



**A survey of children's learning and non-cognitive attitudes  
in England and Pakistan**

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## Abstract

Children's learning attitudes and social emotional skills can be shaped by their family background and school experiences. This study compares 832 children aged 10-11 years old attending **primary and middle** schools in England and Pakistan, who completed a survey of non-cognitive skills and learning attitudes. **Any** comparison is cross-sectional and does not necessarily imply a causal relationship. The findings suggest that children in **the sample from** England were more developed than their counterpart **sample** in Pakistan in teamwork, social engagement, adaptability, problem solving and empathy. However, the children **from** Pakistan showed higher resilience and reported more happiness with general life than their counterparts in England. Policy level changes are suggested for Pakistan to give schools more mixed intakes of children and environments where they feel safe, cared for, and are fairly treated by teachers. Improving children's resilience in academic activities can be useful for schools in England.

## Key words

Children, non-cognitive, learning attitudes, vignettes, England, Pakistan

## Introduction

Developed economies have established an infrastructure of school systems that has ensured enrolment and attendance of children of compulsory school age. Children's learning is supported by trained teachers in relatively well-resourced state-funded schools. However, some large-scale international comparisons have shown that the differences in results compared to less developed countries are small and sometimes children in poor countries show better outcomes in some non-cognitive skills, general satisfaction, and happiness with life. It is not clear why.

The paper addresses the research question:

To what extent do children's non-cognitive skills and learning attitudes differ among primary and middle school children in England and Pakistan?

After a brief discussion of existing evidence on the link between children's background, schooling and attitudes, the paper summarises the methods used in this new study and presents the main findings. The paper ends with a discussion of the limitations and implications. **The study uses a survey-based approach with participation from 13 volunteering schools.** The study focuses on children's perceptions, rather than family, ability or context at all stages, and emphasises that conclusions drawn from the study are limited to children's perceptions.

## Schooling and children's learning attitudes

Material deprivation and household poverty are strong predictors of children's educational outcomes (Authors, Authors). There are substantial differences and variations in poverty and deprivation of material resources. However, children's perceptions of the impact of deprivation on their life portray different picture (Das and Mukherjee 2023, Gross-Manos and Bradshaw 2021). According to international comparisons of 35 countries included in Children's World survey countries such as UK, USA, Switzerland, Germany ranked lower than poor countries such as India, Albania, South Africa, Hungary and Croatia in Children's Happiness (Children's World report, 2020). The evidence based on survey-based studies also indicate that children's happiness and well-being are also not substantially associated with family affluence (Kern et al. 2020, Levin et al. 2010). Controlling for all known factors such as sex, region, and age the regression models only explain 35% of variation in the outcome of life-satisfaction (Gross-Manos and Massarwi 2022).

Schools can provide a valuable social service in educating citizens, especially those from less advantaged backgrounds. They are where children and young people can learn how to interact with a wide range of peers and with the formal adult world. They are where pupils begin to see who they can trust, what society is like, and what they can contribute to it (Author, Author). Policymakers have traditionally emphasised the economic benefits of education – for society and individuals. And some studies have considered wider outcomes such as enjoyment, self-esteem or determination merely as steppingstones to higher attainment and life-long success. Wider outcomes such as enjoyment, happiness, confidence, self-esteem or determination are the foundation of higher attainment (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005).

But education is also about the happiness of individuals, their preparedness for life other than work, and their general ‘flourishing’ in its own right (Brighouse 2008). Children spending time with supportive peers in a positive school environment help them to nurture effective social emotional skills. Some evidence has suggested that children’s active participation in school-based activities is inversely associated with risk-taking behaviours (Garry and Morrissey 2000, Hahn 2022, Malik et al. 2022).

Schools can therefore have a great importance for children’s learning and interaction with the wider world. In schools, children learn skills for developing trust, judgement, opinions, and language for communication. This paper investigates some of these wider outcomes of schools, which can have a life-long relevance.

## Methods used in this new study

### *Cases*

This study is a cross-sectional comparison based on data collected from volunteering schools in England (n=8) and Pakistan (n=5). Children aged 10 to 11 years (n=832) who were present on the day of survey implementation were invited to complete a paper-pencil survey which took around 15-20 minutes. The convenience samples of school and children are not intended to be representative of their populations. In both the countries, we approached schools in our networks and who were willing to seek parental consent for researcher’s access to their children. **In both countries the school types were state-funded schools, located in urban settings.**

Some of the sample characteristics appear in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample

Groups	Number of children
<i>Sex</i>	-
Boys	432
Girls	400
<i>Children</i>	-
England	590
Pakistan	240
<i>Year groups</i>	-
Class 5	19
Class 6	11

### *The non-cognitive outcome instrument*

The survey included 11 scaled attitude items. These items were selected to represent behavioural constructs used in standardised assessments of self-confidence, resilience, and happiness. The response scale for all the items were discussed with primary school teachers and trained staff members in both countries. After seeing the survey, teachers and school leaders in Pakistan agreed to implement the

English version of the survey as they knew children could understand English and respond to the survey without any difficulty. However, if children asked for help to read or understand the survey items and instructions, researchers provided help on site. A pilot study was conducted to assess readability, completion time, and format of these survey items. In the pilot study, we found that children could easily understand the response-scale and were interested in reporting their attitudes and opinions.

Pupils make a self-report judgment of their attitude or skills on a scale of 0 (completely disagree) to 10 (completely agree). The scale is wide, to permit variation in responses, especially over time. Two of the items were reverse-coded so that the socially desirable response would be 0 rather than 10.

Our survey also included four vignettes, and each had three possible outcomes as response scenarios. The vignettes were about imaginary characters (children), and the response statements were neither right nor wrong, but required a judgement based on issues like empathy, social responsibility, fairness, and democracy. We consulted teachers in the development of response statements. The analysis of response statements is also guided by teachers input on selecting the most reasonable choice for odds ratio calculations.

We have used these items in several evaluation studies therefore reasonably sure that the items are age-appropriate, meaningful, and reliable. For more details, see Authors. (2022).

After the children's survey in both countries, we conducted follow up focus group discussions with children who participated in the survey, and some of their peers who were not survey participants. This was conducted after a time gap of several months so that the initial survey results were available. The purpose of focus group discussions was to understand better some differences in the patterns of the initial survey findings. We conducted three focus groups in England in which eight children participated. In Pakistan we conducted two focus group discussions including ten children. The focus group discussions in Pakistan were conducted in mixed Urdu and English language. Urdu was the dominant language in this discussion, but some students were keen to participate by speaking English as it provided them a chance to practice the English language. Code switching between Urdu and English languages is a normal practice in classroom conversations and learning process (Javed and Aslam 2020). We presented the survey findings and asked children the possible reasons for the patterns. For example, we asked children in England why their peers think it is fair if some children like Jacinta (in a vignette) are taught in a separate class, or why voting for a classroom leader is less popular than picking a blind name. In Pakistan we asked children why it is less agreeable that teachers should spend more time helping children who experience reading difficulty. The data was recorded as anonymous field notes.

#### *Methods of analysis*

The results for the 11 scaled items are reported as 'effect' sizes which are differences between the mean scores for the two groups divided by their overall standard deviation. For each item, the effect size presents the magnitude of the differences between the two groups of children.

The results for the four vignettes are reported with effect sizes as odds ratios. The odds ratios are calculated on each occasion for the two groups, comparing the number of cases selecting one of the three options with the number picking either of the other two. In the development phase of the survey, we consulted teachers in selection of the appropriate response statements for comparison.

Field notes from focused groups were children's interpretation of teacher's role in classroom, understanding of fairness and empathy for peers, volunteering in social actions, and perceived quality of their relationship with teachers and other adults in school. Children's interpretations of these topics were recorded as themes presented here as explanation of the survey results.

## Findings

Table 2 presents “effect” size as standardised mean difference illustrating to what extent children of the same age groups are different in two countries with regards to their social emotional skills, learning attitudes, and school experiences. The findings are reported as aggregated effects and not controlled for slight pupil differences in age. The differences between children in the two countries are small as the effect sizes are mixed where in some domains children in England are ahead of children in Pakistan (listed as positive effect sizes) and *vice versa*.

Table 2: Effect sizes for social emotional skills

Social emotional skills		England		Pakistan		Effect Size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Communication	I am good at explaining my ideas to other people	6.53	2.75	6.84	2.83	-0.11
Engagement	I like meeting new people	8.11	2.66	7.54	3.35	0.20
Teamwork	I can work with someone who has different opinions	7.15	2.93	6.57	3.39	0.19
Social responsibility	I want to try and make my local area a better place	7.87	2.93	7.71	2.93	0.05
Happiness	I feel happy most days	7.39	3.03	7.76	2.82	-0.13
Empathy	I try to understand other people’s problems	7.58	2.92	7.59	2.99	0.00

These “effect” sizes are mostly small, as might be expected, especially in terms of social responsibility and empathy. Children in England are reporting higher scores in engagement and teamwork, while children in Pakistan have higher scores in communication and happiness. **These differences are so small that on average adding less than 30 cases in the smaller cell of analysis can lead to no effect at all.**

Table 3: Effect sizes for learning attitudes

Learning attitudes		England		Pakistan		Effect size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Resilience 1	I can do most things if try	8.09	2.49	8.40	2.45	-0.13
Resilience 2	Once I have started a task, I like to finish it	7.73	2.86	8.40	2.63	-0.24
Creative thinking	I like to be told exactly what to do	4.2	3.62	3.83	3.62	0.10
Adaptability	I am often afraid to try new things	5.62	3.78	3.95	3.79	0.44
Problem solving	I know where to go for help	8.37	2.72	6.85	3.39	0.50

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Table 3 presents the differences in learning attitudes. In “resilience” children in England are behind their counterparts in Pakistan. In “creative thinking” and “adaptability” the items are reverse coded therefore adjusted and interpreted as positive for children in England. In “problem solving” children in England are ahead of children in Pakistan. The “effect” sizes for adaptability and problem solving are large.

Table 4: Effect sizes for school experiences

School experiences		England		Pakistan		Effect size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Teacher's fairness	Teacher's treat children fairly at my school	8.16	2.90	7.24	3.49	0.29
Relationship with school	Teacher's and other grownups at school care about me	8.50	2.62	7.13	3.31	0.47

Table 4 presents the differences among children’s school experiences. The effect sizes are large and positive for both items. School experience is positive for children in England as they perceived teachers and adults at school treat them fairly and with care. Children in Pakistan reported less positive school experience than children in England.

In many domains of cognitive skills and learning attitudes the differences are small and perhaps insecure. However, some effects are more noticeable and worthy of further consideration. We have discussed differences that are persistent, meaningful and could not be changed by adding or removing a few cases from two groups.

The positive outcomes in teamwork and engagement could be related to the relatively diverse intakes of state schools where children can interact with people and other children from different backgrounds, ethnic groups, academic abilities, nationalities, and languages. In general, the schools in England encourage and celebrate diversity and therefore children are more aware of engagement and teamworking when compared to children in schools of Pakistan. Children in England also showed higher positive effect size in real life problem solving as compared to children in Pakistan. The schools in England emphasise children’s general health and safety and there is a general encouragement to talk, discuss problems, and seek help.

Children in England were behind in terms of happiness. This is a self-reported rating as a general state of daily life. In developed countries children generally report lower happiness as compared to their age counterparts in less developed countries (Gromada et al. 2020). There is no definitive explanation of differences in self-reported happiness of children in the two countries. It is possible that children in England have higher critical awareness and ability to express critical views of life and circumstances they live in whereas children living in Pakistan are less critical of their life circumstances. It is also possible, as with all such differences, that it reflects something different in the nature of the samples rather than their school experiences.

Children in Pakistan reported higher resilience, and this could be because resilience is seen as an important value and children are encouraged to show resilience in terms of trying hard, not giving up easily and work towards completion of tasks. It is important to remember that these are only self-perceptions of resilient attitudes and not an assessment or indication of children’s actual behaviour in tasks completion.



School experience is more generally positive for children in England as they perceived teachers and adults at school treat them fairly and with care. Children in Pakistan were less positive in reporting school experiences because they perceived being treated less fairly by teachers and do not feel cared for by adults in school. In the open survey responses, children in Pakistan also reported receiving harsh punishments and physical beating from teachers. The findings of items on school experience are consistent as need many cases to disturb the effect sizes.

In the open box at the end of pupil survey we invited children to add anything they think is relevant to their life at school that can help us understand their school experiences. Many children in both countries used this opportunity and added comments on their school experience. In both countries children's enjoyment of school was linked with the time they spent with their friends and playing games in the school ground. Children in Pakistan reported receiving harsh punishments from teachers due to which they feel anxious and worried at school. The following quotations were children's comments in the open response box on life at school:

Children in England wrote:

I like school. It is fun to play with friends.

School is good. I have many friends at school. I like my school.

I enjoy coming to school. I will be sad at home if I had to stay at home all day.

What I like about school is that we meet our friends and we play.

Children in Pakistan added the following comments about their school experiences:

My school is good but teachers are sometimes very strict and they punish us very harshly. I don't like to be punished.

I like my friends. Teachers are very nice. Some teachers are very harsh and they beat children for their naughty behaviour. Miss Yasmeen is a very strict teacher and we cannot talk in her class because she can punish us for even small things.

I was punished and beaten by Sir Bilal for a very small mistake. I think teachers should not beat us for small mistakes.

I like school. I have lots of friends and we play together.

### *Vignettes*

The survey included four vignettes of imaginary characters (children), and the response statements were neither right nor wrong, but required a judgement based on issues like empathy, social responsibility, fairness, and democracy. The analysis is presented as odds ratio of the most favourable response (marked \*) against the other two responses.

### *Empathy*

This vignette included a character named Jacinta who has difficulty in reading and needed extra help from a teacher to keep up with peers in the class. Children in both countries are aware of peers who seek teacher's time and help more than other children in the class. The response options do not suggest any right or wrong choices. Children were asked to select one which they think is most appropriate of the given choices. We selected, 'It is fair that teacher spends more time with Jacinta' as a response indicating children's empathy towards peers facing difficulties.

Table 5 presents differences among children's response in the two countries. In England a higher percentage of children want 'Jacinta to be taught in a separate class while in Pakistan majority of children selected the option, 'Jacinta should work harder'.

Table 5: Percentages in response categories for "empathy"

Jacinta has difficulty reading and finds it hard to keep up in class. The teacher has to spend a lot of time helping Jacinta.			
	*It is fair that teacher spends more time	Jacinta should work harder	Jacinta should be taught in a separate class
England	32.18	31	37.27
Pakistan	8	79	13

We combined the two categories 'Jacinta should work harder' and 'Jacinta should be taught in a separate class'. Odds ratio presented in Table 6 were calculated between the two countries. Children in England reported a far higher favourable response than children in Pakistan to Jacinta receiving extra help.

Table 6: Odds ratio for "empathy"

Jacinta has difficulty reading and finds it hard to keep up in class. The teacher has to spend a lot of time helping Jacinta.			
	It is fair that teacher spends more time	Other responses	Odds ratio
England	32	68	5.72
Pakistan	8	92	

As noted in previous international studies, in countries like England where inclusion means that children with learning challenges are in mainstream classrooms the issue of struggling learners may be more prevalent than in countries that use special schools more generally like France, or that have only partial enrolment in school like Pakistan (Authors, Authors).

In England children's explanation of higher response for Jacinta to be taught in a separate class was that they observe such instances as a normal practice where children who struggle in reading are taught separately in smaller groups, supported by teaching assistants, and sometimes taken out of the classroom to be a taught separately. In the discussion with children, we noticed that many of them did not judge peers taught in a separate classroom as an unfair thing. In the focused group discussions with children the following stories were shared by the children in England.

We have Miss Sharon in the class, and she helps children on the other table. She is very kind. Sometimes she reads with children in the corner room so that they can become better in reading. I think she helps them in doing homework.

Another pupil shared this story:

Jason is taken out of the class because he is behind in maths work. Teacher gives him different lesson from us. Teacher helps him a lot.



In our follow up interviews with children in Pakistan, we asked why many of them would choose the option Jacinta should work harder and we found two explanations. Children perceived that failure and difficulties of students should not be an added responsibility for teachers who is the most important and busy person in the class. Children perceived that teacher's time and efforts should be respected by all children. The other explanation children gave was their perceived virtue of hard work which all children should adopt rather than asking for teacher's help or support. In Pakistan children in the focused groups shared the following stories:

Our Miss Salam is very nice. Some children in the class are not good in their classwork and because they are not working hard and sometimes, they are noisy, so Miss Salma is angry at them. These children should work hard.

Another pupil shared this story:

Sir Jawad is a very good teacher, but he is very strict with children who do not do their homework and in the class they don't pay attention. Some children don't work hard, and their work is not good. Sir Jawad helps all, but some children don't listen and do what he says.

Resham told this about peer:

Ali does not work hard. His homework is always incomplete. Miss Tanya is so nice and helpful, but Ali is naughty in the class which makes Miss Tanya very angry at him. Sometimes she punishes him and make him stand out of the classroom because he disturbs her and all of us. We know Miss Tanya is very kind and she punishes only naughty children.

### Social responsibility

This vignette presented the character of Jon who noticed school playground litter and the response options gave three actions that Jon could take. The vignette presents a common situation that children face in schools or in their surroundings. The three response actions are likely actions that children can take and none of these are right or wrong options. However, a socially desirable response is 'Organise his class to clean up'.

Table 7 shows that in both countries the highest percentages of children selected the socially desirable options. The patterns for the second highest and third responses are also similar. This indicates that children showed similar understanding of social responsibility or civic behaviour in both countries.

Table 7: Percentage in response categories for "social responsibility"

Jon notices that the playing fields at his school have become littered with trash. What is the best thing he could do?			
	Take his friend to play in an area that is clean	*Organise his class to clean up	Complaint his friends that no one cares
England	10	85	5
Pakistan	8	85	7

We combined the two categories 'Take his friend to play in an area that is clean' and 'Complaint his friends that no one cares'. Odds ratio presented in Table 8 were calculated between the two countries. The odds ratio of 1.08 does not show a big difference between the two groups in both countries, children are similar in selecting the socially desirable option.

Table 8: Odds ratio for “social responsibility”

Jon notices that the playing fields at his school have become littered with trash. What is the best thing he could do?			
	Organise his class to clean up	Other response	Odds ratio
England	85%	14%	1.08
Pakistan	85%	15%	

These findings are not an assessment of children’s actual behaviour towards a social problem. In our follow up discussions with children in both countries we asked them to share their views on good social behaviour and responsibilities of a good citizen. Children showed good understanding of social behaviour but also reported some experiences and choices in real life when they faced a situation of showing or participating in social responsibility task. Children in both groups said that litter picking is a hard job and not an exciting fun thing to do. Many children in England reported volunteering for litter picking as social action opportunity organised by schools. In Pakistan, children did not report schools organised volunteering in social actions, but majority said they have done jobs as helping teachers or litter picking in classroom and school playgrounds when asked by teachers.

Children in England shared their experience of social responsibility in the following anecdotes:

Our class raised funds for charity who help poor people. This was our class project and we talked about this in the assembly.

Another pupil shared this story:

I am in the school club, and we do lots of volunteering. One week we did litter picking in the street and in the ground outside our school. We collected lots of rubbish that day. We were so tired at the end. It is a hard job.

Children in Pakistan shared similar views:

Our teacher asked us to pick all the litter from playground. It was good because after that the playground was clean and our school looked good.

Another pupil shared their views:

Not all children throw rubbish in the bins. I collected rubbish from the ground because the teacher asked us to do so. I think we would not do this unless asked.

### Democracy

In this vignette we presented children a simple situation in class where they had the option of selecting a leader for an activity. In the response options we presented most common methods of selection which most children have experienced in school contexts. We selected ‘All children should vote’ as the most appropriate response as it illustrates children’s understanding of democracy.

Table 9 shows differences among children’s response in the two countries. In England a higher percentage of children want ‘A name should be picked blindly’ while in Pakistan majority of children selected the option, ‘All children should vote’.

Table 9: Percentage in response categories for “democracy”

	A teacher should choose the group leader	A name should be picked blindly	*All children should vote
England	9	47	43

Pakistan	8	9	83
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A group leader from your class is needed for a fund-raising activity to buy new books for your classroom. Three children are willing to become the leader. What is the fairest way of choosing the group leader?

We combined the two categories ‘A teacher should choose the group leader’ and ‘A name should be picked blindly’. Odds ratio presented in Table 10 were calculated between the two countries.

Table 10: Odds ratio “democracy”

A group leader from your class is needed for a fund-raising activity to buy new books for your classroom. Three children are willing to become the leader. What is the fairest way of choosing the group leader?			
	All children should vote	Other responses	Odds ratio
England	43	56	0.16
Pakistan	83	17	

As shown in Table 10 children in England are less likely (0.16) than children in Pakistan to choose the more favourable response. However, this odds ratio needs to be interpreted in relation to children’s understanding and exposure to the process of democracy. In our follow up discussions with children, it seemed that children in Pakistan are more aware of the term ‘vote’ and ‘elections’ and they reported observations of political elections in Pakistan as exciting activities. In discussion with children in England it seemed they were less excited about ‘vote’ method and preferred ‘blind selection’ as they associated it with exciting fun games.

These vignettes were introduced as a method for understanding children’s non-cognitive attitudes in response to a given context in which they are not directly involved and there are children or teacher as characters. The findings showed that are not big differences among children’s attitudes towards fairness/empathy, social responsibility, and democracy. In case of fairness/empathy we see that cultural understanding of the role of teacher and expectation of hard work from all children is different among children from England and Pakistan. From the findings we cannot judge one group has more empathy or sense of fairness than the other.

Children in both countries reported high awareness of socially responsible action. However, these findings only show awareness of children and not their actual behaviour. Volunteering for social actions is a popular activity in schools of England while children in Pakistan were not aware of such volunteering opportunities and social actions.

Children in Pakistan were slightly more aware of democracy as a process of selecting leader and their preferred vote for leader over other methods. Discussions with children informed that the response to options in democracy questions seemed to be guided by children’s exposure to the level of excitement and enjoyment they have experienced in methods rather than actual value behind the selection process.

## Discussion

### *Limitations of the study*

The study has reasonably large samples from both countries but neither school nor children were random nor selected as truly representative of the populations in the two countries.

1  
2  
3 Children's non-cognitive skills and learning attitudes can be strongly linked with their family  
4 background and socioeconomic status. We did not collect family background data from schools or  
5 children that can add useful explanation of the results. The comparison is only a cross-sectional analysis  
6 and does not imply any causal relationship.  
7

8 Children self-reported their cognitive skills and learning attitudes. There is no supporting evidence in  
9 the form of children's academic performance, and teacher's or parents' reports of children's learning  
10 attitude as additional measures to validate children's self-reports. Information on children's academic  
11 performance and teacher's or parent's reports of their non-cognitive skills and learning attitudes can  
12 add useful explanation of the results.  
13  
14

### 15 16 *Implications*

17  
18 Children's attitudes and social emotional learning appear to be mainly shaped by the family background  
19 and school experiences. Cross-country comparison of children in the same age-group can present some  
20 interesting similarities and differences among children of the same age group.  
21

22 Children in England showed positive attitudes towards teamwork, social engagement and teacher's fair  
23 treatment at school as compared with the children from Pakistan. Whereas children in Pakistan reported  
24 higher resilience and happiness as compared to children in England. Differences in communication  
25 skills, social responsibility, creative thinking were very small, and the effect sizes could be disturbed  
26 by adding small number of cases. However, effect sizes were large and negative for children in Pakistan  
27 for teacher's care, fairness, justice, and treatment of other adults in schools as compared to children in  
28 England. A large number of cases were needed to change the negative effect size, indicating that the  
29 findings are robust.  
30

31 Vignettes results showed that children in England were ahead in social responsibility and empathy as  
32 compared to children in Pakistan. However, the vignette of empathy had the influence of cultural  
33 perceptions where children are encouraged to take self-responsibility for their underachievement rather  
34 than demanding teacher's help or time.  
35

36  
37 The implications for schools in England suggest positive results of mixed intake of children which has  
38 encouraged children's ability for social engagement, teamwork, and adaptability. However, resilience  
39 among children could be targeted at school level. Children's interaction with teachers and peers gives  
40 them an opportunity and experiences of learning. Children's experience at school prepares them for a  
41 practical life when they face society independently. Non-cognitive skills such as social engagement,  
42 teamwork and adaptability are important for children to learn and experience at school level. If the  
43 schools do not represent what a real social world looks like, then possibly children would not have skills  
44 to respond to challenges in their adult life. Children's maximum exposure to differences and similarities  
45 at social and cultural levels can give them chances to learn positive behaviours. Unfortunately,  
46 segregated schools cannot have the environment of opportunities for children to learn skills and adopt  
47 behaviours for success in life or in becoming a good citizen.  
48

49 Policy-level changes could be desirable in Pakistan to create schools with mixed intake of children,  
50 where students experience a safe and nurturing environment and are treated fairly by their teachers. The  
51 use of harsh punishments and physical abuse, such as beatings, can result in children dropping out of  
52 school, setting them on a path towards activities like child labour, substance abuse, and other life-  
53 threatening situations. Children who face teachers' harsh punishments are generally the disadvantaged  
54 ones who cannot meet teacher's expectation of behaviour or academic performance. Teacher's training  
55 and awareness about children's learning challenges and the impact of their harsh punishment on  
56 children's psychological well-being can perhaps change teachers' response to these children.  
57  
58  
59  
60

In both countries schools are important places for children. Experiences at school have a life-long impact and it is crucial that time spent in school should maximise the opportunities for children where they can build positive attitudes to life and learning.

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Table 1: Sample

Groups	Number of cases
<i>Sex</i>	-
Boys	432
Girls	400
<i>Children</i>	-
England	590
Pakistan	240
<i>Year groups</i>	-
Class 5	19
Class 6	11

Table 2: Effect sizes for social emotional skills

Social emotional skills		England		Pakistan		Effect Size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Communication	I am good at explaining my ideas to other people	6.53	2.75	6.84	2.83	-0.11
Engagement	I like meeting new people	8.11	2.66	7.54	3.35	0.20
Teamwork	I can work with someone who has different opinions	7.15	2.93	6.57	3.39	0.19
Social responsibility	I want to try and make my local area a better place	7.87	2.93	7.71	2.93	0.05
Happiness	I feel happy most days	7.39	3.03	7.76	2.82	-0.13
Empathy	I try to understand other people's problems	7.58	2.92	7.59	2.99	0.00

Table 3: Effect sizes for learning attitudes

Learning attitudes		England		Pakistan		Effect size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Resilience 1	I can do most things if try	8.09	2.49	8.40	2.45	-0.13
Resilience 2	Once I have started a task, I like to finish it	7.73	2.86	8.40	2.63	-0.24
Creative thinking	I like to be told exactly what to do	4.2	3.62	3.83	3.62	0.10
Adaptability	I am often afraid to try new things	5.62	3.78	3.95	3.79	0.44
Problem solving	I know where to go for help with a problem	8.37	2.72	6.85	3.39	0.50



Table 4: Effect sizes for school experiences

School experiences		England		Pakistan		Effect size
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Teacher's fairness	Teacher's treat children fairly at my school	8.16	2.90	7.24	3.49	0.29
Relationship with school	Teacher's and other grownups at school care about me	8.50	2.62	7.13	3.31	0.47

Table 5: Percentages in response categories for “empathy”

Jacinta has difficulty reading and finds it hard to keep up in class. The teacher has to spend a lot of time helping Jacinta.			
	*It is fair that teacher spends more time	Jacinta should work harder	Jacinta should be taught in a separate class
England	32.18	31	37.27
Pakistan	8	79	13

Table 6: Odds ratio for “empathy”

Jacinta has difficulty reading and finds it hard to keep up in class. The teacher has to spend a lot of time helping Jacinta.			
	It is fair that teacher spends more time	Other responses	Odds ratio
England	32	68	5.72
Pakistan	8	92	

Table 7: Percentage in response categories for “social responsibility”

Jon notices that the playing fields at his school have become littered with trash. What is the best thing he could do?			
	Take his friend to play in an area that is clean	*Organise his class to clean up	Complaint his friends that no one cares
England	10	85	5
Pakistan	8	85	7

Table 8: Odds ratio for “social responsibility”

Jon notices that the playing fields at his school have become littered with trash. What is the best thing he could do?			
	Organise his class to clean up	Other response	Odds ratio
England	85%	14%	1.08
Pakistan	85%	15%	

Table 9: Percentage in response categories for “democracy”

	A teacher should choose the group leader	A name should be picked blindly	*All children should vote
England	9	47	43
Pakistan	8	9	83

Table 10: Odds ratio “democracy”

A group leader from your class is needed for a fund-raising activity to buy new books for your classroom. Three children are willing to become the leader. What is the fairest way of choosing the group leader?			
	All children should vote	Other responses	Odds ratio
England	43	56	0.16
Pakistan	83	17	



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