improbable without transformative policy interventions and unprecedented implementation effectiveness.

Concluding Observations

The analysis of enrolment trends in India from 2020-21 to 2023-24 reveals significant challenges and disparities in achieving universal school education. While certain states and regions have made commendable progress, the overall trends indicate declining enrolment ratios, particularly at the primary & upper primary levels. This decline is alarming, affecting foundational learning and long-term educational outcomes. The steep drop in primary-level enrolment suggests that systemic changes in data collection methodologies may have contributed to reported figures, but it also raises concerns about actual participation.

At all levels, the persistent gap between the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) highlights age-grade misalignment, late entry, and grade repetition issues. The disparities become even more pronounced at the secondary and higher secondary levels, where dropout rates remain high, and only about one-third of the age-appropriate population is enrolled in higher secondary education. These trends pose a significant barrier to India's goal of achieving universal school education by 2030.

The state-wise analysis further underscores stark regional disparities. While northeastern and some southern states have achieved near-universal enrolment at lower levels, states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh continue to struggle with low NER, indicating that many children remain out of school. Additionally, high GER in some states suggests substantial over-age enrolment, pointing to inefficiencies in the education system.

The findings indicate an urgent need for targeted policy interventions. Strengthening early childhood education, improving transition rates from primary to secondary levels, addressing regional disparities, and ensuring data accuracy must be prioritized. Without these measures, achieving the objectives of universal school education and ensuring equitable access to quality learning opportunities will remain a distant goal.

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