

Education system of pakistan analysis



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

All through human history, the source of success had been the control of natural resources – land, gold and oil. Suddenly, the emphasis has shifted to knowledge and education in the modern contemporary world. The world's wealthiest man, Bill Gates, owns nothing tangible – no land, no gold or oil, no factories, no armies. For the first time in human history the world's wealthiest man owns only knowledge, which has become the new basis for wealth. Progress and prosperity of a country, both spiritual and material, thus largely depend, more than ever before on the kind of education it provides to its people. Indeed, education is one of the most powerful instruments of change in achieving national goals by producing young minds imbued with the knowledge, attitude, skills and competencies to shape the future destiny of a nation.

Contrary to the challenge of this emerging education revolution, out of Pakistan's total population of 140 million, around 80 million are illiterate.

[1]The national literacy rate is 45 percent with male literacy at 57 percent and female at 33, a gross enrolment at primary level of 87 percent (of whom 50 percent drop out before grade 5), 17. 5 percent gross enrolment at secondary level and 4. 5 percent at tertiary level?[2]

Despite 53 years of our independence we have not been able to tailor the education system in conformity with our religious, ideological, socio-economic needs and the imperatives of the modern world. The failure could be attributed to any number of causes but the fact remains that quantitatively, our literacy rate is poorest even among developing countries of the world, qualitatively our certificates and degrees carry little weight in

the international institutes and there still exists an imbalance in our requirements to tailor an ideal education system.

We have stepped into the 21st century, which surely requires a definite reappraisal of our education system. We ought to learn from our very slow progress rate in the past and must take steps to meet the challenges of the future lest we are left behind.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF EDUCATION IN THE SUB-CONTINENT

Teaching the offspring's has always been the natural instinct of all animals. It differed from society to society and man to man. The Sub-continent remained in darkness so far as community education was concerned till the establishment of Vedic schools but than it saw turbulence in this field which very few regions have seen. This part will briefly cover the different stages of the turbulence in the sub-continent.

Before British Rule

Vedic Schools of Brahmins. The earliest schools in the country now known as Pakistan were the Vedic schools for the training of Brahim priests.

Sometimes before 500 B. C these schools began to enrol nonpriestly class pupils and to develop as true community schools in every village. They were generally composed of 12 to 20 students, and their sole teacher was the village priest who was regarded as a public official supported through rent-free land or a share in the harvest. The classes were normally held in the open under shady trees.

Buddhist Monks. A parallel educational system was sponsored by the Buddhists to prepare their adherents for a life of meditation as a monk. The Buddhist schools, although located in monasteries, were open to all. Youth intending to pursue a monastic life were trained until the age of 20, while those who wanted a secular career left at the age of 12.

Muslim Madrassahs. The Muslim invaders introduced the third educational system, and it flourished particularly in the northern areas of the subcontinent. Schools were generally attached to the Mosques, and the curriculum consisted of the Quran and little else. While the Muslim rulers supported only Islamic schools, Hindus and Buddhists retained their traditional education. Muslim male children (females were excluded from all forms of public education) began their study in maktab, where they received instructions from the imam (worship leader of a mosque) in the rudiments of the Arabic language. The older students continued their studies in the madrasahs, where they were taught Arabic and Persian, rhetoric, grammar, logic, geometry, algebra, astronomy, natural philosophy, medicine, theology and poetry. Children of the wealthy, especially the girls, were often tutored privately in their homes. The madrassahs declined in number and standards with the decline of the Mughal Empire and rise of British power in the 18th and 19th centuries[3]

During the British Rule

The British System. The system of education followed in colonial India was introduced by the British primarily for turning out clerks and subordinates necessary for carrying on the administrative affairs of the country in English under the British masters in the colonial set-up. The system of education

designed by Lord Macaulay in his own words was aimed at "forming a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, opinions, morals and intellect." [4] By the end of the 19th century, Muslims were encouraged to opt for the British system of education, which opened the door to economic and social advancement. However the consensus of the opinion was that since the existing system was designed by the alien rulers to serve their own imperialistic ends it can hardly be expected to deliver the goods. [5]

Muslim Institutes. In reaction to the British system, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan introduced a new English education system which, in character was Indian-Muslim. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan founded Anglo-Muhammadan College, now known as Aligarh Muslim University in 1875, and he always believed that Western education was compatible with Islam. Simultaneously, the orthodox Muslims introduced institutions like Deoband, Nadwat-ul-ulema Lucknow etc, thus giving rise to a sharp distinction between the traditionalists and the modernists, a distinction that continues to this day.

At / After Partition

The inherited System. The present system of education in Pakistan is the heritage of the Pre – Partitioned British India. However, since independence many policies, plans and reports have been formulated for improving the literacy rate in the country. The important documents in this regard are listed as annex A.

Education Policy 1998 to 2010. The policy incorporates a large number of new steps to resuscitate the education system. According to this policy 45,

000 new primary schools and 20, 000 mosque schools are to be set up before 2003. 75, 000 more basic education institutions were to be established under Prime Minister Literacy Commission. 45, 000 primary schools are to be upgraded to middle level and 30, 000 to secondary level. The policy laid special emphasis on vocational and technical education. Private sector has also been encouraged to set up schools, colleges and universities. This is an ambitious policy aimed at achieving 70% literacy by year 2010. Its other main features are attached as annex B[6]:

All the policies and plans as mentioned above envisaged various objectives at different levels however the spirit of the objectives, remained the same as it continues to stress:

- The ideological basis of education.
- National Unity.
- Development.
- Growth of the Society.
- Economic Progress.
- Equalisation of educational opportunity.
- Social equality.
- Quality of education.
- j. Education to be oriented to the world of work.
- Quality of education to be maintained at all levels with global standard.
- Propagation of scientific, technological and research aptitude.
- To promote functional literacy among out of school children.
- To bring about cultural harmony and social cohesion through education.

- To bring about the country's spiritual and culture in harmony with the contemporary world.

The overall sketch of the objectives of all-educational policies and plans clearly indicates the story of Education in Pakistan as the story of high promises, rhetorical emphasis on progress but sadly, little real achievement[7].

ANALYSIS OF OUR PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Though the education system has attracted a considerable attention, it is difficult to ascertain any deterioration in its quality as well as quantity. There has been manifold increase in the number of educational institutions. The government is spending much more than it was in the past but the results are still not satisfactory. The parents blame the teachers, teachers the students and students, in turn, shift the entire responsibility to the system and society. To ascertain the erosion of education standards, it is important to analyse the education system as follows:

- Basic Ingredients.
- Major Weaknesses.
- Effects of Existing Education System.

Basic Ingredients

The educational pyramid consists of three distinct stages – Elementary, Secondary/Higher Secondary and Higher Education.[8]

a. Elementary Education. Designed from 5 to 12 years of age to impart universal literacy and explore hidden talent among the students from class I to 8. Elementary education employs regional languages as medium of

<https://assignbuster.com/education-system-of-pakistan-analysis/>

instruction. Rural areas confront low enrolment, weak turnout, weak infrastructure and inadequate facilities, whereas urban institutions are overcrowded and located in unhealthy environment. This crucial stage of a child's learning is overloaded with stereotypical academic curriculum basically aiming at providing primary inputs for higher education. The syllabus provides no opportunity for arts, crafts and pre-vocational exposures.

Secondary and Higher Secondary Education. Secondary and Higher Secondary stage is an integral part of the growth package for an individual towards his intellectual, research and professional excellence, coincides with adolescence stage (a delicate and sensitive phase of human development) which requires calculated guidance with logical reasoning. The existing curriculum at this stage is again information oriented, predominantly bookish and theoretical in nature, which does not develop a child as to the demands of either the society or work place. The students thus lack exposure to practical and creative work. Soon after their secondary schooling, many of them begin to search for a clerical type of job. At present, 60-80% of students in secondary classes are enrolled in arts subjects, which leads through an aimless general education that has very little acceptance in our agro-based controlled economy. Thus, a pattern of supply rather than demand-orientation in terms of instructions at secondary and higher secondary levels is further accentuating the dropouts either before or during this critical learning period.

Higher Education. This commences at the age where the element of coercion fades away and students are motivated enough to pursue serious studies

and possess abilities for academic/intellectual growth. There are basically stages of scholarly activities at higher education. These are B. A, M. A and the M. Phil. /Ph. D. The first one introduces the field of specialisation, the second the mastery of same field and the third carries students into new advanced fields through independent study and original research work. Under the present educational environment, higher education is producing academics instead of practitioners as there is virtually no concept or avenue for the use of higher learning of certain subjects in our society. Since thinking process and creation of knowledge remains quite restricted without proper experience and experiments and therefore, higher education without practice cannot be truly useful.

Some relevant educational statistics/targets as envisaged in the educational policy of 1998-2010 are attached as annexes C, D, E and F

MAJOR WEAKNESSES

Lack of Quality Education. The most important problem being faced by our educational system is that of quality education. The major factor being overcrowding in the classes i. e. 80 students or more are handled together in a small room. The teaching staff is also unable to pay individual attention to their students; this naturally leads to indiscipline and deterioration of standards in the class.[9]

Untrained Teachers. Unfortunately non-availability of qualified and properly trained teachers also retarded the expansion of literacy rate by adversely affecting the establishment of new educational institution as well as the quality of education in existing institutions. In a nation wide study in Pakistan

in 1995, teachers with less than Matric level education could not answer 30% of questions based on grade four textbooks.[10]

Large Number of Dropouts. Socio-economic factor is a major reason for a large number of dropouts of students even before completing their primary/middle standards. Economic pressures force a student to assist the family to increase family income at the expense of his education. Other contributing factors in this regard are :[11]

- A dislike for school subjects.
- Unsatisfactory student-teacher relationship.
- A history of school failures.
- Non participation in school activities.

Female Education. Literacy rate of female in Pakistan is half of that of males.

Primary reasons for this are:

- Male dominance, cultural biases, and ages old tribal traditions.
- Girls are often required to help with household work of the family.
- Lack of conveniently located schools and separate schools for girls.
- Non availability of female teacher's. In Pakistan female teachers at primary level are 25% of total teachers.
- Inflexible hours of schooling and irrelevant curricula.

Non Involvement of Community. Nationalisation of schools in the 1970's, without adequate community participation in the running of schools, had led to a major deterioration in the quality of education.

Non Participation of Private Sector. Insufficient government facilities do not cater for requirements of the country. In rural areas, where literacy rate is at the lowest, no worth while participation of the private sector exists.

Illdiversification of Courses. It is imperative that a wide choice of subjects be made available to the students at the beginning of 9th class to suit their individual needs, aptitude and temperaments. It is unfortunate that most of our education is of a general and academic nature. Therefore there is an intellectual drought. The general academic nature, no doubt, helps in broadening the vision and creating a general consciousness of the happenings around us, but it is seldom of any use in carrying out the practical affairs of life successfully in the complex society of today.

Allocation of Funds. UNESCO has recommended that 4% of the G. N. P, is a reasonable amount to be spent by the developing countries on education, whereas Pakistan presently is spending about 2. 2% of G. N. P on education. Infact Pakistan is the only country in South Asia, where expenditure on education, as a percentage of G. N. P, has fallen since 1990.[12]

Evaluation System. Prevalent examination system is marred by a number of evils. Tests are based on end of cycle certification rather than periodic tests. Dangerous trend of cheating and manipulation has also crept in the system.

Language. Our education system suffers from a precarious struggle between education in English and Urdu. Presently, there are two standards of education each basing on one language.

Other Factors

Out of meagre amount spent on education, a huge portion is wasted through corrupt and inefficient system. According to a survey by Army Rs 1. 5 billion per year were embezzled in head of teacher's salaries.[13]

52% of teachers in Pakistan use physical punishment.

Curriculum of primary education is not in line with our objectives and national aspirations.

Textbooks are sub standard and generally are not in conformity with the specifications/standards set by the curriculum bureau.[14]

Political unrest and unhealthy political activities amongst students adversely affect education. It's however limited to beyond primary and secondary levels.

School timings for the year do not take into account agriculture cycles, which limits attendance in rural areas.[15]

Narrow research base in the universities.

h. Non-employability of educated youth.

j. Ineffective role of media.

k. Education not being used at all for social change.

l. Learning less in substance and more in volume.

Effects of Existing Education System

Lack of National Aspirations. The development of education is confronted with just about all problems that can be found anywhere in the world. A long detailed description of objectives and aspirations of all educational policies since 1947-98 magnifies the confusion as it has always been set in the absence of definite National Goals.

Waste of Effort. The present education system does not prepare a student for the challenges of the life rather it only prepares him for examination. At the same time huge amount is spent on sending individuals abroad for higher studies and research but the country does not have requisite means and infrastructure to benefit from their higher standards on their return, thus the higher qualification become a mere status symbol with no advantage to the country and no satisfaction to the individuals academic aspirations.

Loss of Inherited Trade. Most of our students come from the working class. The present system of education detaches them from their ancestral trade/business and imparts them a general education though at times it may be very sophisticated education. These youth are ultimately a loss to their trades, to their parents, to the society and to themselves as well. The present system of education is systematically producing a large number of unemployed, frustrated and dejected youth.[16]

Unemployment. Education policies in the past made an effort to give an industrial bias to education. Hence a number of polytechnics and commercial colleges were opened throughout the country. The result is that now we have a daring situation of unemployment among technically qualified.

Moreover trade and industry field in the country is still not sufficiently developed to absorb these trained people.

Bad Governness. Giving higher education to those not possessing the intelligence and aptitude is a national waste. The present system of education in Pakistan is producing so many unemployable graduates of such indifferent quality that they are often not even good clerks and assistants. It is not the number of persons graduating that asses the efficacy of an education system but the quality of such graduates. When the incapable graduates grow in abundance and the society has no system other than the degree to determine merit, the incompetent are bound to infiltrate all walks of life and reasonable positions and threaten the very survival of the socio-economic institutions. The proliferation of facilities for higher education without appropriate merit criteria is, therefore, counterproductive.

Waste of Female Strength. Women who constitute 52 % of the country's population have literacy rate of only 26%. The dropout ratio for women during and after primary schooling is about 80%. The main reason behind it is that girls are not considered as an economic asset to the family hence their education remains a neglected aspect in our society.

Production of Disgruntled Youth. According to education policy 1972-80, " the existing system of education is one of the root cause of the general dropout in our education system. At present there are internal examination from class first to seventh, under which students are failed or passed on the basis of annual test. There is no test of observing or recording the performance of the student throughout the year. As a result the passing or

failing of a students in the annual examination becomes a matter of the pupils memory. The high percentage of failures not only leads to heavy dropouts but also brings to life feeling of frustration and inferiority in the student. This is not only a national wastage but adds to our society a large number of handicapped people,”[17]which ultimately produces disgruntled youth.

Controversial Medium of Instruction. Notwithstanding the recognition of Urdu as a national language in the constitution, education policy on the medium of instruction is always based on compromises. The phenomenon of different languages being used in various regions as medium of instruction and even within a region has created a confused state. In these circumstances development of textbooks in indigenous languages has not been carried out in a systematic and co-ordinated manner. This apart, a student remains exposed to learning three/four languages. From this ensues limited linguistic ability which ” restricts the students horizon and forces them to rely on memorising and learning by rote.”[18]The students mug up few topics that they expect in examination; if the question paper include those topics, the examinees are happy and if the expected questions are not asked, they protest violently and leave the examination hall.

Lack of Pride in the Teaching Profession. Qualified and motivated youth in the teaching profession is essential to ensure a quality education. The best graduates join either engineering or medicine while the rest look for other outlets before joining as a teacher. Low pay grades, poor social status, meagre benefits and a missing career-ladder in teaching profession does not attract the best students. Presently, teaching is a difficult job with low salary,

no status and ever-growing public criticism. These are making it difficult for the teacher to work with pride and dedication.

Improvement Towards Betterment

STRENGTH

Having completed the analysis, it is felt that there are basically five major fields in the education system, which needs close attention to put the things at their right place. The recommendations are being made in these fields one by one which are:-

- Economic Reforms.
- Structural Organisations.
- Qualitative Improvements.
- Socio-Political, Ethical and Cultural Development.
- National Emergency

Economic Reforms

User Charges. There is a strong justification to gradually raise fee structure for secondary and higher level education. However, on social consideration the raise should be steeper for higher level than secondary level. Those poor outstanding students, who qualify for higher studies, should be provided a fixed stipend.

Induction of Local Bodies and Private Sector in Education. Education is basically the responsibility of provincial government, but at the same time it is also a national concern and in certain major areas, decision ought to be taken at national level. There is a need to regard education as a federal-provincial partnership. Education planning has to be decentralised to the

district level and still down to union council level. Moreover, there is a need to incorporate private sector particularly the NGO's and support them in a massive way through financial support to enable them to undertake literacy programmes on a much larger scale.

Increased Budgetary Allocations. The government must allocate minimum 4% of G. N. P, to education as recommended by UNESCO. Additional resources be diverted from the budget to education by effecting some economy in defence /Non developmental expenditure.

Structural Organisation

Primary and Adult Education. Primary and adult education should form the bulwark of our education structure and should receive highest allocation.

Emphasis should be laid on properly equipping the existing schools before establishing new formal schools or informal and community schools.

However, the existing and new schools should take into account the socio-economic environment of areas in the matter of educational cycle and timings of schools. If this is not taken into account, high dropout rates and phenomena of ghost schools will continue.

Secondary Education. Secondary schools are of two types, general and vocational/polytechnic. These schools should be unified and converted into complete stage of education with curricula of compulsory subjects and a few elective subjects for preparing the students for a definite vocational career.

Tertiary Education. The colleges and the universities, both general and professional, have outgrown in number. The need is to consolidate and

improve these seats of higher learning than expanding them. This improvement and consolidation should be brought about by:

- a. Admitting the students purely on merit after subjecting them to aptitude tests so as to determine whether they really qualify for specialised studies.
- b. Making the colleges and universities autonomous and research oriented.
- c. Throwing out politics and professional students from the campuses.
- d. Bestowing on Professors and Teachers the same social status as is enjoyed by them in advanced countries.

Medium of Instructions. The issue of medium of instruction has continued to be skirted due to its sensitivity. The issue should be tackled rationally and boldly as under:

At primary level the national language as unanimously agreed to by the representatives of the people and enshrined in the Constitution, should be introduced as the medium of instruction.

At the secondary level also, the national language should be made the medium of instruction. English should be taught as compulsory subject and its curricula should be completely revised to encourage communicative and cognitive skills in this language.

- c. At tertiary level, English should be the medium of instructions. The possibility of introduction of national language can be reviewed later.

Qualitative Improvements

Teachers Education. The output of qualified teachers has lagged behind the expansion in the schools. Therefore, the number of teacher's training institution should be increased and unqualified teachers should be compulsorily trained in these institutions. Those who do not qualify should not be retained. At the same time, the terms of service of teachers should be improved to make profession of education attractive.

Teachers Supervision and Performance Assessment. With the expansion in the educational network, supervision and assessment of teachers has received a serious setback. This lack of supervision and support has resulted in large-scale absenteeism and low morale among teachers. Hence, in order to improve supervision and carry out on-the-spot support to teachers (model teaching, in service training etc) existing training and inspection system should be strengthened.

Incentives. Suitable annual awards should be instituted for the meritorious work in the field of literacy at national, provincial and local level. It has been observed that government schoolteachers take up alternative employment while their attendance is recorded regularly by junior teachers attending the classes. In the rural areas the situation is much worse.

Number of Students in a Class. To prevent overcrowding, the number of students in a class should be restricted to thirty-five or less.

Physical Facilities including Instructional Material. The educational institutions are deficient in four areas, namely buildings and furniture,

laboratories and equipment, textbooks and sports. These facilities are to be made available without any delay.

Curriculum. Curricula in educational institutions are not only overcrowded but also out of pace with advancement of knowledge. Therefore, a major effort should be made to revise curricula at primary, secondary, college and university levels in order to make it meaningful and responsive to the needs of the society. Moreover it should be same for both the government and private schools throughout the country.

Textbooks. Our textbooks are of poor quality lacking content, method of presentation, printing and set-up. At the same time, they are cost productive. These textbooks have also a strong flavour of foreignness which, to a large extent, owes to syllabus as also to scarcity of writers who can compose textbooks without relying heavily on plagiarism. Therefore, a massive reform of textbooks should be undertaken.

Examination System. The examinations test the students for rote memory and largely exclude conceptual and cognitive tests. The system should be reformed with emphasis on internal assessment and its linkage with curriculum development process. There is also a need for the standardisation of the examination system. All examination papers should be prepared by one central authority, through one curriculum both for private and government schools. Effort should also be made to make evaluation system foolproof. There is also a need to take suitable measures to eliminate test papers and notes other than prescribed curr