

National Education Policy (1998 – 2010) and Education System Pakistan during 2008-2010 in Pakistan; A Detailed Analysis

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Abstract:

Pakistan's education base was too narrow, with a 90% rate of illiteracy at the time of independence. However, political instability, corruption, and maladministration in government did not help to adopt an insistent strategy to address the issue. Resultantly the adult literacy rate and student enrolment remained far from satisfactory as compared to other South Asian Countries. The basic attempt in this study is made to analyze the poor Education System in Pakistan and identify the core reasons and further suggest ways to improve. This attempt is primarily focused on the understanding of education as an instrument of national integration and prosperity. To make the study more meaningful the subject has been dealt with objectively and empirically, the analyses have been carried out in the light of educational policy (1998-2010) using both descriptive and analytical techniques alternating following the requirement of the research. The paper consists of an introduction and elaboration of the importance of education in the current information-based global environment, a description of the national education policies and strategies promulgated from time to time, the problems the education setup is confronting, and recommendations to vitalize the poor education system of Pakistan.

Keywords: National Education Policy (1998 – 2010), the Education system in Pakistan, problems of education, poor educational system.

Introduction:

Education is broadly considered a vital key to change and progress; modernization and creation, and development and success. It serves as the medium for mankind for progression on the ladder of progression. This is a continued and inherited process. This invaluable thing is a blessing from God. Allah Almighty adorned Adam – the first human being – with 'knowledge of things', first and foremost. According to the Quran, it is 'Knowledge of Things' that differentiates and establishes man's supremacy over other creatures (Quran, Al-Baqrah-30). Knowledge is a characteristic of leadership (Quran, Al-Baqrah, 247) and it is a vital factor that is necessary for the healthy evolution and growth of any civilization. That is why all civilizations not only recognize the need for education but gave it much and much significance too. Quaid-i-Azam, during the Pakistan Educational Conference at Karachi on November 27, 1947, very aptly uttered the following remarks:

“The importance of education and the right type of education cannot be over-emphasized. If we are to make any real, speedy, and substantial progress, we must earnestly tackle this question and bring our educational policy and program on the lines suited to the genius of our people, consonant with our history and culture, and having regard to the modern conditions and vast developments that have taken place all over the world”.

Significance of Education:

Education has always been considered one of the main factors for socioeconomic and subsequently national development because of its ability to raise the quality and productivity of human capital. Education also creates awareness, tolerance, self-esteem, and confidence, which empower people to defend their rights, reduce poverty and inequality and improve health, status, and good governance in the implementation of socio-economic policies. It also enables the people to protect their ideological inspiration and helps in developing national cohesion.

Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his Presidential Address at the All India Muslim League, Lahore March 23, 1940, demanded to all Muslims of the Subcontinent “come forward as servants of Islam organize the people economically, socially, educationally and politically and I am sure that you will be a power that will be accepted by everybody”. Thus, the benefits of education are not only limited to an individual’s development but also plays important role in developing the national economy which gives the nation long-lasting prosperity and continued progress.

Pakistan became a sovereign state on August 14, 1947. The British Rule in India had already given a serious blow to the system of education that eminent the Muslims from the rest of the communities living in the subcontinent. As a natural reaction, the Muslims did not come to terms with imposing administration. Muslims tended to remain apart and did not participate in the modernization taking place around them (Hayes, 1987). Therefore, Muslims were separated from the mainstream.

Pakistan’s education base was too narrow, with a 90% rate of illiteracy at the time of independence. However, political instability, corruption, and maladministration in government did not help to adopt an insistent strategy to address the issue. Resultantly the adult literacy rate and student enrolment remained far from satisfactory as compared to other South Asian Countries (Qureshi & Rarieya, 2007; Qureshi, 1975).

The basic attempt in this study is made to analyze the poor Education System in Pakistan and identify the core reasons and further suggest ways to improve. This attempt is primarily focused on the understanding of education as an instrument of national integration and prosperity.

The study has heavily drawn on primary as well as secondary sources which have been detailed in the bibliography. To make the study more meaningful the subject has been dealt with objectively and empirically, using both descriptive and analytical techniques alternating following the requirement of the research.

National educational policies and strategies:

In the initial days of its establishment, the nation was fighting for its survival. This insight was to guide its development planning and policy-making but not always, unfortunately, in a manner that would ensure positive change (Hoodbhoy, 1998). The leaders only created policies but not in the true sense of educational policies to counter divisions along socio-economic class divides. Policies about improving quality such as achieving 80% literacy, requiring eleven years of schooling and three years of BA, and requiring school enrollment to increase to include 75% of children of school-going age are bandied every few years. However, none of the above-stated goals have been achieved.

Efforts were made to transform the education system in a planned manner during the General Ayub regime. Some of the landmarks achieved were the establishment of the

Commission on National Education, in 1959 (Hayes, 1987) and the Commission on Student Problems and Welfare, in 1964. Emphasis was given to the importance of education in developing national character and orientation towards science & technology. Religious education was more symbolic than real.

After General Ayub, General Yahya who again imposed martial law was too set about formulating an education policy that had hardly anything new. There was usual lip service to Islam for the preservation of Islamic values as an instrument of national unity and progress. There was rhetoric about quality education, academic freedom, and the creation of a democratic social order by ensuring equal access to opportunities for education.

Bhutto's regime nationalized the privately managed institutions and there was an additional emphasis on adult education. As per the Government, education was to be free at the primary level and universal up to class X, salaries of lecturers/teachers were raised and University Grants Commission was established to coordinate all university programs.

During General Zia's regime greater emphasis was laid on the process of Islamization and Islamic education was made compulsory at all levels. The institutions of Maktab and Madressahs were revived and provided financial support. The main thrust was given on mass literacy and enrollment of school dropouts in the 1985 government, through the "New Roshani School Scheme" which could be a step forward. But such schemes were wrapped up by the next elected government in (1988-1990).

The current government is following the education policy of 1998-2010 (Appendix I). Which were announced by the Government of Pakistan on 27 March 1998. It vows to double the literacy rate, universalize primary education, and reproduce the non-formal schools to reach the un-reached, increase the learning time by reducing school holidays, improve the assessment system through the introduction of the National Testing Service, and initiate the decentralization process through the formation of District Education Authorities (USAID, 2011).

National Education Policy (1998 – 2010):

The salient features of the National Education Policy 1998-2010 are as follows:

- i. **Literacy and Non-Formal Education:** Eradication of illiteracy through formal and informal means by expanding basic education by involving the community.
- ii. **Elementary Education:** It was planned to increase the gross enrolment ratio at the primary level to 100% by the year 2010 and to enforce Compulsory Primary Education Act. Full utilization of existing capacity at the basic level is to be ensured by introducing a double shift in existing schools of basic education. At the elementary level, a system of continuous evaluation will be adopted to ensure the attainment of minimum learning competencies for improving the quality of education.
- iii. **Secondary Education:** One model secondary school will be set up at each district level. A definite vocation or a career will be introduced at the secondary level. It would be ensured that all the boys and girls, desirous of entering secondary education, become enrolled in secondary schools. Curriculum for secondary and higher secondary will be revised and multiple textbooks will be introduced.
- iv. **Teacher Education:** To upgrade the quality of pre-service teacher training programs will be introduced. The contents and methodology parts of teacher education curricula will be revised. Both formal and non-formal means shall be

used to provide increased opportunities for in-service training to the working teachers, preferably at least once in 5 years. A special package of incentive package shall be provided to rural females to join the teaching profession.

- v. **Technical and Vocational Education:** The purpose is to develop opportunities for technical and vocational education in the country for producing trained manpower, commensurate with the needs of industry and economic development goals. Revision and updating of curricula shall be made a continuing activity to keep pace with changing needs of the job market and to accommodate the new developments and emerging technologies. A National Council for Technical Education shall be established to regulate technical education.
- vi. **Higher Education:** Access to higher education shall be expanded to at least five percent of the age group 17-23 by the year 2010. Merit shall be the only criterion for entry into higher education. Access to higher education, therefore, shall be based on entrance tests. Reputed degree colleges shall be given autonomy and degree awarding status. To attract highly talented qualified teachers, the university staff will be paid at higher rates than usual grades. Local M. Phil and Ph. D. programs shall be launched and laboratory and library facilities will be strengthened. Split Ph. D. programs shall be launched in collaboration with reputed foreign universities. All quota/reserve seats shall be eliminated. To eliminate violence, all political activities on the campus shall be banned.
- vii. **Information Technology:** Computers shall be introduced in secondary schools in a phased manner. Presently use of computers by Pakistani students is very low. School curricula shall be revised to include recent developments in information technology, such as software development, the Information Super Highway, designing Web Pages, etc.
- viii. **Library and Documentation Services:** School, college, and university libraries shall be equipped with the latest reading materials/services. Internet connection with a computer shall be given to each library. Mobile library services for semi-urban and remote rural areas shall be introduced.
- ix. **Private Sector in Education:** Private investment in education will be encouraged. There shall be regulatory bodies at the national and provincial levels to regulate activities and smooth functioning of privately-managed schools and institutions of higher education through proper rules and regulations. A reasonable tax rebate shall be granted on the setting up of educational facilities. Matching grants shall be provided for establishing educational institutions by the private sector in rural areas or poor urban areas through Education Foundations. Educational institutions to be set up in the private sector shall be provided:
 - Plots in residential schemes on reserve prices.
 - Rebate on income tax, like industry.
 - Schools running on a non-profit basis shall be exempted from all taxes. Curricula of private institutions must conform to the principles laid down in the Federal Supervision of curricula, Textbooks, and Maintenance of Standards of Education Act, 1976. The fee structure of privately managed educational institutions shall be developed in consultation with the government.

- x. **Innovative Programs:** The National Education Testing Service will be established to design and administer standardized tests for admission to professional institutions and subsequently for general education in universities. Qualifying these tests will become a compulsory requirement and this mechanism is expected to check the incidence of malpractice in examinations.
- xi. **Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation:** A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system has been envisaged from the grass-roots to the highest level. The District Education Authority will be established in each district to ensure public participation in monitoring and implementation. The education Ministers at the Federal and Provincial levels will oversee monitoring committees, responsible for implementation at their levels. The Prime Minister and Provincial Chief Ministers will be the Chiefs of National and Provincial Education Councils respectively which will ensure the achievement of targets. Realistic data will be collected for planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation purposes to avoid disparities and confusion.
- xii. **Financial Aspects:** The total expenditure of the government on education will be raised from its present level of 2.2 percent to four percent of GNP.

Literacy:

According to the Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2009-10, the overall literacy rate (age 10 years and above) is 57.7 % (69.5 % for males and 45.2 % for females) compared to 57.4 % (69.3 % for males and 44.7 % for female) for 2008-09. The data shows that literacy remains higher in urban areas (73.2 %) than in rural areas (49.2 %), and is more prevalent for men (80.2 %) compared to women (65.5 %) in rural areas. However, it is evident from the data that rural-urban and male-female disparity seems to be closing a bit. When analyzed provincially, the literacy rate in Punjab stood at 59.6 %, Sindh at 58.2%, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at 50.9% and Baluchistan at 51.5%. The literacy rate of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has improved considerably during 2008-09 and 2009-10

Table 1: Literacy Rate in Pakistan¹

Province/Area	2008-09			2009-10		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Pakistan	57.4%	69.3%	44.7%	57.7%	69.5%	45.2%
Rural	48.6%	63.2%	33.4%	49.2%	63.6%	34.2%
Urban	73.3%	80.3%	65.6%	73.2%	80.2%	65.5%
Punjab	58.7%	68.5%	48.8%	59.6%	69.1%	49.8%
Rural	51.3%	63.1%	39.5%	52.5%	64.0%	40.7%
Urban	73.3%	78.9%	67.4%	73.5%	78.9%	67.8%
Sindh	59.4%	71.2%	45.6%	58.2%	70.2%	44.3%
Rural	41.8%	59.0%	20.7%	41.0%	58.2%	20.3%
Urban	75.7%	82.9%	67.5%	74.9%	82.2%	66.8%
KPK	50.0%	69.6%	31.1%	50.9%	70.1%	32.3%
Rural	47.1%	67.9%	27.4%	48.4%	68.3%	29.1%
Urban	63.4%	77.4%	49.0%	62.7%	77.8%	47.4%

¹ Source: USAID, 2011

Baluchistan	51.5%	68.5%	30.2%	51.5%	69.2%	29.3%
Rural	46.5%	64.4%	23.8%	45.7%	64.2%	22.5%
Urban	66.4%	81.0%	48.8%	69.6%	85.0%	50.6%

The below graph shows the provincial percentages of the literacy rate in Pakistan during year 2008-09 and 2009-10:

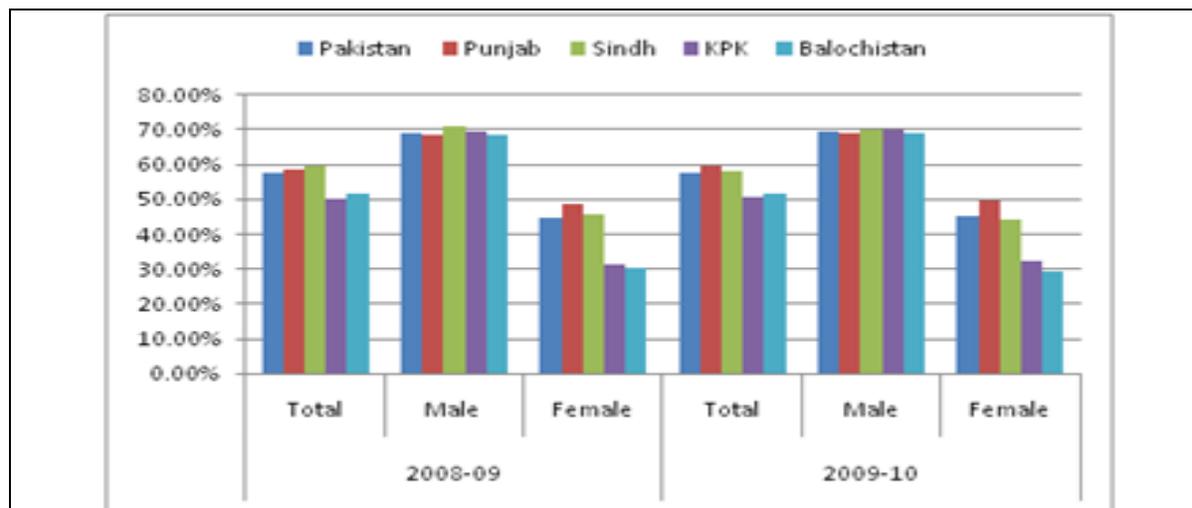


Figure 1: The Provincial Percentages of the Literacy Rate in Pakistan (USAID, 2011).

Levels of Education:

The comparative shares of literate depict marginal improvement in the profile of educational attainment. Nevertheless, all categories remain at the same level except for a sort of increase in below matric (37.5 %). Generally, males are more educated compared to females. The comparative picture is given in Table.

Table 2: Level of Education-Distribution of Population 10 + Years of Age by Sex²

Level of Education	2008-09			2009-10		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Literate	57.4%	69.3%	44.7%	57.7%	69.5%	45.2%
No formal education	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Below matric	37.1%	44.4%	29.2%	37.5%	44.9%	29.5%
Matric but less than Intermediate	10.7%	13.4%	7.8%	10.7%	13.1%	8.0%
Intermediate but less than Degree	4.7%	5.6%	3.8%	4.7%	5.6%	3.8%
Degree and above	4.4%	5.4%	3.4%	4.3%	5.3%	3.4%
Illiterate	42.6%	30.7%	55.3%	42.3%	30.5%	54.8%
Total (A+B)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

- i. **Pre-primary Education:** Pre-Primary Education is the basic component of Early Childhood Education (ECE), Prep classes of children aged 3-4 years. An increase of 4.0 percent in Pre-Primary enrolment (8.743 million) in 2009-10 over 2008-09

² Source: USAID, 2011

- (8.434 million) has been observed during 2009-10, it is estimated to increase by 2.0 percent in 2010-11 (Table 3).
- ii. **Primary Education (Classes I – V):** 157,360 Primary Schools with 466,451 Teachers are functional. An increase in Primary enrolment (18.756 million) in 2009-10 over 2008-09 (18.468 million) has been observed during 2009-10, it is estimated to increase by 1.4 percent in 2010-11 (Table 3).
 - iii. **Middle Education (Classes VI-VIII):** 41,330 Middle Schools with 331,254 Teachers are functional. An increase in middle enrolment (5.501 million) in 2009-10 over 2008- 09 (5.414 million) has been observed during 2009-10, it is estimated to increase by 0.4 percent in 2010-11 (Table 3). 24,792 Secondary Schools with 446,490 Teachers are functional. An increase in secondary enrolment (2.581 million) in 2009-10 over 2008-09 (2.556 million) has been observed during 2009-10. It is estimated to increase by 2.9 percent in 2010-11 (Table 3).
 - iv. **Higher Secondary/Inter Colleges (Classes XI-XII) Secondary Education (Classes IX-X):** An enrolment of 1.257 million is estimated in 2010-11 against 1.165 million in 2009-10 and 1.07 million in 2008-09 whereas, 3,323 Higher Secondary Schools and Inter Colleges with 77,118 Teachers are functional (See Table 3)
 - v. **Degree Colleges Education (Classes XIII-XIV):** An enrolment of 619,629 students is expected during 2010-11 in Degree Colleges against 542,381 in 2009-10. A total of 1,439 Degree Colleges with 30,753 teachers are functional (Table 3).
 - vi. **Universities Education (Classes XV onwards):** An enrolment of 1,105,307 is estimated in 2010- 11 in Higher Education over 935,596 in 2009-10. To boost higher education. Three new universities have been established during the year 2009-10 making the total number 132 universities with 57,780 Teachers in both Private and Public Sectors (Table 3).

Table 3: Enrolment Institutions & State of Teachers^{3,4}

Year	Enrolment			Institution			Teachers		
	2008-09	2009-10 (P)	2010-11 (E)	2008-09	2009-10 (P)	2010-11 (E)	2008-09	2009-10 (P)	2010-11 (E)
Pre-primary	8435	8743	8925						
Primary	18468	18756	19022	156.4	157.4	157.0	465.3	466.5	470.0
Middle	5414	5501	5525	40.9	41.3	41.8	320.5	331.3	337.5
High	2556	2582	2658	24.3	24.8	25.2	439.3	446.5	455.2
Higher Sec/Inter	1074	1165	1257	3.2	3.3	3.4	76.2	77.1	79.2
Degree College	429	542	620	1.3	1.4	1.6	21.2	30.8	35.7
Universities	804	936	1105	0.1	0.1	-	52.8	57.8	63.5
Total	37180	38226	39111	226.6	228.4	229.0	1375.3	1409.8	1441.2

Physical Infrastructure:

The quality of the existing learning environment is evident from the fact that a large number of schools are missing basic infrastructure facilities i.e. 32.7 percent of schools up to

³ P: Provisional, E: Estimated, including Pre-primary and Mosque Schools

⁴ Source: USAID, 2011.

elementary level, 32 % are without a boundary wall, 33.6 % without drinking water facility, 35.4 % without latrines and around 60 % schools are without electricity. For higher accessibility of education particularly for girls in a low-income household and to enhance enrolment, existing schools should be upgraded with the provision of necessary infrastructure to improve both output and quality of education (Qureshi & Rarieya, 2007). (Table 4)

Table 4: Missing Facilities in Government Schools 2009-10⁵

Province/area	Building	Boundary wall	Drinking water	Toilets	electricity
Punjab	1061	11665	7529	12125	23685
Sindh	10722	24001	24559	21664	41230
KPK	430	8327	9280	7291	13134
Balochistan	760	1436	5520	8449	9821
AJK	2596	5061	3906	4212	4443
Gilgit-Baltistan	202	1053	975	934	1065
FATA	225	1834	3095	3050	2839
ICT	0	12	9	9	6
Total Pakistan	15996	53389	54873	57734	96223
In %	9.8 %	32.7 %	33.6%	35.4 %	59.0 %

Sustained Political Will:

The education sector reforms program has also failed to produce desired results. The whole system needs to be refurbished for which political will has been a missing factor. The aforementioned national educational policies which were planned and pronounced in a span of over half a century, reflect a constant lack of political will and good Governance. Setting ambitious targets and allocating extremely low funds to about 2 percent of GDP, when at least 4 percent (USAID, 2011) is needed, globalization of education will remain an intangible goal.

Analyses of the Existing Education System:

Basic education should be at the center and heart of a state's obligations to its citizens. This is the stage when a child is prepared for life and in him is a developed attitude and approach that determines his contributions to his own life and role in society and nation-building. Every policy enunciation begins with an emphasis on the state's commitment to providing the children of that country with free compulsory primary and middle schooling. But more often than not the political will has not found the strength that is needed for implementation.

Despite a lot of efforts since the independence of Pakistan, Pakistan's education system is facing a lot of problems because it is not according to the needs of our society. Several drawbacks/grey areas that have been identified are as under:

Multiple Systems of Education: Today our education system does not offer the opportunity and environment of one and equal system of education. We have a very divisive education system that has created a huge gap in the nation and penetrated deeply into our culture. Thus, different tiers have been created in our system over 64 years to facilitate the hold of the elite over the governing of our nation:

⁵ Source: USAID, 2011.

- i. **Cambridge Education system:** This Cambridge education system is exclusively meant for the children of very rich families so that they can after graduation go overseas for higher education. So, the students from the elite class follow the “O” and “A” levels curriculum instead of Pakistan’s domestic, poor-quality curriculum. They have little or no awareness of their religion and culture and associated problems.
- ii. **Pakistan’s Secondary Education System:** This system is provided by private and government schools, one for the middle class and the other for the poor. The one for the middle class has medium instruction in English and the other one in Urdu. The children from these institutions, if they happen to have good grades and the parental financial capital go to the colleges of their preference and the rest either become clerks/ cashiers/salespersons in a shop/worker in the factory/ any other work which comes in their way.
- iii. **Madressahs Education System:** Madressahs are supposed to provide religious education; however, poverty is another factor that restricts the parents to send their children to public or private schools so they prefer to send their children to madrasahs where education is free. Religious madrasahs churn out yet another class that is usually unaware of the world outside their own. This one has no name and consists of children who are born in misery and die in misery.

Aimless Education: Education develops the roots of any nation. Nations prepare their generation according to their ideological, cultural, social, and religious norms through education but the education system of Pakistan is entirely aimless. Our education system is producing goods for no means and use. Socially cultural and political unrest is caused by improper education of our new generation, who can play a vital role in the development of the country.

Lack of Professional Teachers: Over the years since independence public has seen various political parties in the action, various reforms about education, and various declarations on paper but nothing has been fulfilled in a prosperous way. The main reason for the failure of our educational system is the grooming of less technical faculty. Our methods have been stereotyped and new techniques of teaching and materials to make lessons more interesting to the students have not been adopted. Most of our teachers joined teaching just for the sake of a job to earn their livelihood. Over the years, education department has hardly spent any funds on advanced coaching of their faculty staff who are still stuck in the old-age teaching techniques and are unaware of modern methods of teaching and convincing students through sheer knowledge. One of the chronic problems of our education system is the shortage of teachers due to which merit criteria are ignored the number of teachers has been gradually increasing but it does not match favorably with the number of students and there is a gap between the student-teacher ratio.

Dropouts: The provision of basic education has been a goal since independence and enrolment have been increasing but the percentage of student completing primary school has been falling. Only 30 % of those who enroll in primary education ever reach their matriculation exam. The major problem in our education is a large number of dropouts. It is estimated that it is mostly due to economic reasons and the unattractive school environment. Thus, our school-going children cannot even acquire the basic skills of learning and a number of them fall back into the category of illiterates (Quddus, 1990).

Poor Examination System: Examinations are conducted to test the ability of a student and find out his standard of academic learning and knowledge. Through the use of illegal practices, our examination systems have become very widespread and lost their objectives. Our poor

examination system encourages poor learning and cramming. This system is criticized for its tendency to define education as the pursuit of high marks and not the development of intellectual power through learning.

Inadequate Facilities: According to Pakistan Education Statistics 2009-10 by the Ministry of Education most of the public sector educational institutions remain in a poor condition and lack even basic facilities resulting in substandard education. Overcrowded classrooms, low standard and overworked teachers, inadequate teaching material, ill-equipped laboratories having poor staff, shortage of modern books, lack of physical facilities, and virtually crippled children under the dead weight of their curriculum are some of the usual situations in educational institutes of Pakistan. Under such conditions, they cannot be expected to achieve the standard expected from them (Hayes, 1987).

Low Enrollment Rate: Though Pakistan has made some effort and improving the enrollment rates at the primary level, the achievement at present in this regard is still far below that of other countries in the region. According to Pakistan Education Statistics 2009-10 present enrollment rates in Pakistan are 54 percent for males and 30 percent which is very low and comparable to other countries of the region which have by and large crossed the 100 percent mark for both males and females. Teacher absenteeism, untrained teachers, inadequate materials, and obsolete teaching methods are the main reasons for low enrolment in schools. Most public schools are poorly managed, impart poor-quality education, use poorly written textbooks, and use curricula that are not relevant to the needs of the 21st century.

Outdated Curriculum: In Pakistan emphasis is given to quantity, not quality which will make things more worsen for the future generation. The curriculum of our education system is not based on its objectives to create the power of reasoning in a child. It has no direct connection with the practical life which the students will have to face when they become mature people in society. Our curriculum is not updated to compete with the rest of the world in modern education (Hayes, 1987).

No Free Compulsory Education: Seeking knowledge is the religious duty of every Muslim and to get it is the religious duty of every Muslim. Getting it done is the biggest responsibility of the state. In our education system, there is no free and compulsory education available for citizens on equal bases. In other countries of the region like Sri Lanka, there is free and compulsory basic education to create discipline and feelings of common identity and integration, irrespective of social and economic background (Hayes, 1987).

Educational Policies: Several educational policies have been introduced from time to time by various regimes in the history of Pakistan for reforms but due to lack of implementation and inconsistency, they showed no results. Major policy decisions are made under threats from the strongest pressure group or by the political leaders for their political slogan rather than in keeping with the overall needs of the country. Little or no research is done on the implication of these policies and their long-term benefits. Similarly, there is hardly any harmonization between the federal and provincial governments which leads to poor policy implementation. Teachers have also been generally ignored in the policy-making process.

Insufficient Budget Allocation: The share of public education expenditure in national budgets is being increased in many regional countries but it has declined in Pakistan. Pakistan is one of only 12 countries in the world that spends less than 2 percent of its GDP on education. Less than Fifty percent of the funds allocated for development expenditure of the Ministry of Education at the federal level are utilized. A major reason for this underutilization of funds is their complex

financial allocation and release system. Provinces lack financial resources to achieve the goal of universal primary education.

Table 5: Pakistan GDP Expenditure on Education from 1971-1980⁶

YEAR	GDP on Education						
1971	1.28 %	1981	1.51 %	1991	2.21 %	2001	2.34 %
1972	1.28 %	1982	1.49 %	1992	2.08 %	2002	2.34 %
1973	1.28 %	1983	1.75 %	1993	2.28 %	2003	2.34 %
1974	1.28 %	1984	2.00 %	1994	2.40 %	2004	1.52 %
1975	1.56 %	1985	2.12 %	1995	2.40 %	2005	1.71 %
1976	1.55 %	1986	2.32 %	1996	2.37 %	2006	1.94 %
1977	1.55 %	1987	2.11 %	1997	2.31 %	2007	2.06 %
1978	1.55 %	1988	1.91 %	1998	2.33 %	2008	2.15 %
1979	1.55 %	1989	2.00 %	1999	2.34 %	2009	1.91 %
1980	1.55 %	1990	2.16 %	2000	2.34 %	2010	-

Gender Discrimination and Regional Inequalities: The adult female Illiteracy rate in the country is twice as high as for males. The illiteracy rate is 30.5% for males and 54.8% for females. The number of educational institutions, the literacy rate among both males and females, the number of private educational institutes, and the available educational facilities are not equally provided all over the country (Quddus, 1990; Qureshi & Rarieya, 2007).

Recommendations:

The present education system of Pakistan is the result of multiple factors, which are political instabilities, backwardness, illiteracy and bureaucratic apathy, attitude, the division between Islamic and western thoughts, and socio-economic disparities. Different Education systems which are associated with different classes of our society do not guarantee the creation of a standardized society or national cohesion. This is obvious from the fact that society has been allowed to be divided into different echelons and seems to exist on as many emotional and intellectual wavelengths.

Pakistan's Education system needs a major change, a complete revamping. The following recommendations may add to the prosperous prospect of Pakistan.

- i. **Suitability of Curriculum:** The curriculum is usually inappropriate or at least inadequate for the set goals in many disciplines. There must be an integrated system in which one step leads to the next to enable a student to develop a truly sound base for the discipline he or she is interested in. The curriculum should be made updated to compete with the modern world. Computer education should also be introduced gradually. Religious education should be incorporated into the curriculum. Interesting and informative documentaries and activities should also be designed
- ii. **Uniformity of Educational Systems:** Many Education systems are working here, resulting in social division and conflict. For example, we have English medium schools, Urdu medium schools, and religious madrassahs. Therefore, a uniform

⁶ Source: The World Bank, 2022

system of education for all citizens should be introduced. One medium of instruction should be introduced, for which English is suggested which is the demand of the modern world.

- iii. **Declaration of Educational Emergency:** The present government should declare a national educational emergency and involve the whole nation in waging a war against illiteracy. Ask for volunteers with specified qualifications to contribute their services in their areas of work or residence under organized bodies of the government.
- iv. **Improve Teacher’s Selection Process and Teaching methods:** We can improve the quality of our education through teachers' training because education can only be good for the teachers. Teaching is not an easy profession as it is considered in our country. Hence while hiring teachers there should be a very critical process. The hiring process should include a written test, interview, and practical demonstration. Teaching is an art and everyone could not teach, it should be examined through proper demonstrations. Government should compare its training mode with the training of elite school teachers. Or government should train trainers from elite school’s trainers to improve training methods.
- v. **Scholarships Programs:** Students should be given more scholarships and government should support intelligent and outstanding students. Higher education commission should send position holder students under strict conditions, to foreign developed countries for studies with full facilities and contracts to return after completion of studies. Banks should be encouraged to give student loans on easy bases.
- vi. **Annual Evaluation Reports:** For better monitoring and evaluation all schools should be bound to submit annual reports to complaint desks. The then-compliant desk should compare reports with complaints and monitor the progress of each. Members from complaint desks should also visit occasionally schools for strict checks and balances. Annual reports should contain all sorts of statistics related to students along with several parent meetings in the school and views complaints and problems of parents. These reports should be utilized for the improvement of the whole system and to establish new policies.
- vii. **Promote Research:** Research is the key to the solution of many problems and has basic significance in bringing quality education. In recognition of this fact, the national institute of educational research should be established to conduct research, facility, communication, and provide guidance and counseling. University professors should be facilitated to conduct research. Each government is just allocating less than two percent of GDP. The educational budget should be enhanced at par with international limited to research-related activities. The standard of Universities should be research centers only and must not be allowed to conduct graduate or post-graduate examinations. High priority should be given to research and development and technology, to solve practical problems.
- viii. **Free and Compulsory Education:** Free and compulsory education should be provided on equal bases up to the matric level. Primary education should be made compulsory and free of cost; though it is already free of cost but not compulsory.
- ix. **Provision of Necessary Funds:** Lack of funding is also a problem. According to UNO standards, a country should allocate 4 percent of its GDP towards education

but Pakistan is spending only about 1.5 to 2. percent of the GDP on education. Moreover, it is very clear that if existing funds are utilized fairly then there would be no shortage of funds.

- x. **Provision of Required Infrastructure:** Government must spend more money on basic infrastructure and facilities of the public sector educational institutions so that students could get an education in a befitting manner. For instance, all eligible male and female population endeavor to seek education than poor condition basic facilities, overcrowded classrooms, low standard and overworked teachers, adequate teaching material, ill-equipped laboratories having poor staff, shortage of modern books, and lack of physical facilities would not be sufficient to meet the requirements. So basic infrastructure at schools and colleges is essentially required for the betterment of the nation.
- xi. **Implementation of Policies:** Implementation of issued policies should be ensured instead of introducing new policies. There should consistency in these policies which can provide gradual steps for better implementation. Teachers, professors, and other educationists should be consulted in the policy-making process.
- xii. **Examination System:** To show good results in educational reforms great stress should be given to the examination system. Ministry of Education should try its best to conduct a pure examination system. It is suggested that equal importance should be given to external as well as internal assessment, to eliminate the chances of corruption and illegal promotion.

Conclusion:

This is the fact that education is the backbone of the development of any nation. It develops people mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually. The countries that have an effective education system also happen to be the leaders of the world, both socially and economically. Any nation prepares its generation according to its ideological, cultural, and religious norms but our education system did not conserve our norms. If we will prepare our generation properly, according to our requirements, and make them faithful and patriotic then they can play a vital role in nation-building otherwise we will waste our valuable assets. In short, it is education, which can turn the population of any country from a burden to a human resource. Moreover, before devolution, the policy and planning have been undertaken by the central and provincial governments without taking into account the ground realities and without the participation of the community. The main objective of the devolution plan is to empower the community at the grassroots level in planning, management, resource mobilization and utilization, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Education system to improve the standard.

The main problematic issues of education systems in Pakistan are lack of professional teachers, high dropout rates particularly at the primary level, outdated curriculum, lack of accountability, multiple systems, insufficient funds, corruption, poor examination system, lack of research, and lack of proper implementation of policies, etc. Pakistan's dire state of the education sector and policy implementation demands the immediate attention of the government. Without doubling its current financial commitment to education, Pakistan cannot meet it. We are on the verge of destruction and the only factor which can build up our society is Education, so it's our

responsibility to work for the betterment of our education reforms so that we can keep pace with western countries.

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