

The LEAPS Report What do Children Know?

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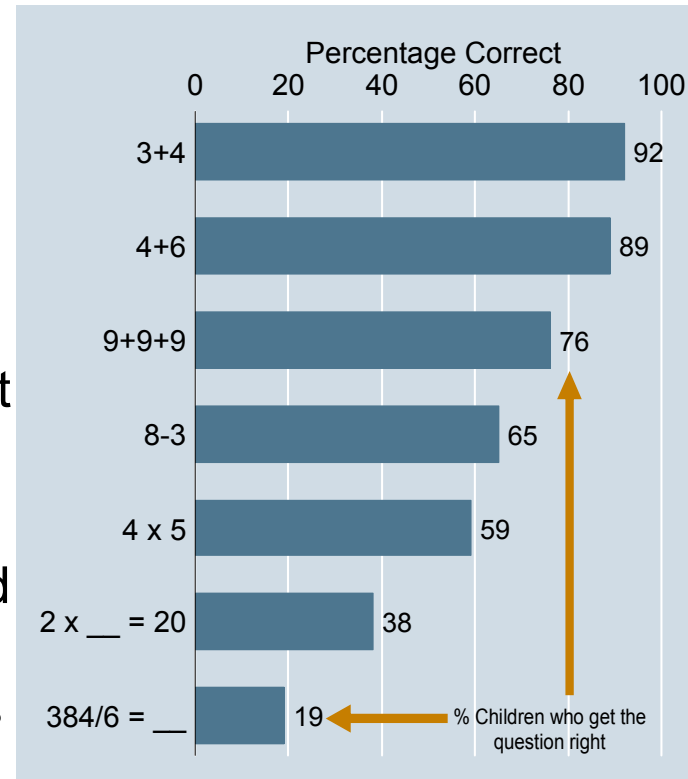
This presentation

- Four Facts about Learning in Punjab Villages...with several added facts
- The Four Facts
 - Learning is poor
 - But there are better and worse performers in the same village
 - Private schools perform better
 - While government schools are dragged down by a number of failing schools
- The Added facts
 - Where do private-government differences come from?

Fact 1: Children know very little

Mathematics

- Only single-digit addition & subtraction
- **Curriculum standard 2:** In grades I-II, children should be able to “add and subtract up to 3-digit numbers.”
- **Curriculum standard 3:** In grades III-V, children should be able to “multiply and divide up to 6-digit numbers by 2 and 3-digit numbers.”



Fact 1: Children know very little

Table 1.2: What do Children Know in Urdu

Subject	The Question	Percentage who answered correctly	Corresponding Grade for Curriculum
Urdu	Tick the correct answer to match the picture (picture of house)	52	I-II
Urdu	Tick the correct answer to match the picture (picture of book)	73	I-II
Urdu	Write a sentence with the word “beautiful”	33	I-II
Urdu	Write a sentence with the word “school”	31	I-II

Urdu

- Basic recognition of simple words with pictures
- Only 33 percent can make sentence with common words

Fact 1: Children know very little

Table 1.2: What do Children Know in English

Subject	The Question	Percentage who answered correctly	Corresponding Grade for Curriculum
English	Write the letter “D” (spoken out loud)	86	I-II
English	Fill in the right letter D _ F	70	I-II
English	Tick the correct answer to match the picture (picture of book)	70	I-II
English	Fill in the missing letters (picture of a ball) BA _ _	45	I-II
English	Fill in the missing letters (picture of a flag) F L A _	29	I-II

English

- Most children can recognize alphabets
- Only 29% can complete a simple word

Fact 1: Children know very little: And little has changed over time

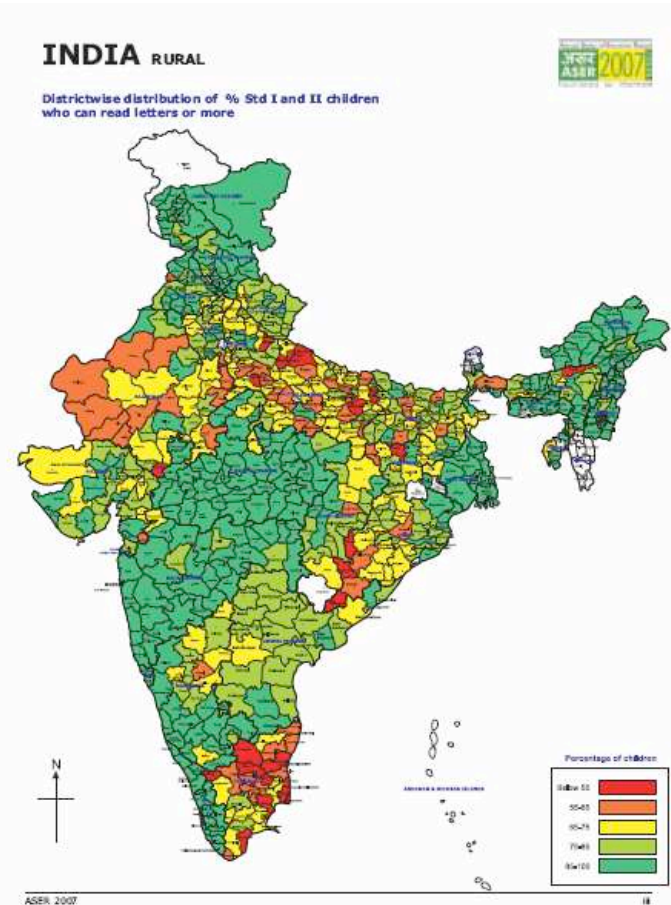
Table 1.4: Rising Enrollment, Lagging Learning

Subject	First Cohort Class 3 in 2003			Second Cohort Class 3 in 2006	
	Knowledge score	Percent Score		Knowledge score	Percent Score
English	500	30	→	502	31
Urdu	500	29	↘	463	27
Mathematics	500	38	↘	479	34

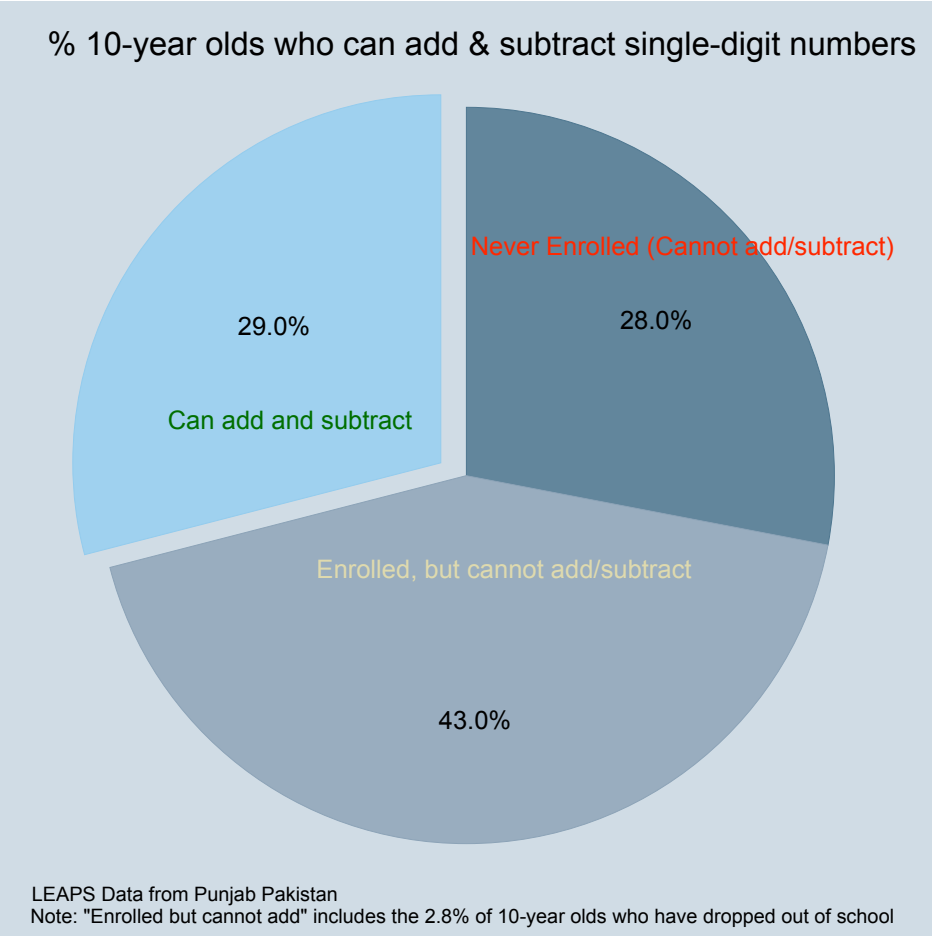
- Between 2003 and 2006
 - English scores have remained stagnant
 - Urdu and Mathematics scores have dropped slightly

Poor learning is a South-Asia wide problem

- Learning levels are as poor in India and a number of other low-income countries
- This is a serious problem that deserves a serious response, *South-Asia* wide



Fact 1: Is Pakistan ready for globalization?



Who Learns More: LEAPS Test Scores

- Tests graded using standardized *knowledge scores* rather than just “percentage correct.” *Knowledge Scores* show how students are doing in relation to one another.
- Average knowledge score is 500
- Somebody who scores 350 is roughly at the 16th percentile
- Someone who scores 650 is roughly at the 84th

Fact 2: Enrollment and Learning *are different*

		Village Literacy		
Village Wealth	Gender	Low	Medium	High
Poor	Male	56	75	83
	Female	38	65	75
Middle	Male	82	77	88
	Female	62	66	80
Rich	Male	73	82	84
	Female	53	73	82

- Enrollment always increases with village wealth and village literacy

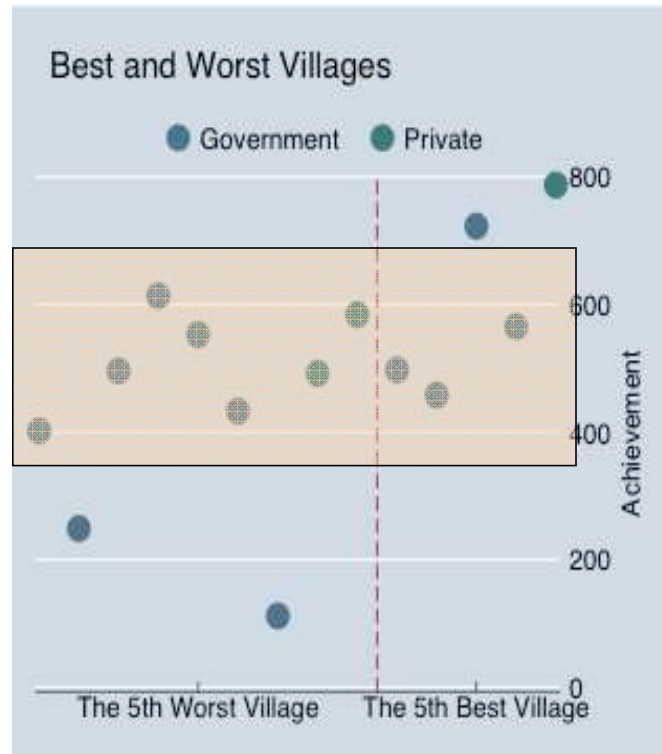
Fact 2: Enrollment and Learning *are different*

Village Wealth	Gender	Village Literacy		
		Low	Medium	High
Poor	Male	512	526	565
	Female	463	495	503
Middle	Male	484	493	484
	Female	455	462	489
Rich	Male	497	515	525
	Female	507	522	522

- There is no clear pattern between learning and village wealth or village literacy

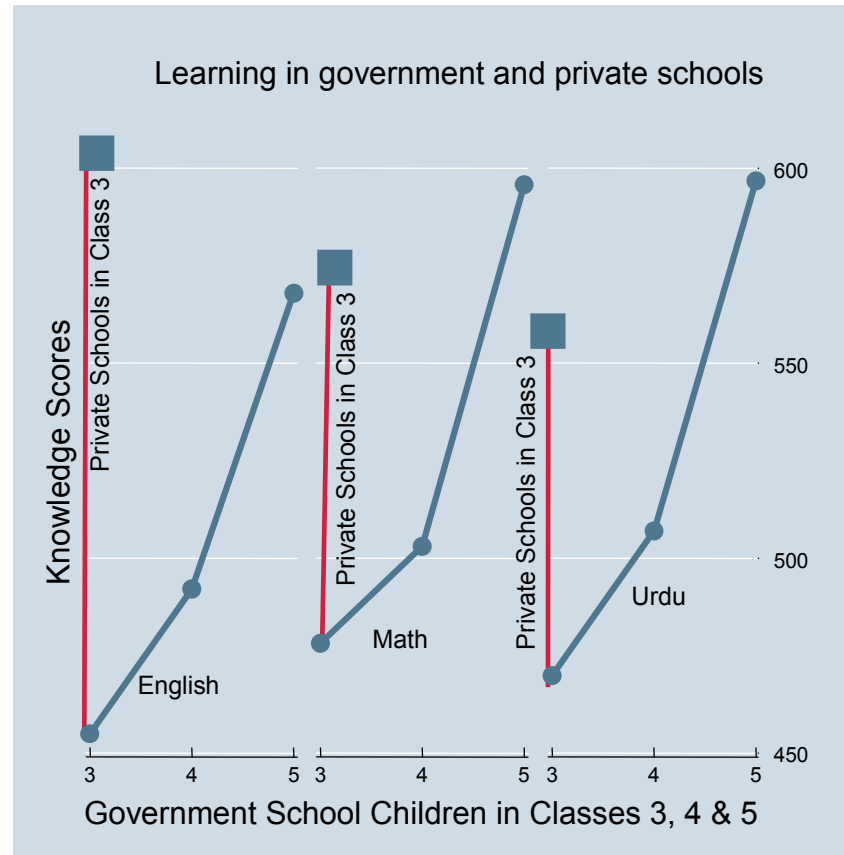
Fact 2: The school matters, not the village you live in

- Figure shows schools in the 5th worst and the 5th best village, ranked by learning
- Considerable overlap in performance
- Most schools in the 5th best have a counterpart in the 5th worst



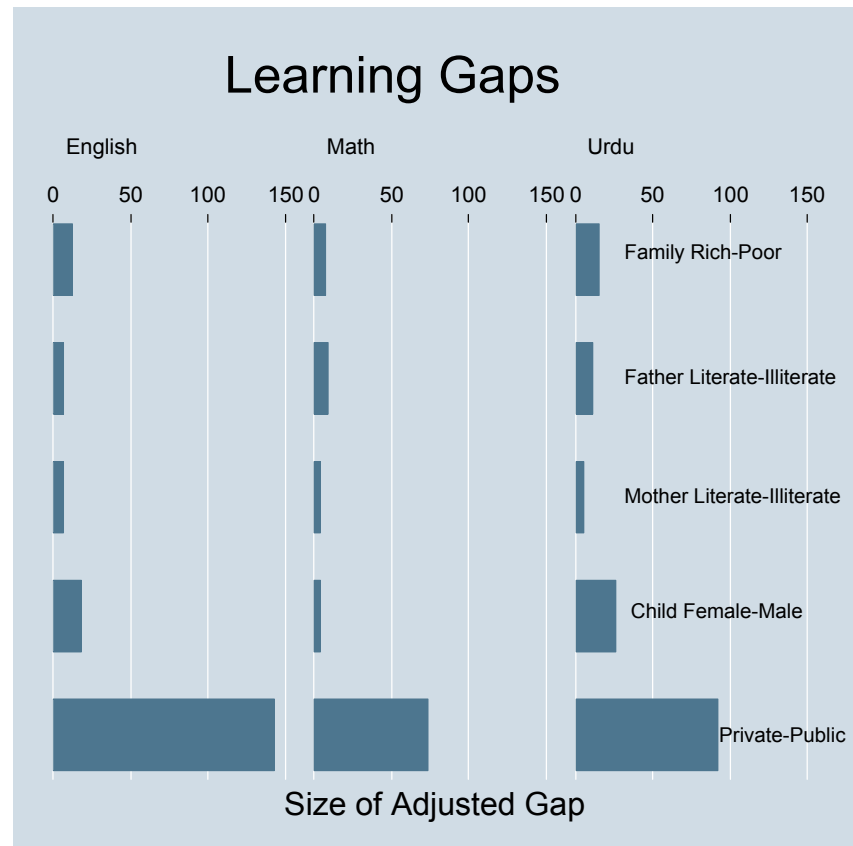
Fact 3: Children in private schools report higher scores

- Children in private schools are 1.5-2.5 years ahead of children in government schools



Fact 3: Government-Private gaps are much larger than household gaps

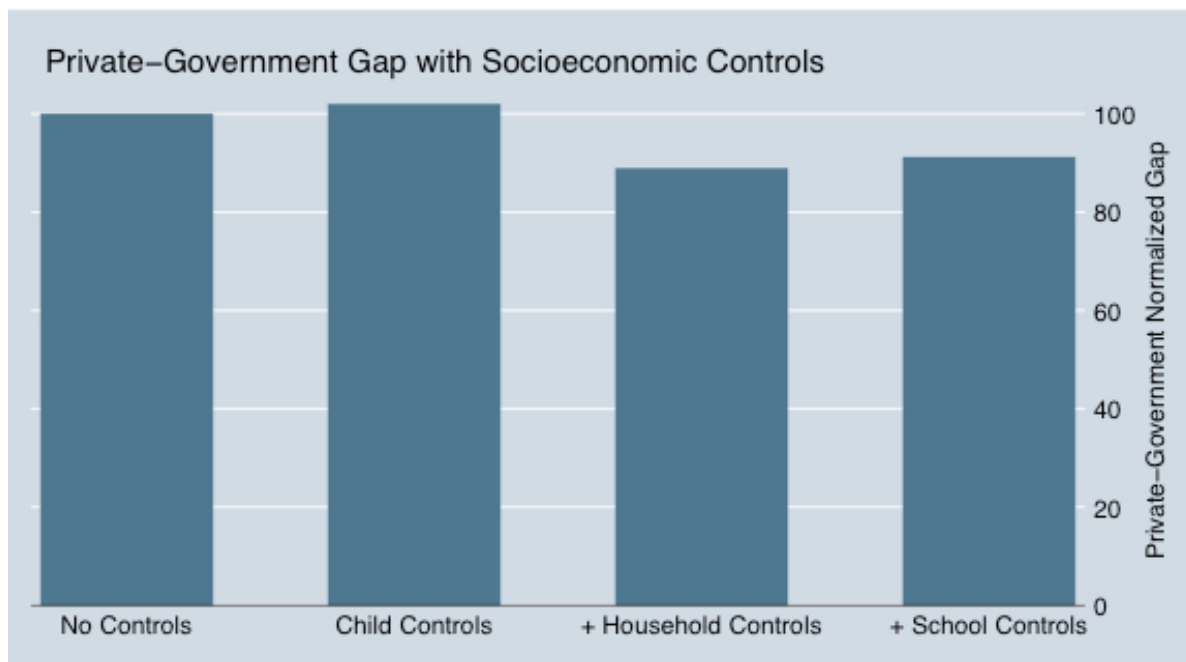
- The gap between 2 children with the *same* family characteristics but who attend different schools is far greater than the gap between 2 children with *different* family characteristics in the same school



The Big Question

- Why are children in private schools reporting higher test-scores?
 - One common reaction: These children come from more advantaged backgrounds—they are richer with more educated parents
 - Another common reaction: Private schools have better infrastructure and lower student-teacher ratios

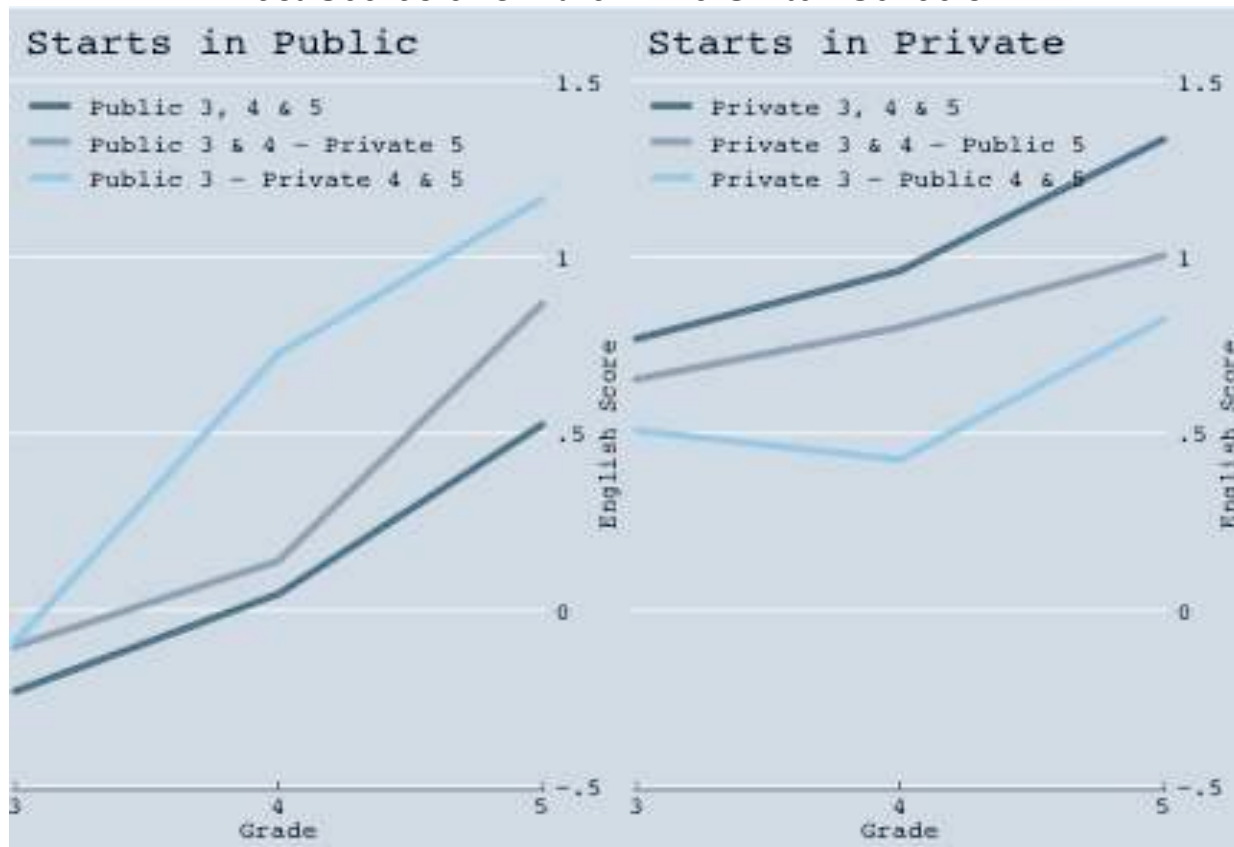
The big answer



- Public-private differences in test scores are *not* due to differences in infrastructure, student-teacher ratios or children's backgrounds

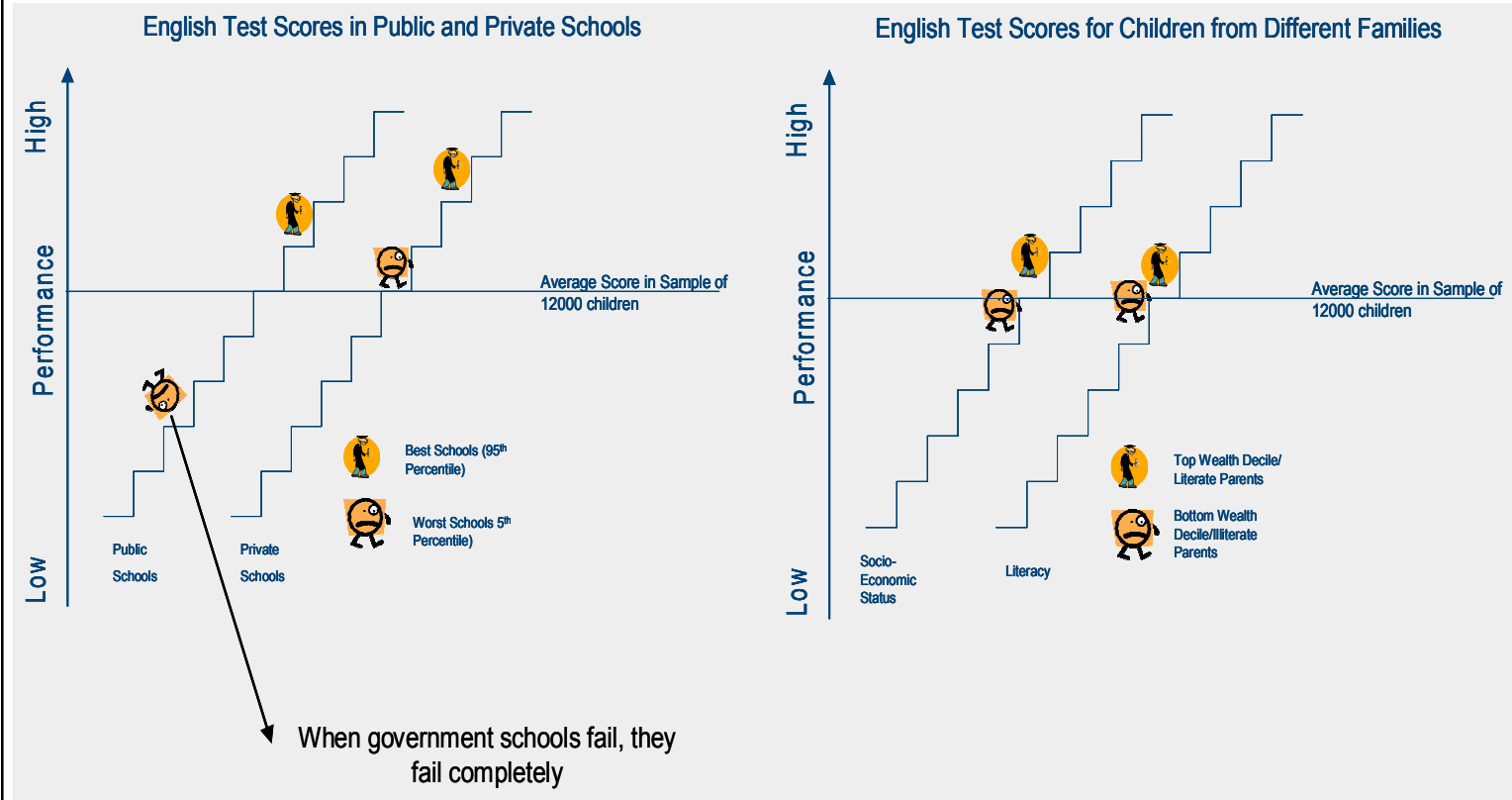
And unobserved child factors like child motivation and ability?

Test Scores of Children who Switch Schools



- The same child performs worse when in a government compared to when in a private school

Fact 4: Failing government schools are *the* problem



Questions to Debate

- Is enrollment enough?
 - Or should learning be a central focus of schooling?
- Is it about fixing the pipes...
 - “What do private schools do differently from government schools”
- Or, is it about fixing the institutions that fix the pipe?