

Education Innovation



Article 25(A) of the constitution of Pakistan guarantees to the right to education for all children between the ages of 5 to 16. But 36 percent girls and 25 percent boys aged 5 to 16 are still out of school. Provincial disparities show that 49 percent girls in Sindh, and 67 percent girls in Baluchistan are out of school.¹ The rural urban divide shows that girls are behind in rural areas as well; 48 percent of girls in rural areas are out of school, as compared to 25 percent girls in urban areas.²

As a natural consequence of low enrollment rates, the overall state of education of Pakistan's children also suffers. Statistics show that only 27.6 percent of women, and 45.7 percent of men have completed lower secondary education.³ Gross tertiary enrollment shows that only 8 percent of women and 10 percent of men are currently enrolled in any tertiary institute. Only 2.7 percent of men, and 0.9 percent of women have completed a Master's or an equivalent degree.⁴

But those who are completing their schooling, may not be getting quality

education. Lower learning outcomes are reported in children from wealth quintile (WQ) 1, as compared to WQ4; where the learning level of WQ4 are also not entirely promising. Children have shown limited ability to read basic stories, and solve 2-digit equations.⁵ Disaggregate along provincial lines, and disparities become visible again.

The complexity of the education problem of Pakistan, is of a challenge rooted in unaffordability and inaccessibility of education, coupled with problematic perceptions of the utility of education. Ghost schools, ghost teachers, dysfunctional facilities; all of these create fault lines in the education system.⁶ The COVID-19 pandemic has created additional barriers, with limited access to e-learning tools pushing students further away.⁷

The need of the hour, then, is to push for parity within the education sector. Parity in terms of quality of education and parity in terms of accessibility of education, for both girls and boys, regardless of where they come from.

1 Government of Pakistan (2020). Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey 2018-19.

2 Ibid.

3 UNESCO Institute for Statistics (uis.unesco.org). Data as of September 2020.

4 Available at <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SESEC.CUATLO.MAZS?locations=PK>

5 Ibid.

6 ASER Pakistan. (2020). Annual Status of Education Report 2019.

7 <https://wemr.wes.org/2020/02/education-in-pakistan>

8 Ansar F, Ali W, Khattak A, Naveed H, Zeb S. (2020). Undergraduate students' perception and satisfaction regarding online learning system amidst COVID-19 Pandemic in Pakistan.