

8.4cr kids don't attend school: Census

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HARD LESSONS FOR INDIA

WORKING STUDENTS
(5-17 years) 78 lakh

Working around the year



Working up to 6 months



Male 57% Female 43%

OUT OF SCHOOL STUDENTS
(5-17 years) 8.4 cr

Working



Not Working



Male 51%

Female 49%

Source: Census 2011

ce because patriarchal attitudes and lack of jobs force them into domestic work.

Of working students, some of them as young as six years old, 68% are into marginal work. That's work which lasts

for six months or less — predominantly agricultural or artisanal in nature. But they also serve as unskilled helpers in diverse enterprises. Main work, or work that continues year round, is the fate of the remaining

32%. How this affects the child's learning process is yet to be studied but it surely is not doing them any favours.

The other equally shocking dimension is that 8.4 crore children don't go to school at all — that's nearly 20% of the age group covered under the Right to Education Act.

Boys and girls make up nearly the same proportion of the out-of-school segment. But, contrary to popular perception that children don't go to school because they are forced to work, the Census data shows that just 19% of them are working somewhere. But it's not as if the remaining 81% don't have to work. Many of them could well be doing domestic chores — from fetching water to lending a hand in whatever vocation their elders are engaged in.