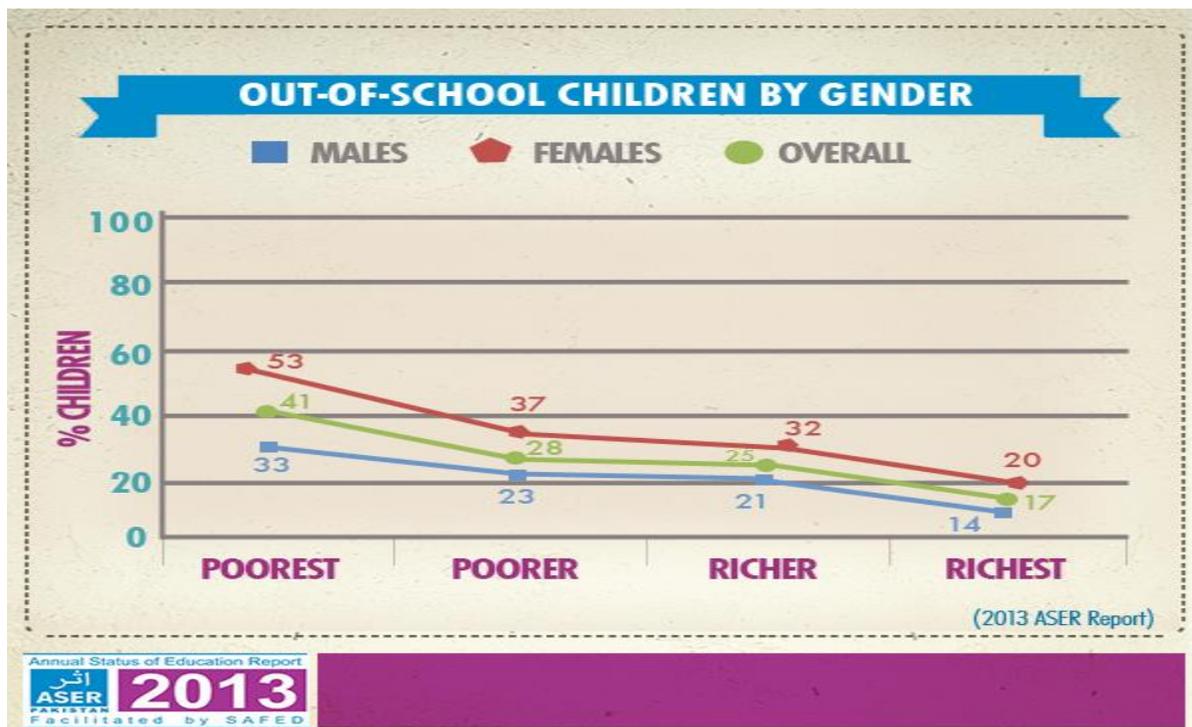


What can help Pakistan accelerate current education trends for quality, access and gender equity from pre-primary to secondary education? Build your argument based on evidence, experience and research?

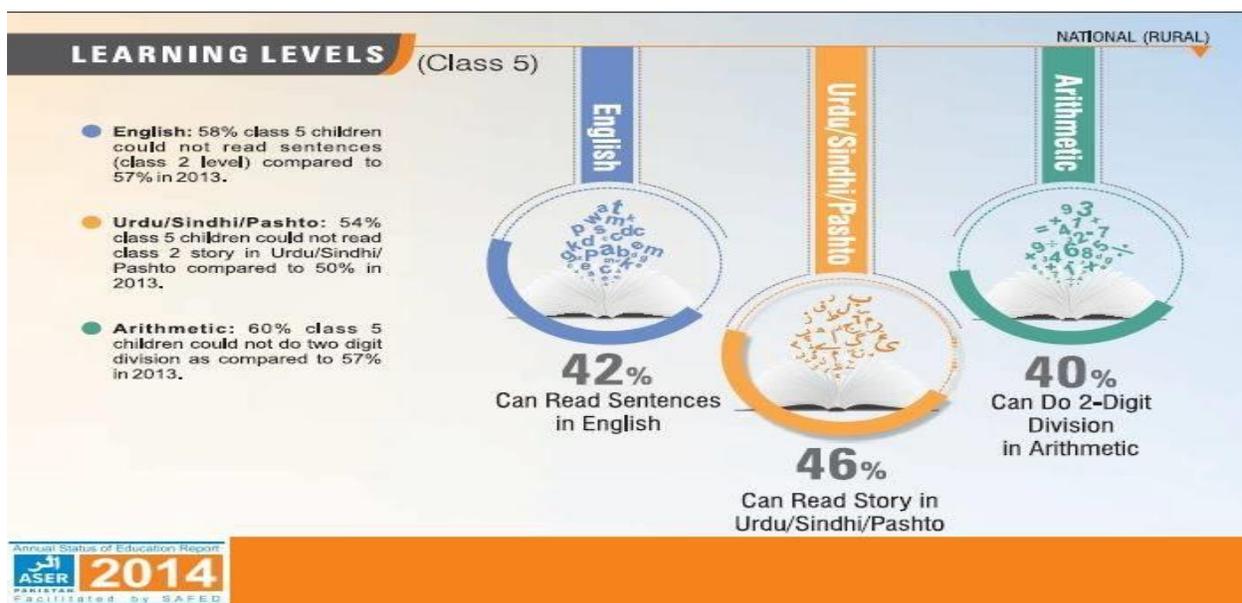
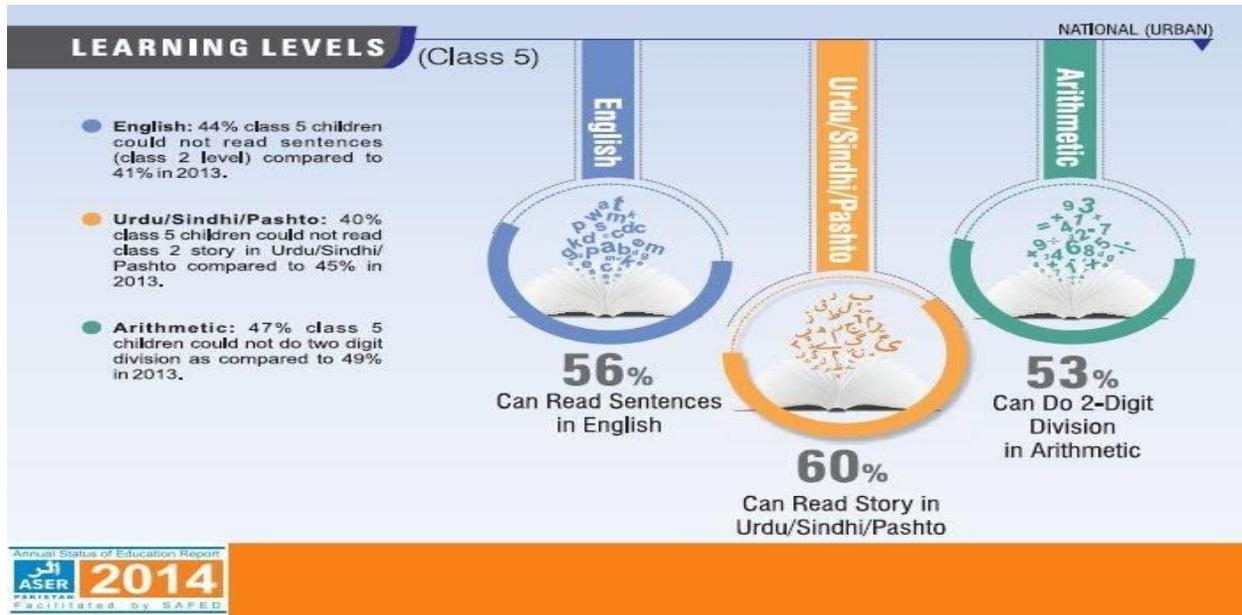
Education strengthens the overall economy and social status of a country. The economic and social progress of a country depends on quality of education for its citizens. The state of Pakistan with earlier economic and political crises and has performed badly for the supervision of development arena of education. Pakistan a conflicted effected country is among the countries where largest numbers of children are out of school. It is obvious that Government of Pakistan has failed in fulfilling its obligation to provide free and compulsory education to all children of age 6-16 years as per Article 25 –A.

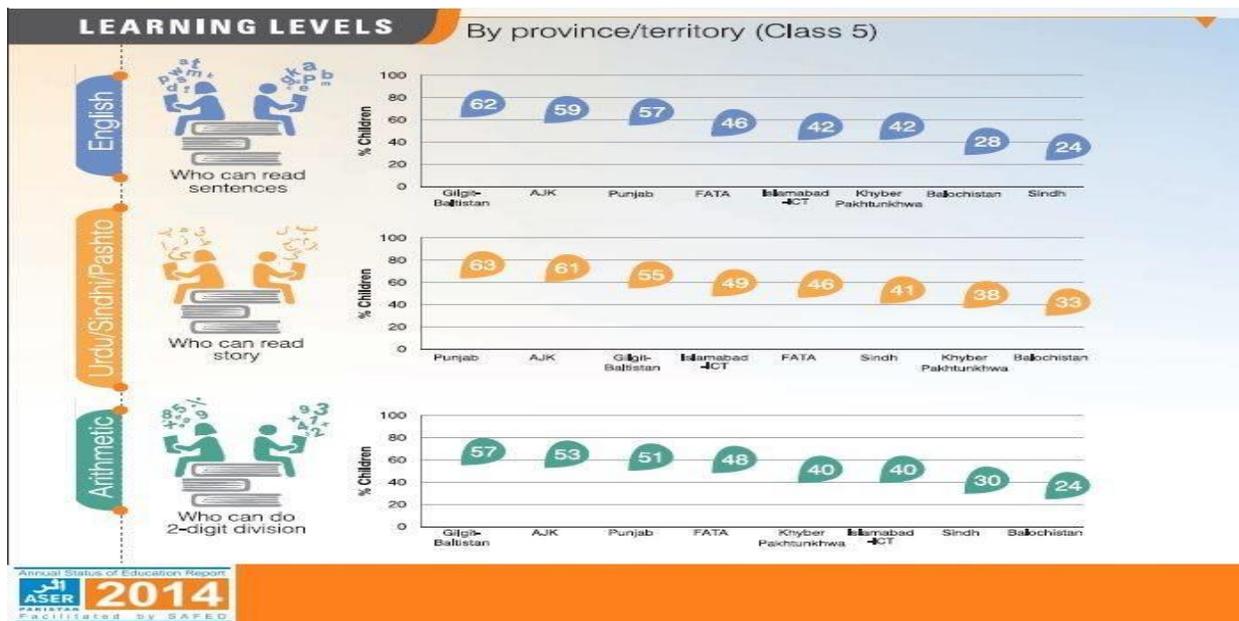
ASER 2014 which covered data from a large population of 144 rural and 21 urban districts shows alarming facts behind the downfall of education system in Pakistan. The statistics show that 21 percent children of age 6-16 years are out of school. With a high gender disparity, in rural Pakistan, 11 percent out of school children are girls.



The reason of education dilemma in Pakistan is not changing due to many

reasons. Right to education which not only covers access to schools also put light on quality learning. Where on one side the number of school going children enrollment increased in 2013 was a way to progress, access to quality education became a questionable phenomenon. There is no significant improvement in learning competencies of school children. Pre primary education enrollment decreased from 41 % (2013) to 39 % (2014), it shows that there is no plan for children who need early childhood education.





ASER 2012-2014 shows that Sindh and Balochistan lag behind in learning competencies as compared to other provinces. It also shows that Punjab with an outstanding performance is leading among all provinces.

This indicates the poor performance of governing bodies of other provinces especially of Sindh and Balochistan. There are many indicators behind these circumstances such as teachers' professional qualification, pedagogical content knowledge, large class size and high STRs, multi grade teaching especially in rural areas and facilities available in school which affect the learning abilities of students. It is observable that quality of learning depends both on teachers and students. Various reports indicate that teachers in Pakistan are less professionally qualified which extremely affected and vitiated learning abilities in students.

Teachers in Pakistan have good qualification and professional diplomas, but the situation shows that teachers do not use effective teaching methods in classrooms. Government schools which receive more financial grant than private schools have the same facilities, but still not showing any development.

The province of Balochistan which suffers from lower economic rate face many problems in implementing policies related to Article 25- A. This is the reason that where Punjab government spent 60 % of its funds on critical issue of recovering facilities in girls school, the Balochistan government did not stand up due to limited finances. Other than this bad infrastructure, poor quality of PTC and CT,

large distances between schools and residential places of teachers is reason for the poor teaching and learning quality in Balochistan. A result of good spending and educational policy implemented by Punjab is removing problems.

A drastic change in current trends is required to achieve MDG 2015 and EFA goals at the national level. Solution of all the problems depends on collective efforts by government and all non-state actors by making education top priority. This is the time to reach to Provisional and Federal government to question about equity and quality in right to education and demand for serious and comprehensive steps for implementation of good policies.

Proper transparency and accountability mechanism of government works should increase by educational entrepreneurs. Global Monitoring Report indicates that lower middle-income countries including Pakistan 2 % GDP on education. To enhance budgetary allocation on education, government should use the strategy of increasing 20 % of annual income tax revenue. All provinces should demand more development funds for issues such as poor expenditure and increasing opportunities for girls' education. Balochistan which is facing a large number of problems to handle education emergency should revise its policies and demand for more finance. The standards of teaching and learning should be improved by making teachers and education assessment system accountable for their performance for improving nationwide reading and numeracy skills of students. Education policy making process should include teachers to address issues related to poor performance of students. The wide gaps between regions and gender should be minimizing opening more accessible schools in nearby areas.

Government should insure to bring girls to school with equal opportunity. To achieve sustainable development, Government needs to work diligently and efficiently. Article 25-A need much emphasis on outcomes centered policies rather than only input centered policies. To achieve post-2015 goals learning should be ensured despite of gender and region in Pakistan.

Essay by: Raeesa Javed.