Education and Learning: Round 4 Preliminary Findings

Young Lives

Preliminary Findings from the 2013 Young Lives Survey (Round 4): United Andhra Pradesh

This fact sheet presents preliminary findings from the fourth round of the Young Lives survey of children in Andhra Pradesh[1] in 2013. It reports on children's learning and some of the changes that have taken places in key education indicators for our sample children over the eleven years since the first round of data collection in 2002. Enrolment is now almost universal and only 3% of children are not attending school at age 12. This improvement in access to elementary-level education has particularly benefited girls and Scheduled Caste children. We also find that the number of 12-year-old children attending private schools has increased from 32% in 2006 to 41% in 2013, but gaps in are widening between boys attending private (46%) and girls (34%), and between children from better-off households and poorer children (only 15% in private school). When we look at achievement levels, we see little difference between when boys and girls, but inequalities emerging with children from rural areas, from poorer households and whose mothers had less education continuing to fare worse than their peers. There are worrying signs that learning standards have fallen since 2006, with only half the children able to answer our maths questions correctly, compared with two-thirds of children in 2006.

The policy context for education in India

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act), ratified in April 2010 made it a constitutional obligation for all 36 states and union territories in India to provide access to free and compulsory education in a local school for all children from the age of 6 to 14. Recent years have witnessed a huge increase in enrolment at elementary level across the country, and there is indisputably a growth of private schools, not only in urban areas but also across rural India. National statistics reveal that in 2012–13, almost 200 million students were enrolled in elementary school (Grades 1 to 8): 65% in government or public schools and 35% at private aided or unaided schools (DISE 2012–13). In united Andhra Pradesh[1] the total enrolment of students in elementary schools was 11 million, 48% of whom were attending private aided and unaided schools.

Recent years have seen an increasing focus in education debates on 'learning levels' and on the successful transition from primary to upper primary school. This fact sheet presents some preliminary findings from the Young Lives Round 4 survey conducted in 2013 in united Andhra Pradesh, focusing on the Younger Cohort of 2,000 children aged 12 years. Drawing on longitudinal data, we compare educational outcomes for the 12-year-olds in 2013 with outcomes of the Older Cohort children who were aged 12 in 2006. Thus we are able to show changes in enrolment and the increase in private schooling over that period of time, as well as report learning levels of children in upper primary grades by wealth level and social group.

Key findings

- 97% of all 12-year-olds were enrolled in elementary schools in 2013, up from 89% in 2006.
- This increase is particularly significant for girls and Scheduled Caste children, with 97% of 12-year-old girls enrolled in 2013 (compared with just 87% in 2006) and 97% of SC children (compared with 85% in 2006).
- The number of children attending private schools increased from 32% in 2006 to 41% in 2013.
- Gaps in private school enrolment are widening between boys (46%) and girls (34%), different caste groups, and children from poorer households (15%) or better-off households (72%).
- Comparison of scores in maths tests shows that that learning levels have declined by 14 percentage points for 12-year-olds in 2013 compared with children of the same age in 2006.

1 The state as it existed since 1956 before its bifurcation into two new states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on 2 June 2014.

2 The Young Lives sample was designed in 2001 to cover the three agro-climatic regions of Andhra Pradesh – Coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema and Telangana. See the accompanying Methods factsheet for further details.

School enrolment, school type and grade completion

Enrolment levels: India has made huge strides in providing elementary-level education to children across the length and breadth of the country. The Young Lives data also reveal that there has been an improvement in enrolment levels with 97% of the children attending school at the age of 12, only fractionally fewer than during our Round 3 survey in 2006 which found 99% of the children (then aged 8) enrolled in school. This is indeed good news, since it shows less than 3% of children are dropping out between primary and upper primary levels. And no major gaps in enrolment are found across gender, caste, mother's education level, household socio-economic status or urban/rural location.

Private schooling: Our longitudinal analysis shows how private school enrolment is increasing (from 32% of the 12-year-olds in 2006 to 41% in 2013). At the same time, the proportion of the Younger Cohort at private school decreased on 45% of the children at age 8 (in 2009) to 41% at age 12 in 2013. This suggests both an age effect (younger children are more likely to be in private schools than older children), and a time effect (increasing prevalence of private schools over that 4-year period). Private schooling is clearly biased towards boys, socially advantaged groups, better-off households, and urban children.

Huge disparities also exist related to after school extra tuition and annual expenditure on fees across social groups and by gender. It is interesting to note that the number of children receiving extra tuition decreased from 18% in 2006 (Older Cohort) to 11% in 2013 (Younger Cohort). This may be related to the implementation of the RTE Act, which prohibits teachers in government schools from offering tuition, or the high cost might also be a deterrent.

Grade progression: The Young Lives cohort data also enables us to analyse how children are progressing through school and to investigate how many children are over-age for grade (i.e. children who have repeated a class). Since 12-year-old children should normally be in Grade 6 if they started primary school at age 6 (Grade 1), the Round 4 data gives important information on grade progression. While 11% of the Older Cohort children were found to have repeated a grade by age 12 in 2006, this has increased further to 18% for the Younger Cohort in 2013 (see Table 1). Despite a 'no detention' policy adopted by the Government, which means that no child should be held back between Grades 1 and 8, our in-depth case study interviews show that children who moved into private schools were more likely to repeat a grade than their counterparts in government schools (Galab el al. 2011). The fact that 23% of boys were over-age compared with 13% of girls, and a very large proportion of Scheduled Tribe children (31%), is an important finding requiring further attention.

In line with the in-depth interviews, our survey also showed that a majority of over-age children were in private schools (23%) rather than government schools (15%). We had already seen large number of children moving schools in earlier survey rounds, and now found that 15% of the children moved schools in the period 2009 and 2013. It is worth examining whether this school mobility is caused by economic conditions or quality of teaching.

Table 1. *Children over-age for grade in school (%)*

	Older Cohort (age 12 in 2006)	Younger Cohort (age 12 in 2013)
Average Total	11.1	18.2
Gender		
Boys	10.9	22.9
Girls	11.3	12.6
Caste		
SC	14.6	16.8
ST	17.2	31.2
BC	9.3	15.9
OC	8.7	15.2
Type of school		
Private	14.2	23.1
Public	9.8	15.3

Note: Total number of over-age children: 336 (18.2%) in R4 (2013).

Schooling and learning outcomes of 12-year-olds

Young Lives gathers information about children's learning achievement through language and maths tests conducted in each survey round.

When we look in more detail at different groups of children, we see little difference in how well girls and boys are doing, but large differences between Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children and other groups. There are clear indications that children from better-off households are doing better: children in private schools had higher test scores than children in government schools, children in urban areas, and children whose mother had had more schooling. There is a gap of 33 percentage points in average math test scores and 19 percentage points in average Telugu test scores between the children whose mothers had no education and those whose mothers had more than 10 years of education.

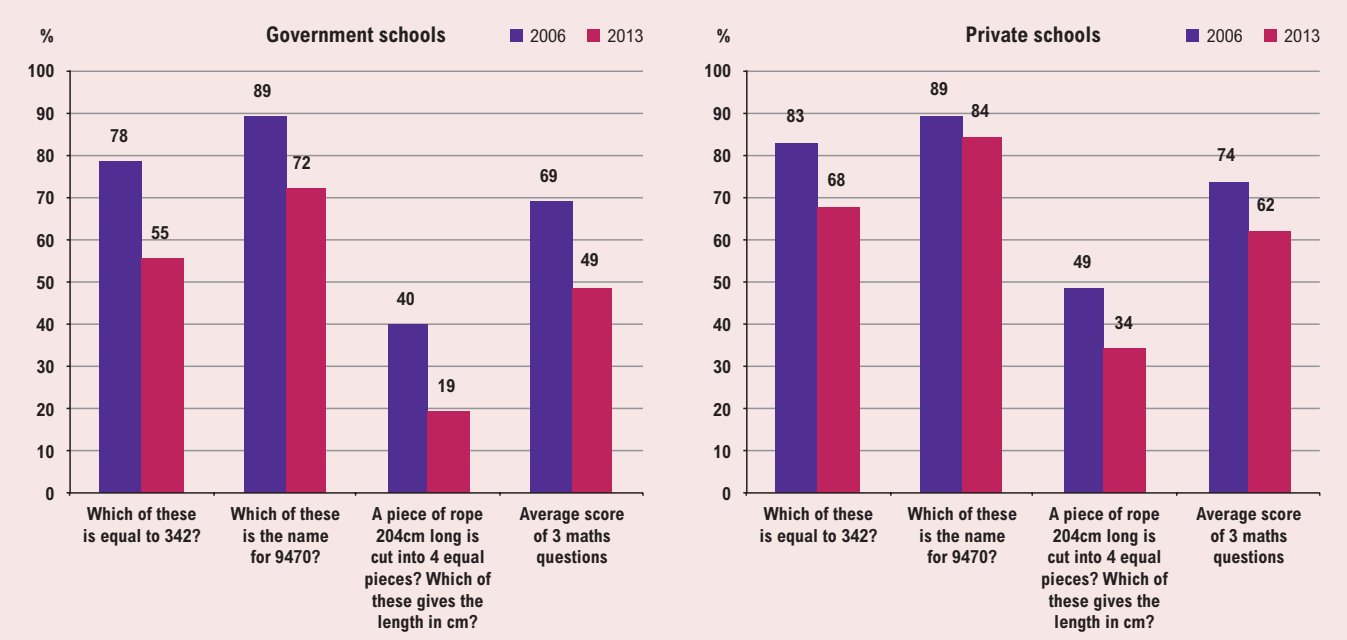
Changes in schooling and learning

The unique design of Young Lives with two cohorts of children eight years apart in age allows comparison of how children were doing at the same age, allowing us to see the impact of changes in the environment around them between 2006 and 2013.

Generally there is a higher level of enrolment and of private schooling among 12-year-olds in 2013 than in 2006, irrespective of gender, socio-economic group, or rural–urban location. The increase in enrolment is particularly significant for girls and Scheduled Caste children: 97% of girls are now enrolled at age 12 (compared with 87% in 2006) and 97% of SC children (85% in 2006).

3 Full details are given in data sheets on the Young Lives website: http://www.younglives.org.uk/where-we-work/AP-and-Telangana

Figure 1. *Percentage of children correctly answering maths questions*



Private school enrolment has increased from 32% in 2006 to 41% in 2013 and is highest for Other Caste children, 71% of whom are now attending private schools. Greater gaps between children according to gender, caste and household socio-economic status are now evident. For example, 72% of children from the better-off third of households are now in private school, compared to 59% in 2006. It is important to point out that private schools are far from homogeneous and we notice huge discrepancies between average annual tuition fees paid by better-off households (Rs.8,113) and those paid by poorer households (Rs.1,388).

While parents have high hopes for their children's education and parental aspirations for 'English medium' education for their children has been one of the driving forces towards private schooling. However, the percentage of 12-year-olds answering the same maths questions correctly in 2006 and 2013 shows that that learning levels have declined over that time. While 67% of the children in 2006 answered the questions correctly, this has fallen to 53% in 2013 – a decline of 14 percentage points. Gaps in test scores persisted – with children from rural areas, from poorer households, and children whose mothers had less education all continuing to fare worse than their peers.

Children in private schools continued to do better in our maths tests, with the average gap between children in government schools increasing from 5 percentage points in 2006 to 13 percentage points in 2013 (see Figure 1). This fact sheet does not seek to identify why this may be the case – but other papers from Young Lives already analyse teaching and learning processes within schools and differences in the intakes between government and private schools which are likely to affect results. We will explore this in more detail in forthcoming analysis.

Conclusions: from access to learning

Undoubtedly there has been considerable progress made in addressing inequalities in school enrolment in the past few years, especially the gender gap. For the Younger Cohort of children we find 97% are in school at age 12 years, and that fewer have dropped out of school than the Older Cohort children at age 12. However, inequalities related to segregation of the poorest children into government schools, and the dip in learning levels across both private and government schools are both a real cause of concern. This finds resonance in the Annual Achievement Survey (2012) conducted by NCERT for students studying in Grade 8, which found that children from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Categories, scored significantly lower than other students. We need to dedicate concerted efforts to ensure that the focus moves from education 'access' to 'learning outcomes' at all levels, in particular giving due attention to quality teaching processes and the learning environment in our schools.

To make sure that equity is clearly linked with quality, we must focus efforts on the most marginalised children, particularly those in rural areas, from disadvantaged social groups and the poorest households. Improving teachers' pre-service training is essential, and teachers must be provided with avenues for continuous professional development. To ensure a strong foundation for later learning, we need to focus on early childhood care and education and ensure that the recent National Policy on Early Childhood Care and Education is implemented effectively.

Table 2: *Schooling and learning outcomes of 12-year-old children in united Andhra Pradesh*

	Children enrolled in school (%)		Children attending private schools (%)		Children receiving extra-tuition (%)		Average score on 3 Maths questions		Average raw score in Maths test (%)	Average raw score in Telugu test (%)	Average annual tuition fee (Rs)	Number of children	
	2006	2013	2006	2013	2006	2013	2006	2013	2013	2013	2013	OC in 2006	YC in 2013
Gender													
Male	91.2	97.3	36.1	46.5	20.3	11.2	68.3	53.2	43.7	54.9	4,919	465	1,030
Female	87.3	96.6	28.8	33.8	16.7	10.7	66.2	53.1	43.7	56.9	3,659	487	885
Child's ethnic group or caste													
Scheduled Castes	85.3	97.2	21.3	22.2	9.2	5.5	60.7	48.9	38.9	53.4	2,014	204	352
Scheduled Tribes	86.8	96.1	21.7	21.3	10.9	4.0	75.1	47.0	37.1	53.6	1,707	106	283
Backward Classes	88.4	96.4	30.0	40.7	20.6	14.0	65.3	53.2	43.9	55.2	4,403	439	892
Other Castes	96.1	98.7	52.3	70.8	26.2	14.1	73.8	61.2	52.4	61.3	8,133	203	388
Type of school													
Government	–	–	–	–	14.3	8.4	68.9	48.8	39.0	54.0	181	573	1,102
Private	–	–	–	–	26.9	14.8	73.6	61.9	52.7	59.5	10,404	275	755
Maternal education level													
No education	84.3	94.8	23.4	24.4	11.0	7.8	62.7	45.3	35.7	50.7	2,273	572	984
Up to 5 years	95.4	99.1	24.7	34.7	21.1	12.1	69.9	53.9	45.0	57.3	3,315	174	343
6 to 10 years	97.6	99.2	55.1	64.0	34.0	17.3	76.0	62.6	53.1	61.6	6,815	163	470
More than 10 years	97.5	100.0	82.1	94.1	38.5	7.6	85.0	78.5	68.9	70.2	13,828	40	118
Household wealth level (YL wealth index)													
Bottom tercile	81.8	95.8	15.7	15.2	5.8	6.0	64.5	45.6	35.2	51.3	1,388	319	644
Middle tercile	91.5	96.7	20.4	34.5	14.5	12.2	63.7	52.8	44.6	56.3	3,501	316	638
Top tercile	94.3	98.4	58.7	72.0	33.4	14.7	73.3	61.2	51.4	59.9	8,113	317	628
Urban or rural location													
Urban	95.2	99.1	68.4	77.6	42.5	17.2	71.8	59.5	49.4	58.6	8,744	230	532
Rural	87.3	96.2	20.0	26.0	10.2	8.5	65.8	50.7	41.5	54.8	2,590	722	1,383
Regions (before partition)													
Coastal Andhra	90.3	97.5	29.4	37.2	24.4	12.2	77.9	59.3	48.7	60.0	3,856	331	671
Rayalaseema	88.7	97.4	25.2	36.8	21.1	13.7	62.8	54.4	46.4	57.8	4,300	283	577
Telangana	88.5	96.1	32.4	40.9	10.4	7.3	60.2	45.9	36.3	49.7	4,864	338	667
Average of full sample	**89.2**	**97.0**	**32.4**	**40.7**	**18.5**	**11.0**	**67.2**	**53.2**	**43.7**	**55.8**	**4,338**		
Number of children	**952**	**1,915**	**848**	**1,857**	**849**	**1,859**	**924**	**1,904**	**1,904**	**1,858**	**1,859**	**952**	**1,915**

Note: Data from the Older Cohort (c.1000 children) aged 12 in Round 2 of the Young Lives survey (2006) and the Younger Cohort (c.2000 children) aged 12 in Round 4 (2013).

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

S. Galab, S. Vijay Kumar, P. Prudhvikar Reddy, Renu Singh and Uma Vennam (2011) *The Impact of Growth on Childhood Poverty: Initial Findings from India*, Young Lives Round 3 Survey Report, Oxford: Young Lives.

Zoe James and Martin Woodhead (2014) 'Choosing and Changing Schools in India's Private and Government Sectors', *Oxford Review of Education* 40.1: 73-90.

Abhijeet Singh (2013) *Size and Sources of the Private School Premium in Test Scores in India*, Working Paper 98, Oxford: Young Lives.

Renu Singh (2013) *Professional Development of Teachers: The Need of the Hour*, Young Lives India Policy Brief 4.

Renu Singh and Sudipa Sarkar (2012) *Teaching Quality Counts: How Student Outcomes Relate to Quality of Teaching in Private and Public Schools in India*, Working Paper 91, Oxford: Young Lives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CREDITS

This is the second of a series of factsheets giving a preliminary overview of some of the key data emerging from Round 4 of the Young Lives household and child survey. Since the state of Andhra Pradesh where we are working was divided in 2014, we have produced separate factsheets for the new states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, as well as this factsheet reporting on our original sample in the undivided state (as it was at the time of our survey). The factsheets – which cover *Young Lives Survey Design and Sampling*; *Education and Learning*; *Health and Nutrition*; and *Youth and Development* – were written by Professor S. Galab, P. Prudhvikar Reddy and Renu Singh. Prudhvikar Reddy coordinated the survey fieldwork and we would like to thank our fieldwork teams (particularly the fieldwork supervisors) for their efforts in minimising attrition, K.T. Shyamsunder our Data Manager, and Maria Franco Gavonel and Protap Mukherjee for support with initial data analysis. In particular, we thank the Young Lives children and their families for their willingness to be part of our sample and answer our many questions.

In India, Young Lives is a partnership between the Centre for Economic and Social Studies in Hyderabad (CESS), Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalam (Women's University) in Tirupati and Save the Children. Young Lives is funded by UK aid from the Department for International Development (DFID) and co-funded from 2010 to 2014 by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from 2014 to 2015 by Irish Aid. The views expressed are those of the author(s). They are not necessarily those of, or endorsed by, Young Lives, the University of Oxford, DFID or other funders.

Funded by

UKaid from the British people

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Irish Aid
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Young Lives in India
Capital Trust House, 47 Community Centre
Friends Colony, New Delhi-110065, India

E-mail: Indiayounglives@gmail.com