



SDPI
Sustainable Development Policy Institute



cef

Critical Issues in Education Policy

A Citizens' Review of the National Education Policy 1998 - 2010

A.H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY INSTITUTE

Critical Issues in Education Policy

**A Citizens' Review of the
National Education Policy
1998 - 2010**

A.H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY INSTITUTE

All rights reserved. No part of this paper may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or information storage and retrieval system, without prior written permission of the publisher.

A publication of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI).

The opinions expressed in the papers are solely those of the authors, and publishing them does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the opinion by the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) and SDPI.

Sustainable Development Policy Institute is an independent, non-profit research institute on sustainable development.

© 1992 by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute

Mailing Address: PO Box 2342, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Telephone ++ (92-51) 278134, 278136, 277146, 270674-76
Fax ++(92-51) 278135, URL: www.sdpi.org



CONTENTS

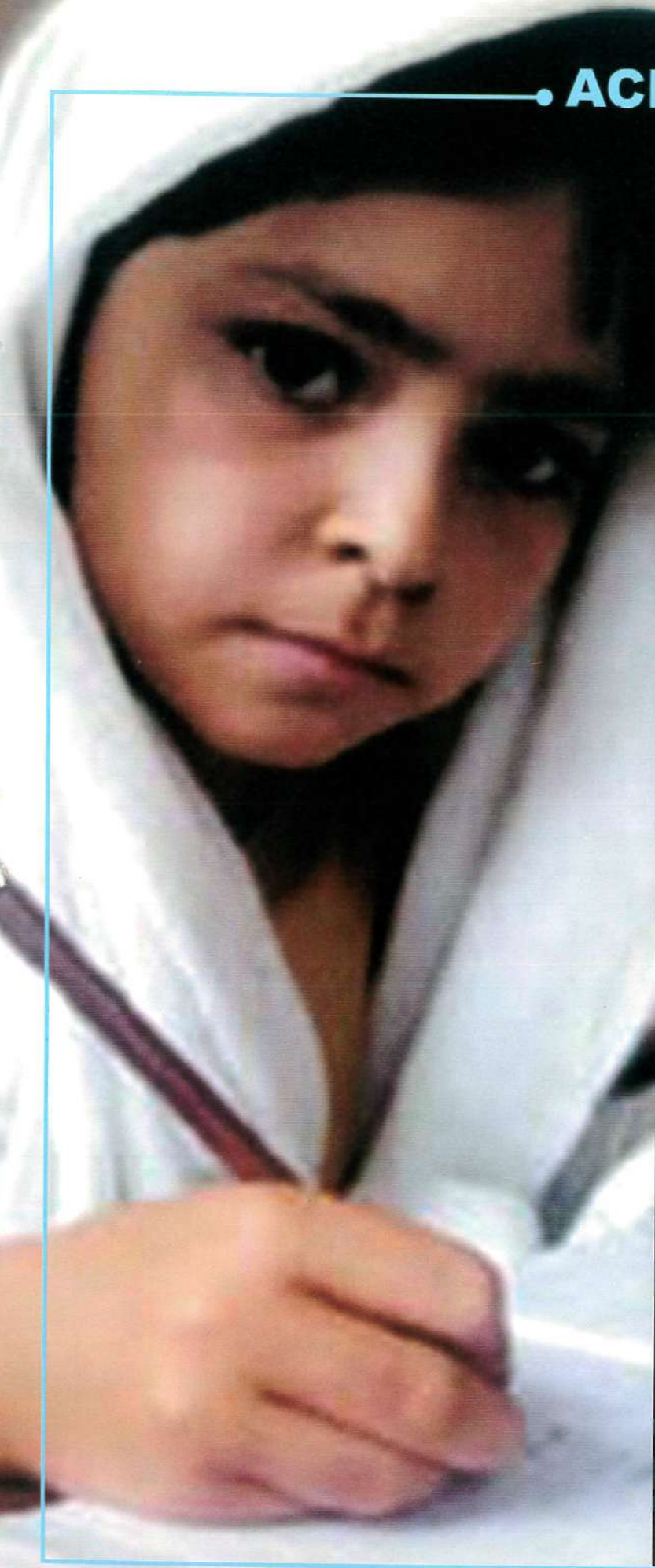
Acknowledgments

Part 1: Thematic Summary

1.Introduction	09
2.The State of Education	13
3.A Vision for Education in Pakistan: Aims, Objectives and Vision	21
4.A Critical Evaluation of the National Education Policy 1998-2010	23
5.Issues in Provision of Education: Financing, Access, Equity	27
6.Ensuring the Quality of Education	33
7.Management of Education	39
8.Teachers and Teachers' Training	43
9.The System of Examinations	49
10.Teaching of Languages and the Issue of the Medium of Instruction	53
11.Technical and Vocational Education	57
12.Philanthropy vs Commercialism: Private Sector Education	61
13.Policy Issues in Higher Education	65

Part 2: Regional Consultations

14.Proceedings of the Regional Consultations	73
---	-----------

A close-up photograph of a young girl with dark hair, wearing a white headscarf. She is looking down and writing on a piece of paper with a dark pen. The image is partially framed by a blue border on the left and bottom.

• ACKNOWLEDGMENT

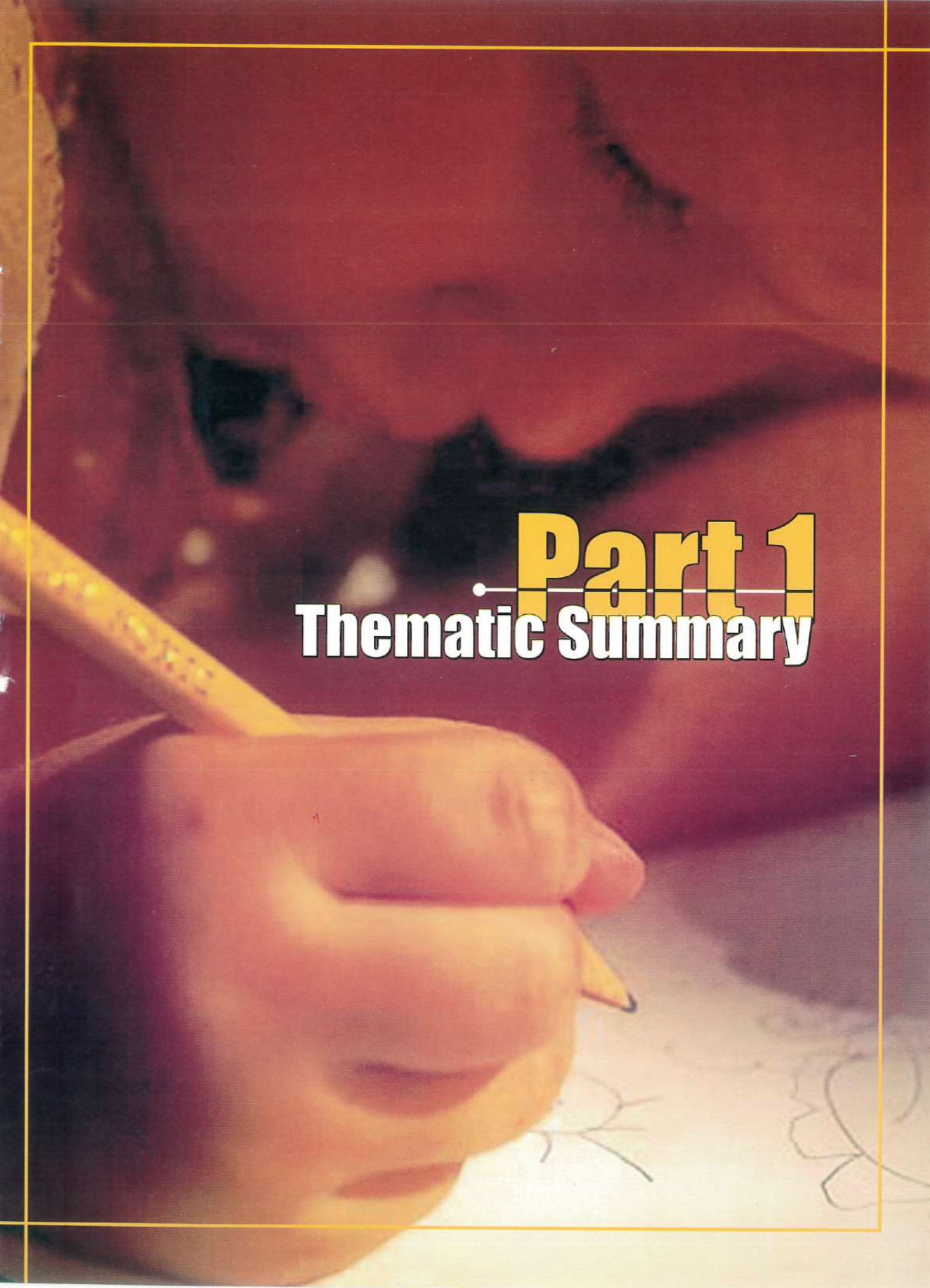
The work reflected in this report was initiated by the Commonwealth Education Fund in collaboration with the Pakistan Coalition for Education, a collection of several civil society organizations which considered it expedient to make a citizens' review of the National Education Policy at a time when the government was also undertaking its own review. The SDPI team deeply appreciates the trust that CEF and PCE placed in it for the work, and acknowledges the financial support provided by the CEF.

The SDPI team gratefully acknowledges all the contributions that invited scholars and academics, listed at the end of this document, made to this study through their presentations, interventions and in some cases through written contributions in the five workshops held across the country. SDPI is indebted to each one of them individually.

The team wishes to express special gratitude to Dr. Sarfraz Ahmed of Peshawar University, Mr. Sibte Hassan of the Punjab Textbook Board, Lahore, Mr. Karamat Ali and his dedicated colleagues at PILER, Karachi, and Mr. Ali Naqvi and Mr. Ahmed Jan of IDSP, Quetta, for help in arranging workshops in their respective cities.

We would like to acknowledge the dedicated research and coordination work performed by the project Research Assistants Ms. Benish Tahir, Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Ms. Rafia Sultana.

AHN would also like to express special thanks to Dr. Zia Mian of Princeton University, USA, for help in organizing thoughts and expressions.



Part 1

Thematic Summary

CHAPTER – 1

Introduction

In recent years, teachers, education policy researchers, parents, concerned citizens, and civil society groups have campaigned for sweeping reforms of Pakistan's education system. Responding to this pressure, the Government of Pakistan has decided to conduct a mid-term review of policy laid out in the National Education Policy 1998-2010.

To help inform the government's review, the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, with support from the Commonwealth Education Fund and the Pakistan Coalition for Education, organized a series of public consultations with teachers, education administrators, education policy researchers, and concerned citizens. The aim was to clarify and present an independent perspective on education policy reform. The consultations were held in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta.

The consultations considered the following issues:

- The aims and objectives of education
- Provision of education, including financing, access and equity
- The quality of education
- Teachers and teacher training
- The examination system
- The management of education
- Technical and vocational education
- Language teaching and the medium of instruction
- Private sector education
- Higher education

This report is based on those consultations. The proceedings of the five consultations are summarized in Part 2 of this report.

Part 1 first provides a brief overview of the state of education, followed by a critique of the NEP which points out some of its shortcomings. The report then takes up each of the issues discussed in the consultations, in an effort to clarify the problems and to

make some recommendations for viable and effective education reform. In the remainder of this Introduction, we highlight some of the key concerns raised.

National commitment to education

There is a long-standing question about the commitment of successive governments and the bureaucracy to public education in the country. This lack of commitment is seen in (i) low government spending on education, (ii) a sustained failure to fully and effectively use the funds that are available, (iii) insufficient attention to improving the quality of education, (iv) the increasing reliance on private, for-profit, education, (v) political interference in educational institutions and administration by government and political parties, and (vi) the failure to honor Pakistan's international commitments on education.

At the same time, society as a whole has failed to focus on providing adequate education to its children and young adults. Many people – especially the poor in remote villages – consider that education has no value for their children. There is a need to convince them of its usefulness and to provide them with incentives to send their children to school. Some parents invest in their children's education but become frustrated by the low quality and the ill-defined outcomes – the opportunity cost. They must somehow be encouraged to remain hopeful and that will only happen with the reform of the entire public education system.

Resources

It is widely understood that persistently low government spending on public education has been damaging for society, the economy, politics and culture, and that these effects will be felt for decades to come. The recent announcement by the government that it intends to increase education spending to 4% of GDP is welcomed by all, but is still seen as insufficient. These concerns are compounded by the perennially low levels of resource utilization, and by misallocation.

A three-fold policy response is therefore needed: increased government spending on education; ensuring that funds go where they are most needed; and making sure that funds are fully and properly used.

Access

Pakistan's low government investment in education, combined with its high population growth rate, has worsened problems of poor provision and unequal access to education.

Access to education should be provided to every child between the ages of five and fifteen. It should be taken as a fundamental right of every child. Article 21 of the *United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states that "Everyone has the right of equal access to public services in his country." Article 26 states that "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. ... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality"

Currently, access to education in Pakistan is unequal along the rich-poor, urban-rural and male-female divides. It is worsened by several things: the state abdicating its responsibility to the public sector; government officials and elected public representatives sending their children to private schools; the armed forces running their own schools that in time become elite schools and by those in power paying high-profile visits to elite, private schools rather than to public schools in poor areas.

Quality

More government funds would help to increase access to education but will not pay good dividends at the national level if the education is of poor quality.

There are several factors that ensure the quality of education, not the least being good learning materials and adequate infrastructure. The most important condition for quality education, however, is the teacher. Employing a sufficient number of qualified, trained and dedicated teachers is a necessary condition for quality education.

The teaching profession has not received enough funding, social recognition or respect to attract the best and the most dedicated persons. The current capacity of teacher-training institutions is not sufficient to cater to even the existing need of teachers, let alone the additional teachers that universalizing education would require.

Language skills are crucial to students being able to develop a good grasp of basic concepts and being able to think and express themselves clearly. The language problem – largely centering on the medium of instruction – is a serious issue in Pakistan's education system. One aspect of the issue is the medium of instruction in early education, when learning in a language other than the child's mother tongue can create difficulties in learning. These problems require immediate and serious attention.

No improvement in education can be expected without serious reform of the examination system. The low quality of teaching and learning is inextricably linked with the poor quality of examinations. The public examination Boards have failed to set high standards and more and more schools which care about quality are turning to alternative examination systems.

Curricula and Textbooks

What is taught to children is as important as how well it is taught. The National Education Policy dictates the content of the curricula, and this in turn shapes the content of textbooks and what is taught in the classroom. Pakistan is currently paying for the narrow and parochial objectives defined in education policies since the 1970s, which emphasized rote learning, nationalism and Islam over critical enquiry and problem-solving, tolerance, and open-mindedness. This has caused a serious deterioration in the quality of high school and college graduates. A central element of education reform must be to change the aims and objectives of education, focusing on transforming curricula and textbooks so as to prepare children for life in a modern, progressive Pakistan in a globalized world.

Management of education

The national education system in Pakistan is a vast, slow, corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy. This means that effective management is almost impossible and reform doubly so. To improve school management requires that students, parents and local communities be empowered to function as real stakeholders in education, and to play a role in decision-making and holding the system accountable.

Private education

The emergence of a large, private, for-profit, largely unregulated education system has created enormous problems in Pakistan. While a small segment of private education offers a better alternative than that of the public sector, a large part of the profit-oriented education system serves only to exploit the aspirations of parents and children. There is clearly a need for better oversight and regulation of the private education system.

Higher education

Much of the emphasis in education policy is on schools, rather than on Colleges. However, it is higher education that produces school and college teachers and members of other professions that meet essential social and economic needs. The interdependence of lower and higher education can hardly be overemphasized. Poor quality early education feeds ill-prepared students to higher education, resulting in poorly skilled professionals, including those who become school teachers who are unable to impart good quality education. The overall result is a downward spiral. Education reform must include improving university education.

The Higher Education Commission is an attempt at reform that, while laudable, has met with serious problems and needs major overhaul, as discussed later in the report.

Targets and achievements

Education policies in the past have set targets which were never met. A summary Table showing the targets and achievements in recent policies is given in Section 2. Arguably, short-term targets are more likely to be met because they are more likely to be realistic.

The current policy review should not set longer-term targets than those originally set; that is, not beyond the year 2010. Targets should be set for the next four years only, and should contain both annual targets and a mechanism for annual performance reviews.

The problems with the education system are serious and deep. There can be no quick solutions. National education is not going to undergo a revolutionary change in a mere five or ten years. It will need committed, patient and attentive efforts at reform over several decades.

CHAPTER – 2

The State of Education

Much has been written on the state of education in Pakistan and the need for sweeping reforms¹. Many plans have been proposed for such changes and all have failed in large measure to achieve their aims. The current government's efforts at improving the provision of education need to be seen in this light.

No one doubts the need for reform. Almost half the population is illiterate, and of the literate ones, a very small fraction is capable of meeting the human resource needs of a modern nation state. These are major factors constraining the social, political and economic development of Pakistan.

This brief review begins by looking at the 50-year long legacy of education goals set in consecutive policies and plans, and the failure to meet them. The repeated failure to implement established policies is matched by the perennial neglect in government allocation of public resources. To make matters worse, the poor management of education leads to misallocation and under-utilization of scarce resources.

The chapter then looks at some of the current concerns about the quality of education and the areas that need improvement. It sketches the serious failures manifest in the situation regarding the syllabus, textbooks, examinations, teaching methods, pedagogical skills, and access to libraries and laboratories. These are all taken up in greater detail in subsequent chapters.

Pakistan is counted among the least developed countries in the UNDP Human Development Report of 2003². It ranks 135 out of a total of 177 listed countries. Pakistan's education index is 0.44 whereas the average index of the least developed countries is 0.5 and that of South Asia is 0.58. The index is based on literacy levels, primary, secondary and tertiary enrollment and government expenditure on education as a percentage of its GDP.

¹ *Social Development in Pakistan 2002-03: The State of Education*, Kaiser Bengali (Ed.) Social Policy and Development Centre, Karachi, 2003; *The State of Education: Fifty Years of Pakistan*, Pervez Hoodbhoy (Ed.) Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1997.

² <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/data/countries.cfm?c=PAK>

Pakistan has a population of over 155 million. It is increasing at a rate of 2.9% a year. The literacy rate, according to the government, is currently only 53%. This is far below what had been projected in education policies for the past fifty years. Table 1.1 shows what was expected and what has been achieved in terms of literacy targets. The Table also shows how the state has rolled back its expectations over time, but has failed even to meet these more modest targets.

Table 1.1 Targets of literacy achievements in various education policies³

Education Policy	Literacy Targets	Achievements
1959 education policy	100% literacy by 1975	21.7% in 1972
1979 education policy	35% by 1983 and 100% by 2010	26.17% by 1981
National Literacy plan	33% by 1986	34% in 1992
Nationwide Literacy Program	53% by 1990	34% in 1992
1998 education policy	70% by 2010	53% in 2006

Participation in the formal education system is an indicator of the quantitative health of the education system. Pakistan's failure in this respect is shown in Table 1.2. The data reveals that two million Pakistani children of primary school age today are deprived of the chance of ever attending school. Thirteen million children of middle and secondary school age are also out of school. The participation ratio at the higher levels is 4% or less.

Table 1.2: Enrollment in formal educational institutions

Age group	Population ²	Enrolled in all schools ³	Enrolled in private schools
Primary school	25 million	17 million	6 million
Middle and high school	21 million	6.4 million	1.7 million
Intermediate and degree college	16 million	690,000	37,000
Post graduate education	14 million	232,000	

Female participation in the four categories in Table 1.2 is 42%, 41%, 47%, and 49% respectively.

³ Compiled by Ahmad Nawaz Hakro, unpublished Ms, 2006.

⁴ Population data from

http://www.statpak.gov.pk/depts/pco/statistics/other_tables/pop_by_5_years.pdf

⁵ Enrollment data in columns 3 and 4 is from <http://www.aepam.gov.pk/Download/sum%2004-05.pdf>

To make a contrast with other countries, the net primary enrollment in Pakistan in the year 2003 was 59%. In India it was 87%, and in most of the countries of the world it was above 80%. Several countries boasted of 100% primary enrollment.⁶

Efforts to meet the need of a growing population and to increase enrollment create their own problems. While the number of students in the public sector schools increased by 2.17 million over a 2 year period (from 2002-03 to 2004-05), the number of teachers decreased by nearly 20,000.⁷ This led to a rise in the average pupil-teacher ratio from 26 to 30. Similarly, in the same period, only 2,200 new schools were opened for the additional 2.17 million students.

In the public sector, a primary school is on the average provided with only 2.5 teachers, a middle school with 7.6, a high school with 18, and an intermediate and degree college with 26 teachers. The average pupil-teacher ratios are 31, 29, 8.6 and 14 respectively.

The various Five Year Plans have been very generous in setting targets for primary enrollment, but the achievements have always been rather short, as shown in Table 1.3.

Table 1.3: Targets of various five year plans and education policies to achieve primary school enrollment⁸

Five Year Plans	Targets (primary school enrollment rate)	Actual
Third Five Year Plan (1965 -70)	70%	54% at the time of the Fifth Plan
Fifth Five Year Plan (1978 -83)	100% by 1987	60% at the time of the Seventh Plan, 1998
Seventh Five Year Plan (1988 - 93)	100% by 1993 Lowered to modest 40% by 1993	Actual 39%
Eight Five Year Plan (1993-98)	48% by 1998	39% in 1998
1992 Education policy	100% by 2002	39% in 1998
1998-2010 Education policy	90% by 2002	68% in 2006

Other education targets were also established in the past, but were never achieved. As an example, Tables 1.4 and 1.5 below list the targets and achievements of the two most recent policies, those of 1992 and 1998-2010.

⁶ <http://www.un.org.pk/nhdr-pak-2003.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.aepam.gov.pk/Download/sum%2004-05.pdf>, page 31

⁸ Compiled by Ahmad Nawaz Hakro, unpublished Ms, 2006.

Table 1.4: Targets set in the National Education Policy 1992, and achievements by 2002.⁹

Policy targets	1992	2002 (Target)	2002 (Actual)	Achieved
Literacy rate	34%	70%	51%	NO
Primary education				
Schools	112,400	230,957	14,9100	NO
Enrollment	10,736,000	21,800,000	17,529,000	NO
Teachers	293,500	594,000	413,900	NO
Secondary education				
Schools	9,000	48,487	26,800	NO
Enrollment	2,981,000	9,150,000	3,821,000	NO
Teachers	87,500	338,586	230,100	NO
Higher secondary education				
Schools	535	935	925	Nearly
Enrollment	450,000	832,000	770,000	NO
Teachers	8,026	14,025	27,822	YES
Vocational institutions				
Institutions	194	527	607	YES
Enrollment	12,000	41,130	83,000	YES
Teachers	1,685	6,288	7,192	YES
Higher education				
(A) degree colleges				
Institutions	395	795		
Enrollment	142,000	267,000		
Teachers	9,322	14,822		
(B) universities				
Institutions	23	43	29	NO
Enrollment	65,944	186,000	117,863	NO
Teachers	4,926	6,415	5,160	NO

Table 1.5: Targets set in the National Education Policy, 1998-2010, and achievements by 2003¹⁰

POLICY TARGETS	Position in 1996-97	2003 Targeted	2003 (Actual)	Achieved
Literacy rate (%)	39	55	52	NO
PRIMARY EDUCATION				
Schools	145,000	162,000	150,800	NO
Enrollment	13,724,000	20,200,000	18,220,000	NO
Teachers	339,500	382,200	433,500	NO
SECONDARY EDUCATION				
Schools	11,000	30,000	26,800	NO

⁹ The data was compiled by Benish Tahir and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto at SDPI from various government sources.

¹⁰ The data was compiled by Benish Tahir and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto at SDPI

Enrollment	3,726,000	7,610,000	3,918,000	NO
Teachers	160,000	175,800	230,100	YES
High schools				
Schools	11,000	18,000	15,600	NO
Enrollment	1,950,000	3,715,000	1,589,000	NO
Teachers	160,000	216,000	278,000	YES
Vocational institutions				
Institutions	84	560	585	YES
Enrollment	19,400	43,000	94,000	YES
Teachers		4,500	7,273	YES
Higher education				
(B) Universities				
Institutions	23	45	29	NO
Enrollment	101,346	186,000	126,870	NO

The same is true of the commitments made by Pakistan at international forums. Human development is now the yardstick of national development, and several international forums have laid great emphasis on human development. Pakistan is signatory to various targets set at these international forums. Some of these commitments, and the level of implementation in Pakistan, are shown in Table 1.6. The data on achievements is based on the government claim, and has not been verified independently.

Table 1.6: Pakistan's international commitments: Targets and achievements¹¹

International Forum	Nature of Commitment	Target	Achievement (claimed)	
EFA Jomtein, Thailand	Universal access	80% completion of primary education by 2000	74%	Not achieved
	Reduction of adult illiteracy	to half of the 1990 level by 2000	decreased from 66.2% to 52.9%	Not achieved
	Adult literacy	61% by 2005	53%	Not achieved
Dakar Framework for Action	Primary enrollment	3.5 million additional by 2005	2.5 million	Not achieved
	Number of primary schools	Increase by 10,250 by 2005	7,300	Not achieved
	Number of primary school teachers	Increase by 56,100 by 2005	23,600	Not achieved

¹¹ The data was compiled by Benish Tahir and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto at SDPI

All of this information leaves no doubt that there is a serious problem with the state's commitment to education. State priorities are not directed towards human resource development. An indicator of this is the inadequate allocation of state financial resources to education. This has always been inadequate, irrespective of the political party (or military regime) in power. The public sector expenditure on education over the last 25 years has been between 1.5 and 2.5% of GNP, as shown in Figure 1.5.¹²

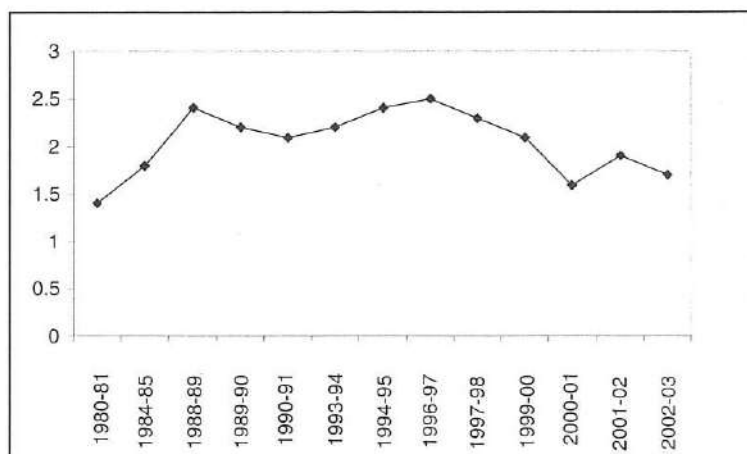


Figure 1.5: Expenditure on Education as % of GNP

Source: Data compiled from Pakistan Economic Survey 2003-04, Government of Pakistan

The public expenditure on education as a percentage of total government expenditure was 7.4% in 1990 and 7.8% in 2002. In contrast, it was nearly 13% in India in 2002.

The low priority to education means that in times of financial crisis, which are not uncommon, expenditure on education is invariably among the first to be slashed.

While inadequate financing is a serious problem, the system of governance is so badly flawed that whatever amount is allocated is seldom fully utilized. Development funds take an unduly long time to be released, resulting in either hasty and unsound execution of projects or in approved funds lapsing without being utilized.

All of these factors point to an alarming lack of state commitment to public education. Instead, the state has compensated for its abdication of public responsibility by encouraging private provision of education. This has grave social consequences.

There are other serious problems with the education system, much less quantifiable, but real nevertheless. Some of the major problems pertaining to the quality of education are listed below. They are discussed at length in later chapters in this report.

The educational content of required courses and prescribed textbooks is poor. The curriculum, syllabus and textbooks are geared more to religious and parochial

¹² Compiled by Ahmad Nawaz Hakro, unpublished Ms, 2006.

indoctrination and less to nurturing intellectual or critical abilities in students. This problem has been analyzed in detail in the 2003 SDPI study *The Subtle Subversion*.

Public examinations are flawed. They fail to test understanding of course materials and skills. Instead, memorization is the only faculty tested. As such examinations have become predictable, requiring students to prepare only a fraction of the course material. Public examinations in Pakistan have also lost credibility on account of rampant cheating. Examination results and certificates are deemed useless by both institutions of higher learning and prospective employers.

Classroom teaching leaves much to be desired. First, there are not enough teachers. Second, teachers are ill-trained in the theory and practice of teaching. These flaws are a major cause of early dropout from schools. Teacher training institutions are few; they follow a poor and archaic curriculum, and allow little 'hands-on' practice before certification. Teachers in many institutions of higher learning are themselves poorly qualified, thus producing poorly trained and unskilled graduates.

The teaching profession is very poorly paid, so the best and most committed people are not attracted to it. The better teachers in the public system become frustrated by the poor teaching environment, inadequate learning materials and the low quality of public examinations.

Public schools and colleges by and large have poor and un-stimulating learning environments. Few public schools can boast of decent libraries. Science laboratories are so ill-equipped that, in most cases, the students can only expect to observe their teachers perform experiments for large classes.

The entire edifice of the education system is also something to worry about. It is very 'linear', with little variety or options in trades and skills. All the students head for the same endpoint, keeping their eyes focused on entering the white-collar job market. However, the specializing streams start at such a late stage that those who drop out (by desire or compulsion) after 10 years of schooling find themselves unskilled for any socially useful or remunerative task. This state of affairs discourages those parents who were reluctant to educate their children to start with.

A rethinking of education policy of the country therefore must keep both the objectives in view: improvement of education quantitatively as well as qualitatively. In particular, the tasks involve, among others, finding ways to secure a firm political and financial commitment from the nation and the national leaders; revisiting and redefining the objectives of education; setting priorities both for the sake of optimal utilization of resources, and in recognition of the causal linkages among the various components of the education system, and finally, charting out a sound implementation strategy.

CHAPTER – 3

A Vision for Education in Pakistan: Aims, Objectives and Goals

Any process of reform must begin with a clear idea of what it seeks to achieve and ways of measuring its success in moving towards this goal. We describe here briefly a vision of what Pakistan's education system should seek to achieve and what we believe it could manage by 2020 if reform is pursued seriously.

Vision and purpose

We believe that education is a fundamental right of all citizens. It should serve as a means for helping each individual realize his or her innate creative potential, and as a vehicle for furthering the entitlement to justice, equality and economic well-being of all citizens.

We believe the education system should seek to create:

1. literate and informed citizens who know and can exercise their rights and responsibilities locally, nationally and globally
2. young people who want to fully realize their social, intellectual, economic, cultural and physical potentials
3. students who can think, reason, argue and assess ideas for themselves and are independent, autonomous and life-long learners
4. adults who are able to contribute to the social, political, economic and cultural development of their society
5. people with appropriate talents to take part in the global human effort to create and further knowledge

Goals for the education system for 2020

The following is a partial list of goals that we should set for ourselves as a nation. We should make sure that in the year 2020:

- Every child has a school in the neighborhood to attend. Attending ten years of schooling is a legal compulsion, backed up by incentives to encourage school attendance, and mechanisms to enforce the law.

- Education is free up to class 10, and the education after that is affordable by most parents. State scholarships in sufficient quantity are available to talented students from poor families.
- Free books are provided up to class 10. School lunch is provided to primary students.
- Every school has a building, with an adequate number of classrooms, a desk for each child, blackboards, trained teachers (at least one for every 30 children), a playground and a library, safe drinking water and clean toilets.
- There are an adequate number of well-trained teachers (both men and women) at all levels.
- Teachers seek to inspire their students to have high ideals, to struggle for excellence and to develop a broad social vision.
- Teachers are sufficiently well paid so that motivated and naturally gifted persons join the profession. Salaries are commensurate with teachers' qualifications, and there are adequate financial and professional incentives for teachers to undergo additional training. Adequate rewards are in place for good performance.
- Textbooks are attractive and interesting, and students as well as schools can choose from several approved books.
- Textbooks are free of any material that incites hatred and false patriotism. They teach tolerance for and appreciation of the cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of the nation.
- Examinations assess a critical understanding of material rather than memorization skills.
- There is a uniform standard of examinations among the various boards of examinations, both public and private
- There are no "ghost schools" and there is no teacher absenteeism. Teachers' are paid adequate salaries so that they need not take up other jobs to supplement their income.
- Primary school children are taught in either their mother tongue or the regional languages¹³ while also learning Urdu and English. By class 10, students are proficient in reading, writing, comprehension and communication the languages they have learnt.
- Public sector education has improved to the extent that it competes with the private sector in terms of quality.
- There are enough technical and vocational training institutions at different levels for those who wish to learn practical skills for future professional employment.
- All degree colleges have well-equipped laboratories and libraries. There is no single textbook at this level and the emphasis is on practical laboratory work and projects. Examinations are challenges in problem solving.
- National expenditure on education has been a steady 6% of GDP for over 15 years.
- The utilization of funds has reached 100%.
- Pakistani degrees and certificate are internationally recognized for quality.

¹³ For example, Sindhi, Balochi, Seraiki, Pushto, Hindko.

CHAPTER – 4

A Critical Evaluation of the National Education Policy 1998-2010

The National Education Policy 1998-2010 (NEP) was introduced by the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in March 1998. Like education policies before it, NEP is a hotchpotch of contradictory aims and objectives, a “wish list” with little thought of coherence or feasibility. Most of the policy strategy steps have never been implemented.

Among other things, the NEP aimed to increase resources for education to 4% of GDP by 2003, to make primary education universal and compulsory, to increase participation rates in primary and secondary education, to improve education access for girls, to double the literacy rate, to improve teacher training and the examination system, and more. Not one of these targets has been met.

More broadly, NEP also sought to prescribe the ideals and goals for a reformed educational system which would allow the nation to develop socially and economically. However, it did little to change the previous policy that had been in place during the regime of General Zia ul Haq in the 1970s. Much of the NEP is premised on the fundamental thinking of the Zia ul Haq era.

The NEP suggests that the ultimate objective of education is to build a religious national identity. This is so forcefully emphasized that it overwhelms all other issues and policy provisions. It does not recognize that this perspective can only result in fostering narrow, parochial and intolerant attitudes.

We note here only the two most troubling elements in the National Education Policy that must be reformed if there is to be any hope of using the education system as a vehicle for the progressive social transformation of the nation.

1. The NEP promotes the Islamization of education, society and the state

- (a) Section 1.7 of NEP declares the goal of the policy to be ‘*Placing the entire system of education on a sound Islamic foundation*’.

- (b) In section 2.1, NEP defines the first objective of education as '*to help build a sound Islamic society*'.
- (c) In Section 3.4.7, the Policy declares: "*Teachers shall be considered focal points for dissemination of information on fundamental principles of Islam.*"
- (d) Section 3.3.9 proposes "*expunging material repugnant to Islamic teachings and values*".
- (e) Section 3.1.7 articulates the argument that in an Islamic state there should be no difference between the knowledge of *deen* and *dunya* (the spiritual and the worldly) and that all disciplines would become *Islamiyat* (Islamic studies).
- (f) Sections 3.3.7 and 3.3.10 mention the term 'Ideology of Pakistan' and want it to be taught to trainee teachers.

These goals of NEP are in sharp contrast to the speech by the Quaid-i-Azam to the first education conference in December 1947, where he proposed that the purpose of education was the development of the "future citizens of Pakistan" who could "build up our future economic life" and who would have "the highest sense of honour, integrity, responsibility and selfless service to the nation." These words, emphasizing the importance of democratic citizenship, skills, and justice as the key goals for the education system to support, are quoted in Section 2.2 of the NEP but do not seem to inform the policy in any way.

The "ideology of Pakistan" that it cites and seeks to encourage is in fact the ideology of a particular political party, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, and was never used by the nation's founding fathers. It was not mentioned in any of the original Constitutions of the country, even the 1973 Constitution. The phrase was introduced without definition in the 1973 Constitutions under a Martial Law Order by General Zia ul Haq and was subsequently sanctified by the controversial 8th Amendment. There are several interpretations of this term, and there is no national consensus on either its meaning or its usage.

2. The conceptual framework of the NEP undermines the possibility of an enlightened education. For example, it asserts: '*The only justification for our existence is our total commitment to Islam as our sole identity*'.

However, Islam is not the 'sole identity' of the people of Pakistan. This view rejects culture and history altogether, feeds religious fundamentalism and privileges those who claim to be the custodians of religious understanding. It is important to recognize that Pakistanis are first and foremost citizens of Pakistan; they have specific regional identities, and may be Muslim, Shia, Sunni, Christian, Hindu, Sikh or whatever else. They also have identities that reflect their city, town or village and the fact that they are South Asians. This is the day to day reality of identity that has wide acceptance in the country. It has been the failure to accept and respect all these identities that has created many problems for Pakistan, with consequences that are too obvious to ignore.

In any case, the religious identity so vehemently advocated in the NEP is being framed by a school of Islamic thought which in fact may not represent the majority. Many Muslim and non-Muslim Pakistanis disagree with this framework, and the insistence on defining identity in one particular way has often resulted in mindless

violence. In this sense the stress on religious identity is divisive and should best be left out of the sphere of education.

The NEP says: “*‘Islam is not just a matter of belief. It is a complete code of life wherein science and technology, as well as social and human sciences, economics and cultural activities ... are to be guided and determined by the principles of the Holy Qur’an and the Sunnah’.*”

By seeking to “Islamize” all knowledge, the NEP undercuts basic scientific ideas such as the modern understanding of the origin of the universe, the formation of the solar system, and Darwin’s theory of Evolution. It also challenges the understanding of society, economy and culture that has been developed by modern social and human sciences such as history, economics, anthropology, and psychology. This constraint on knowledge runs contrary to the fundamental requirements of high-quality modern education, which is to promote critical thinking and an appreciation of current scientific ways of understanding the world.

Sections 9.2.1 and 9.2.2 claim that *‘the underlying purpose of the vision of higher education would be guided by the Holy Quran and Sunnah through inculcation of Islamic ideology and moral values and preservation of our religious and cultural heritage’.*

The NEP also claims “Institutions of higher education have the main responsibility for equipping individuals with advanced knowledge and skills required for *positions of responsibility* in government, business and other professionals.” [Emphasis added]

This is a narrow, fundamentalist vision of university education. It offers a perspective for higher education as combination of religious and professional training. It is, moreover, biased in favour of science and technology disciplines and emphasizes the development of science and technology primarily to meet the needs of business and industry.

Higher education, to be of use to society as a whole, must aim at preparing both skilled professionals and critical and creative individuals able to take part in the global process of the creation and application of knowledge. The natural sciences should be pursued not just for the sake of technological application, but also to broaden the horizons of knowledge. Also, social sciences are as important as natural and engineering sciences, but have been sorely neglected in Pakistan. Institutions of higher learning ought to be places where free enquiry and critical thinking are encouraged and nourished. These have been the driving force of higher education throughout the history of humanity.

CHAPTER – 5

Issues in Provision of Education: Financing, Access and Equity

Basic education is a right of every child, and opportunities for it must be provided by society in a collective way; that is, through government financing, and should be managed by the state through local communities.

It also follows that access to education must be universal. The state must ensure that every child has easy access to education, and that every child receives an education, irrespective of the attitude or financial means of parents. Once the government has accepted its responsibility to provide universal, basic education, mechanisms should be devised to monitor and enforce it.

It is also the state's responsibility to regulate all levels of education, since it is a public good, even when education is being provided by the private sector or a charitable organization, regardless of whether it is a for-profit elite school or a *madrassa*.

Universal access to education demands the following: that there should be a school for every child within reasonable distance of his/her residence (ideally no more than a kilometer), and that the school has a building with classrooms and other essential infrastructure, including toilets. Access is a serious problem in underdeveloped, remote and sparsely populated areas.

This makes the state responsible to provide:

1. sufficient financial resources
2. the requisite number of schools, colleges and universities (these are laid out in the 2001 Education For All plan)
3. adequate infrastructure needed for adequate education in these institutions
4. a rigorous teacher-training programme that produces skilled and dedicated teachers
5. enough trained teachers to staff schools, colleges and universities
6. education for children who did not finish school and are now working
7. adult literacy programs for those who have never had any schooling

Education for all also means equitable access. There are many disparities in society – gender, economic, regional, faith, disability *etc.* – that serve to disadvantage people. Equal access to education means taking special care of the disadvantaged.

Financing education

Education has always been under-funded in Pakistan. The yearly allocation to education has typically been around 2% of GDP, has at times dipped to a mere 1.5%, and has only recently climbed up to 2.7%. But even this allocation was never fully utilized.

The report has already highlighted the shortfalls in targets on the provision of education that governments have set in the two most recent education policies. It has also listed the commitments Pakistan has made at international forums regarding various aspects of education, and the country's achievements so far. The recent announcement of an increase in the education budget to 4% of GDP, welcomed by all but still seen as insufficient, is likely to go to meet the targets to some degree. This is because 4% of GDP is universally recognized as the minimum necessary education expenditure, rather than one that would contribute to accelerated socio-economic growth. Moreover, the education sector in Pakistan has been so badly impoverished over the decades that a much higher and sustained resource input for several decades would be needed to compensate for the neglect. It should be noted that many countries of the world, both rich and poor, spend over 20% of the total government expenditure on education. In the case of Pakistan it hovers around 7-8%. It would be in the national interest if other expenditures were reduced to spare resources to increase spending on education to 20%.

Successive governments in Pakistan have also cheated the nation in the name of spending on education. They have levied additional taxes for education, but never used these funds for education. For example, the Iqra surcharge was introduced in 1985 with the promise that it would be used to supplement the regular annual education budget. Hundreds of billions of Rupees have been collected over the past 20 years, but there is no evidence that any of it was ever used for education. When challenged, the government has failed to convince anyone that the surcharge was used for education, despite the fact that the surcharge continues to be collected. It would be difficult to find another nation in the world where the government so blatantly cheats in the name of education.

Utilization of funds

There are many inefficiencies and problems in the public financing of education. Development finances in particular take a long time to come, and if unused, lapse. This creates a rush to spend the money in the remaining time available, resulting in inefficient use and often in corruption. There are few systems in place to expose such waste, or to remedy the misuse.

Funds to education should be made non-lapsable, and budget cuts, so common in the education sector, should be made unlawful.

The financing of education needs to be decentralized to districts, tehsils, union councils and schools, all of which have a greater stake in using the money effectively. It would also serve to create a strong system of local oversight and so reduce the risk of corruption and waste.

Provision of infrastructure

Currently, school construction is determined by politicians, and this has given rise to all kinds of biases in the number, location, size and style of school buildings, as well as underutilization and wastage of funds.

Communities should be involved directly in the provision of education. To make education policies demand-driven, community-based schools should be encouraged. In such an arrangement, community members could donate the space, and the local government could assess the needs of the school (including space, teachers and facilities) before building and furnishing new structures.

Because of the shortage of schools, there is no need to enforce gender segregation in the early stages of education. Rather, there should be co-education in primary schools.

Provision of teachers

It is ironic indeed that there is a shortage of teachers, and many teaching posts remain vacant for years, while there is a large pool of unemployed graduates in the country. Where teachers are provided, there is often an inappropriate employment of teachers (*e.g.* arts graduates teaching mathematics and science).

The appointment procedure for teachers through the Public Service Commission is lengthy and cumbersome, and results in delays. Also, the service conditions in rural areas are so poor that teachers avoid these positions. This results in serious teacher shortages in rural areas. This problem needs to be addressed by streamlining the employment procedure, by decentralizing the appointment authority, delegating financial authority to local bodies, and of course improving rural schools.

There needs to be better planning for recruiting teachers and allocating them to appropriate schools. Gender and minority factors should be a consideration in where teachers are posted.

It has become clear that early childhood education is better delivered by female teachers. Since educated women still suffer discrimination in many parts of the economy, and are denied financial autonomy and independence, women teachers should be given preference over male teachers in primary schools. To encourage female teacher employment, care should be taken to post them close to home, and the principle of co-location of husband and wife teachers should be observed.

Teacher absenteeism is a common problem. It could be controlled through improved working conditions and salaries, better defined career paths, and encouraging teacher participation in improving school management. Community oversight of the working of teachers will also help.

Non-formal education

It is no secret that a significant fraction of the population has never been to school or drops out of school for various reasons. To achieve universal literacy, non-formal education (NFE) and adult literacy programs should be a part of the government effort.

Non-formal education through NGOs has been successful in some places - BRAC in Bangladesh is one example - but has failed repeatedly in Pakistan. One reason for the failure is bad planning; for instance, a teacher catering to a hundred students, offering his home as the premises for education, is paid a salary of only Rs.1,000. Using *madrassas* as part of such programs also has its problems, in that it opens up ways for training in obscurantism. There is a need to understand why these efforts have failed. Further funding for these programs should be based on sweeping reforms of these programs.

The Education Monitoring and Information System (EMIS) is an essential part of education policy planning and tracking reform. There has been some progress but it remains poor in some provinces. It has been de-centralized, but the requisite facilities have not yet been provided.

Specific recommendations

Financing

- Budgetary allocations for education must be enhanced. The government has promised an allocation of 4% of GDP, which is a step in the right direction. But only a consistent spending of 6% of GDP over a couple of decades, coupled with 100% of fund utilization, will ensure sustainable education reform.
- The financial utilization level is very low. A national level study should be urgently instituted to find the reasons for under-utilization, and recommend solutions.
- The disbursement of funds for annual development programs (ADPs) takes a long time and causes development allocations to lapse. The study should find why this happens, and how it can be remedied.

Access

- Primary schools should be made co-education institutions all over the country. Girls will benefit where girls schools are not easily accessible.
- Mechanisms should be devised to enforce the laws that make education compulsory.
- The Education Management Information System should be strengthened, where weak, with the necessary equipment and human resources. Up to date information should be available to all policy makers, local governments, and citizens.
- There should be a district-based census system to ensure increased accuracy and availability of information.
- Statistical data should be standardized with uniform benchmarks in all the provinces and districts to improve education planning.

Equity

- Access to educational facilities must be equitable with respect to gender and regional and economic disparities.
- Female teachers should be given improved opportunities.

Education for All (EFA) and Non-formal Education (NFE)

- Formal education ought to have priority over non-formal education, because the former is for willing learners, while the latter caters mainly to less willing learners.
- Support for education can be provided by NGOs, which the government should support, especially in rural areas.
- The pay of teachers in the EFA and NFE programs is humiliatingly low and should be increased. Annual performance-based increments should be instituted for teachers who demonstrate excellence.
- Talented students in the non-formal educational system should be helped to enter the formal education system.
- Regions should be allowed to design NFE curricula according to their specific needs.
- Serious efforts should be made to eliminate 'ghost schools'. These are a huge drain on national resources.
- Education in *madrassahs* should be remodeled into more socially useful training, and to ensure that it does not lead to intolerance.
- Further funding for NFE programs should be based on analysis followed by sweeping reforms.

CHAPTER – 6

Ensuring the Quality of Education

Rapid expansion in education can be at the cost of quality. The real challenge is to simultaneously improve access and quality. The rate of return on investment in education is enhanced by improving the quality. Conversely, poor quality education keeps returns on education low, and leads to a high dropout rates.

It is widely held that the quality of public education in Pakistan is already rather low. However, for different people, quality of education can mean different things. For some parents, for example, quality is gauged in terms of the load of daily homework. The heavier the workload, the happier they are. For others, if a child fails to learn to read and speak English, he or she is seen as receiving a poor education. For most parents, quality is measured in terms of examination results, no matter what the quality of the exam.

For our purposes here, quality of education can be taken to depend on:

- What is taught (content)
- How it is taught (methods)
- How learning is evaluated
- The physical infrastructure of schools
- Management of schools
- Parents' attitudes to education
- Social attitudes towards education

What is taught depends on curricula, syllabi and textbooks, on extracurricular activities, and on the imparted worldview.

How it is taught depends foremost on teachers, their number, training, skills, classroom practices (whether they encourage questions, whether they rely on corporal punishment, *etc.*), their punctuality, their care for students, their own knowledge and worldview, the pupil-teacher ratio, and so on. It also depends on the quality of textbooks, teaching aids, libraries, laboratories, workshops, and the availability of material for hands-on work.

How learning is evaluated depends on the nature of tests, the frequency of tests, the quality of questions, the predictability of questions, fairness of the examination system, and above all, on the use of the most recent advances in the art and science of evaluation.

The physical and social infrastructure of schools contributes greatly to the quality of education. The buildings, furniture, playgrounds, toilets and extra-curricular activities, all contribute to the quality, and can profoundly affect enrollment.

Other factors which contribute to quality education include: a chain of authority, which links the various tiers of the semi-centralized management of the public education system from Islamabad to the smallest village school; the management of schools; the control exercised over teachers in the performance of their duties; their employment and transfers, and the interaction between teachers, parents and students.

Parents' attitudes, such as encouraging children to study when at home, particularly in higher classes, and encouraging them to read extra-curricular books and to visit libraries, all serve to make students more serious. These factors enable children to enjoy their studies and make it possible for good schools and good teachers to enhance the quality of instruction and learning.

Finally, the quality of education is determined by how much value a society places on it. It is reflected in how eager parents are to enroll their children in school; by what they see as the purpose of their investment in their child's education; by how society treats educated persons and the status it accords them; and whether education is seen only as a means of economic gain or as part of the overall development of decent human beings who are productive members of society.

The parameters that define the quality of education have to be seen differently at different stages of education. The major requirement for primary-level teachers must be good training in psychological handling of children, of encouraging their creativity and of imparting positive social attitudes of empathy, cooperation and sharing. At higher levels of education, a student is supposed to be able to learn on his or her own, and the teacher serves as a guide, opening up vistas for the students. For this, the teacher has to possess a sound and broad knowledge of the subject. In addition, there must be adequate access to academic resources. Early education must be alluring, joyful and exploratory, while higher education must be progressively challenging in the use of reasoning, analysis and synthesis.

Improving the quality of education

Improve the quality of education requires four parallel sets of initiatives:

1. To improve infrastructure, the state will need to increase resources for public sector educational institutions.

With the annual public sector expenditure on education going up from the present 2.7% of GDP to 4% - *i.e.* increasing by over Rs. 65 billion – a large part of the additional money, perhaps at least 50% of it, should be utilized to improve the infrastructure of public sector schools, colleges and universities.

Since this would be development expenditure, and the utilization of development expenditure has been traditionally very poor, the government would need to identify factors that impede proper utilization, and make sure to remove any bottlenecks.

There should be a rating system for educational institutions, by which every institution is evaluated on the best patterns adopted from within Pakistan and other societies.

2. The courses, syllabi and textbooks need to be thoroughly revised.
 - a. Courses, syllabi and textbooks need to follow minimum international standards to enable our young generations to face multifarious global challenges. The present-day over-emphasis on nationalist and religious ideology and militarism must not in any way compromise this need.
 - b. The monopoly on textbooks exercised by government-run textbook boards should be broken. Schools should be free to choose approved books from private publishers.
 - c. Examinations should be based on the contents of courses rather than replicating what is in a textbook.
 - d. School libraries should be stocked with a wide range of textbooks from textbook boards as well as private publishers.
 - e. In higher classes, particularly at the level of bachelor's studies, there should be a list of prescribed books, including those used internationally, and examinations should not be based on a single textbook.
 - f. Early education, up to class 3 at least, should be in the mother tongue. Authors and publishers should be encouraged to produce textbooks in mother tongues. Special boards should be formed to standardize the scripts and grammars of those mother tongues that have been neglected so far.
 - g. Early education should emphasize creativity, communication skills, language training, good social habits of cooperation and sharing.
 - h. Curriculum formulation should be decentralized. Provincial education departments should be allowed to develop their own curricula according to their specific needs. This can be devolved down to the district level. While developing curricula in accordance with the specific environment of the learner makes it more relevant and useful, it should not become parochial or inhibit a talented student from pursuing advanced studies.
3. Measures should be taken to attract more qualified persons to teaching, and teacher-training programs should be strengthened and expanded.

There is a serious shortage of teachers in science, mathematics and English, which can be remedied by creating more incentives for people to join the profession. This can be accomplished if salaries and grades are according to qualifications and not according to the classes one teaches.

The curricula of teacher training programs need to be modernized. There should be continuous refresher courses for teachers. Teachers ought to have a sound

knowledge of the subject they teach. Teachers should be rewarded for good performance and for obtaining additional qualifications and skills. More detailed suggestions are given in the chapter on teachers.

4. The school year should be lengthened.

It has been estimated that the effective school year in Pakistan averages only 180 days, while it is 219 days in the United Kingdom and 290 days in Japan. If this is the case, then a school teacher in Pakistan is grossly under-employed. It is also possible that he/she is otherwise overburdened by being loaded with too many classes in a single day. If so, the burden must tell on his/her efficiency, which in turn is bad for students.

A school year for up to 220 days is possible, and would mean additional classroom teaching, a relaxed teaching schedule as well as time for professional development days and extracurricular and creative activities.

Specific recommendation (in addition to the above)

- Learning materials (curricula, textbooks, *etc.*) must be transformed
- Help should be sought from the experience of other societies which have made significant progress in educational reform.
- Educational institutions should have an adequate number of well-trained teaching staff.
- Primary and middle school teachers should be adequately trained in child psychology.
- Teaching must not be used for indoctrination or to spread prejudices.
- Education should assure increased understanding amongst peoples across cultures, countries, religions and languages.
- Assessment methods must be changed to ones that determine internalization and application of knowledge. Those methods that require rote memorization must be discontinued.
- Teachers must be given refresher courses on good teaching practices like classroom attitudes, punctuality, giving regular homework and regularly checking it, giving frequent tests and quizzes, *etc.*
- The public sector should endeavor to produce quality textbooks. Private textbooks of good quality should also be approved for use. A student should be encouraged to read more than one textbook.
- Examinations should be based on the contents of courses rather than repeating what is in a textbook
- School libraries should have a wide range of textbooks from textbook boards as well as private publishers.
- Educational policies should be in accordance with the International Charter of Human Rights.
- Early education should be given in the child's mother tongue. Other languages should be taught as second languages.
- Quality control mechanisms should be developed and enforced in both public and private schools.

Infrastructure

- Provision of educational infrastructure (furniture, libraries, laboratories, playgrounds, toilets, clean drinking water, *etc.*) must be ensured in every educational institution.
- Learning should be interesting and based on inquisitiveness, leading students to become independent and creative learners.

Self-appraisal

- Schools should create methods of evaluating their own performance.
- Every school should be rated by the same system.
- Members of the government, public servants as well as public representatives, should be obligated to send their children to government schools so that they become *stakeholders* and take an interest in improving the condition of education in these schools.

CHAPTER – 7

Management of Education

Education, being on the concurrent list of subjects, is managed by the central as well as provincial governments. The centre exercises total control over policy formulation, defining curriculum and approving textbooks. The provincial governments allocate financial resources out of the revenues they receive from the divisible pool in the centre and provincial revenues. The delivery of education is managed by the provincial education Ministries through a network of horizontally and vertically linked schools, colleges, departments, directorates and boards.

Provinces also participate in curriculum formation and textbook production, but are not autonomous in choosing their own curricula and textbooks. In the case of university education, the centre exercises total financial control through the Higher Education Commission.

Management of education means all of the following:

- Efficient administration of education
- Delegation of authority for financial appropriation
- An education information system

The foremost question education managers need to answer is: why are allocated funds not properly utilized?

Educational management has perennially lacked vision, professional and technical knowledge and competence. The managers have also been authoritarian in decision making, and there has been little community participation in school management.

With the devolution of political authority, the system of district inspectors of schools was changed into District Education Officers, regional directorates of schools/colleges were established and a cadre of supervisors of primary education, learning coordinators, and resource persons was introduced.

The new system has not yet taken root. It is still evolving and the District governments are becoming more aware of their responsibilities. They are seeking funds for education. The school management committees (SMCs) have in some places become more active. Community participation is also now encouraged in some places. Public-private partnership is also promoted. Institutional as well as individual accountability is being promoted.

However, there are challenges to the new devolved system. Tensions have often arisen between district and provincial education departments over their respective roles and authority. Provincial education departments are still reluctant to delegate powers and authority to districts. The district education system has also now become more susceptible to interference from local politicians.

In addition, there is a lack of trained people to work in this decentralized framework. Schools still do not take SMCs seriously. The district administrators still lack authority to appoint and transfer teachers and employees, and hence to punish failures to carry out duties. As a result, the new system does not have the capacity for effective monitoring.

The problem lies in the government's failure to define the functions and responsibilities of officers and different tiers of management in the new system. The officers do not have clearly defined job descriptions in the changed situation.

The Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) are dominated by teachers, and do not allow the contribution of parents to school management that was originally envisaged. In any case, the experience of PTAs, laudable as it is, and while successful in some places, has in general failed to work because of parents' lack of interest.

Collaboration between district education administration and school management committees has yet to evolve. Those schools that do succeed in mobilizing local communities in their functioning should be suitably rewarded for it.

Even in the new system, education officers charged with monitoring performance are overloaded by the number of schools under their jurisdiction. There are about 120 schools under an EDO, and 70 or so under an ADO. There is a need for more officers and more qualified personnel. The present monitoring system serves more to find fault than to engage and assist teachers and school management.

The District Education Officers should be trained in human resource management, finances and in establishment matters.

An efficient Education Management Information System would help every tier of education to better organize and plan delivery.

The federal and provincial governments need to institute a study on the management structure of education, and its functioning under the devolved political system, clearly identifying the respective roles of each actor.

Corruption in education

Corruption is a major barrier to education reform. Corruption appears in several forms and through several channels, some of which are:

- Ghost schools
- Non-attending paid staff
- Pilferage of school hardware; furniture, blackboards and other items
- Undeserving appointments

- Political interference in teachers' appointments and transfers and students' admissions
- Poor performance monitoring
- Cheating in examinations
- Textbook writers' and printers' "mafias".

All of these are extremely harmful to the health of the education system. There should be laws treating them as serious social crimes, with heavy punishments for offenders.

Specific recommendations

- Develop institutional management capacity by clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of each nodal point in the management network, and by developing explicit job descriptions and ToRs.
- Develop individual management capacity by holding training workshops.
- Provide adequate financial resources according to properly assessed needs.
- The systemic problems that cause under-utilization of funds must be identified, and remedies found and implemented.
- Allocated funds must be released in time for their full and proper utilization.
- Limit political interference by passing a law that makes using political intervention in appointments, transfers and admissions an offence liable to disqualification of an elected public representative.
- Clearly define provincial and district roles in the management of education to remove the existing tensions between the provincial and district governments.
- Improve community and civil society participation in all levels of local governance in the provision, monitoring, accountability and improvement of education.
- Institute a system of performance measurement and appraisal to gauge progress.
- Reward good performance of individuals, institutions and committees.
- Encourage local innovations within the devolved system.
- Create a sense of ownership of schools in the community. Schools that succeed in involving communities should be rewarded.
- Employ more EDOs and ADOs. There are far too many schools for each to monitor/inspect.
- The monitoring system must also contain ways and means of assisting schools and teachers to improve their performance.
- Initiate a Masters level university program on education management.
- Improve and sustain the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in all the provinces, and decentralize it down to the district level. Supply all necessary infrastructure facilities for this.
- Pass laws to make corruption in education a serious crime, punishable by severe penalties.

CHAPTER – 8

Teachers and Teachers' Training

The teacher is the pivot of any education system. Good, motivated teachers are a great source of inspiration for pupils, even when they are forced to work in unfavorable conditions.

This chapter will deal exclusively with the school teachers with CT, PTC, B.Ed. and M.Ed. qualifications. Degree college teachers and university teachers will be discussed separately in the discussion on higher education,

While expanding access to education demands a sufficient number of teachers, good initial training and preparing teachers with knowledge and teaching skills would ensure quality of teaching, which would contribute to good learning outcomes.

The following problems can be identified with the current system of recruiting and retaining teachers and providing teacher training:

- There is a shortage of employed teachers. Positions remain vacant, and filling these positions takes a long time.
- Not all teachers are trained, and even fewer are well-trained.
- Teachers are not appropriately employed. This is particularly true in the case of English, science and mathematics teaching.
- Teachers are overworked, having to deal with large classes. The existing class size in some areas exceeds 40.
- Teachers are not accorded due status in society. Their salaries are low, and many suffer from low esteem. This often results in a lack of motivation.
- Teachers lack opportunities for professional development.
- Teachers are often transferred without regard for their needs. Female teachers particularly face great inconvenience on this count. When husband and wife are both teachers, the transfers hurt even more.

On the other hand, the general complaint against teachers is that:

- Not all teachers are well-trained in pedagogical practices, nor do all have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach.
- Teachers lack motivation and dedication.

- They do not always come to class prepared.
- Teachers often take up the job as a temporary occupation on their career path.
- There is no mechanism to check whether a teacher is performing his or her duties properly. Teacher absenteeism is therefore quite prevalent.
- Teachers are not given a proper job description; for example, to prepare lesson plans, give regular home assignments, regularly check assignments, and keep a regular check on the progress of all the students.
- Teachers are ill-trained in child psychology, and often kill any creativity in children with their harsh attitudes and punishments.

Teachers' training institutions are unsatisfactory in terms of

- Ill-trained master trainers
- Poor curriculum
- Poor training schedules
- Unnecessary emphasis on ideological correctness

Allama Iqbal Open University has produced a large number of teachers, but the quality of the training is questionable. For example, trainees have little hands-on classroom practice, despite the curriculum requiring 40 days' teaching practice. Also, distance learning cannot ensure high quality. Studies have conclusively shown that employing ill-trained teachers has a negative impact on quality, resulting in a downward spiral in the quality of learning and high dropout rates.

It should be noted that with the greater efforts to increase enrollment, and at the current rate of population growth, the number of additional teachers needed to staff the schools every year would run into the thousands. This is much more than the present capacity of teacher-training institutions. The capacity of teacher-training institutions must therefore be enhanced to keep pace with the increasing demand.

The issue of numbers *vis a vis* quality also arises in the case of school teachers. The existing number of teachers is far short of the requirement. Many of those available are poorly trained. If quality is to improve then only well-trained teachers should be employed.

If the government were to have enough resources to employ the necessary number of teachers, it would have two options to overcome the shortage of trained teachers: (1) provide fast-track training to untrained educated persons who want to be teachers, or (2) employ untrained teachers and train them later, or replace them in time by trained teachers.

The first option could work in the following way: employ untrained educated persons, give them a short (3 months) intensive, high quality pre-service training, employ them for a year or so, and make their longer-term employment conditional on their undergoing more rigorous training programs in future, as well as on their performance. Provide them with periodic training programs both in their subjects as well as in pedagogy. Their performance would be evaluated against their job-

description and ToRs, and on the basis of feedback reports¹⁴ from students and school management.

In the meantime, admit several thousand persons in an expanded and improved regular teacher-training program, so that they are ready as well-trained teachers in due time.

For those among the temporarily employed who are inclined to continue in the profession, regular, rigorous training programs should be offered that would eventually lead to certification by the proposed 'National Teachers' Accreditation Council'.

The periodic short training programs in specific subjects can be conducted by university students hired on contract during vacation periods. Mechanisms would need to be evolved to monitor the quality of such teachers, and to ensure consistency. This should be coupled with the proposal of forming a National Education Corps, consisting of university students, to undertake teacher training and spread out to districts and tehsils to conduct refresher training of school teachers in the summer and winter vacations. This is a gigantic logistical and financial task.

Good management can bring out the best in any teacher. It is a common observation that unmotivated teachers in public schools turn out to be reasonably good and dependable when employed in the private sector. This shows the value of management imposing good teaching practices like being punctual, preparing lesson plans, giving assignments, regularly checking assignments, being innovative and generating learning activities.

Teachers' incomes have to be enhanced. This would increase their job satisfaction, self-esteem, and improve their social status, and hence their efficiency, as well as attracting qualified people to the profession.

Clearly the existing BPS system fixes grades according to the minimum qualification required for the position, but there is no bar on increasing teachers' income through increments and allowances for additional professional qualifications they acquire or for refresher courses they attend and pass, or any other achievement. This can apply to the many unqualified persons already hired in the profession for whom enhancing salaries across the board is not generally seen as justified.

Parent-Teacher Associations or SMCs can be involved in assessing whether a teacher deserves a monetary incentive. There should be no upper limit on the number of incentives a teacher can earn. This can ensure that serious and dedicated teachers can earn a decent salary for their work.

This would not be a novel practice in Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission rewards university teachers for their performance as measured in terms of research output and the number of Ph.D. and M.Phil. students supervised.

¹⁴ It is understood that the feedback reports from students would be applicable for upper primary and higher classes.

Given that teachers in the public sector are appointed on a permanent basis, it is next to impossible to remove a bad teacher. The best that can be done is to motivate bad teachers to improve their teaching methods by rewarding their peers for good work and offering them training courses.

In general, national policies over-emphasize school education, and pay less attention to higher education. School teachers, particularly middle and high school teachers, have a Bachelor's. However, the two-year Bachelor's program is widely regarded as the weakest link in the education chain. Universities taking students into Masters' and Doctoral programs uniformly complain of the poor state of preparedness at the undergraduate level. This deficiency also hurts the quality of school education when college graduates opt for teaching as a career. Improvement in college and university education will help address the problem of poorly prepared school teachers.

Strategies

1. Teacher training

- (i) Pre-service teachers' training programs should be improved in curricula and practical work. Teachers' quality should be improved through in-service training. To improve teaching skills, there should be a focus on mastery of subjects, training in pedagogical skills, provision of teachers' guides, monetary and non-monetary incentives as well as knowledge of child psychology, counseling and student-assessment techniques.
- (ii) All teachers should be engaged in in-service training programs during the summer holidays.
- (iii) University students should be trained as master trainers after a short training course in their subjects (this may attract many university students to becoming school teachers profession) and a course on pedagogy.
- (iv) AIOU has produced thousands of trained teachers from its distant learning programs, about whom the professional opinion is that they are ill-trained. A crash retraining and certification program (not distance learning) should be instituted to turn them into employable teachers.
- (v) Incentives should be provided to in-service trainees in the form of advanced increments after completing each successful training schedule.
- (vi) A progression to the next grade should be provided to trainees for each advanced level training.
- (vii) Education psychology and child psychology should be a compulsory and a significant component of the teacher training curriculum.
- (viii) There should be a Teacher Certification Agency that awards certificates to teach specific subjects at specific levels.

2. Teachers' employment

- (i) More female than male primary and middle teachers should be hired, especially in urban or semi-urban areas. Targeted female teacher recruitment will aid in this process.
- (ii) Teachers should be assigned to work in their localities and a spouse policy (in which teachers married to teachers work in the same locality) should be adopted.
- (iii) No political interference should be brought to bear in transferring teachers.
- (iv) Transfer of the teachers should be banned during the academic session.

3. Accountability

- (i) Strict management control through head masters and School Management Committees should be exercised to check teacher absenteeism.
 - (ii) Teachers' performance should be evaluated regularly by School Management Committees
4. BPS grades should be fixed according to qualifications. A fresh M.A. teaching primary classes should be fixed in grade 17, as in other services.
5. College education should be improved by revamping the curricula, syllabi, and examinations and by moving it away from the existing system of a single, locally published, prescribed textbook. Opening this sector to international textbooks, as was the practice until some 40 years ago, would help to improve the quality of intermediate and degree college education. Simultaneously, examination questions should be set from the course contents, and not from a given textbook.

CHAPTER – 9

The System of Examinations

Annual examinations, particularly of classes IX to XII, have, unfortunately, acquired central importance in the educational process in Pakistan for educators, students and administrators. They have become the sole source of standardization of students' achievement and a determinant of their career path in spite of a universal lack of trust in them.

Reform of the examination system requires looking not just at the terminal examinations at the end of class X or XII, but also at the internal evaluation system in schools, both in the form of continuous assessment through monthly tests, and annual examinations set by school teachers internally for promotion to the next class.

Examinations also remain an unsatisfactory aspect of university education where they continue to demand rote learning and fail to assess the basic understanding of the subject and analytical skills.

The examination system now prevalent in Pakistan suffers from a number of serious deficiencies. For example,

- Examinations require rote memorization rather than internalization of the learnt material.
- They contain a large choice in questions to answer, making it possible to earn good grades by focusing on a fraction of the total course work.
- Examination questions are taken from textbooks. Questions from another book covering the same curriculum are regarded as being 'out of course'.
- Examination question papers repeat questions from previous examinations, and thus have a high level of predictability.
- Teaching has become examination-oriented, and not focused on encouraging the process of learning and exploring.
- Examination results depend heavily on the subjectivity of the person setting the paper and the person grading the answer book.
- The process has several loop-holes for corrupt practices from examination paper setting, to conduct of examinations, to grading of answer books, to compilation of results, to award of actual certificates and degrees.

- Examinations lack standardization. There is no comparability among different examination boards

Examination papers have become predictable, and have therefore given a boost to the tutoring/coaching industry. In addition, cheating in examinations, often with the help of invigilating staff, has become a common occurrence. Then there are “mafias” in the examination boards who let question papers out ahead of time, change the identity of candidates on answer sheets, conspire to award undeserved grades and issue bogus certificates.

As a result, examinations and the certificates issued by the examination boards have lost credibility in the eyes of most employers and institutions of higher learning at home and abroad. Students and teachers are helpless, and silently acquiesce to the system because there is no alternative.

Low payment for setting question papers, and even lower payment for grading answer books (paid by number of books graded) pose serious problems of efficiency and honesty in the conduct of public examinations.

The question of examinations, however, should not be looked at from the point of view of terminal class X and class XII public examinations alone. The internal examinations set by class teachers also suffer from serious deficiencies because they do not correctly measure internalization of the learnt material. The teachers often lack the ability to pose good, challenging questions, primarily because they are not sufficiently trained in the skill of asking questions.

The examination boards have often experimented with changing examination question patterns, but not always in the right way. For example, a good departure from the normal questions that require largely descriptive, rather than analytical, answers is supposed to be multiple choice questions (MCQs). It is often held that MCQs bring out the student’s understanding of the material. It is however overlooked that there should be two very important ingredients of MCQs in examination papers: (1) the multiple answers must contain distractors (*i.e.* answers that are wrong but look right), and (2) if rewarding randomly marked answers is to be avoided then wrong answers ought to be given a negative weight. Unless these two prescriptions are strictly followed, the system of multiple choice questions would remain flawed.

The complete lack of trust in the examinations conducted by the Boards of Education has led to more and more private schools opting for the British ‘O’ and ‘A’ level examinations. They are expensive and have been instrumental in creating educational apartheid in the country, yet they offer an example of what is possible and what our own children can achieve.

As a solution to the failure of public examinations, the government has allowed private examination boards. The first such board is the Agha Khan University Board of Examinations. If the private boards can establish their credibility by giving challenging examinations, firmly controlling unfair means, and making sure of fair and honest grading, they may eventually prove to be the answer to the degraded public examination boards. They offer an alternative, but at a hefty cost and would be affordable to only a few, perpetuating the present educational apartheid.

Methods of assessment are globally under continuous development. There is no single perfect system yet, but some are demonstrably better and more credible than others. Techniques of assessment require continuous research that should take into account the specific socio-economic conditions of the society they are being used in. Such persistent research is lacking in Pakistan. Each public examination board, and particularly education universities and education departments in general universities, should set up and support active research groups on assessment methods.

Assessments at each age group and class ought to be according to learning objectives, which should be clearly defined in the curriculum.

Trained teachers are also in principle trained in the art of assessment and the result to be derived from an assessment. Teachers' training programs should include the theory and practice of the most advanced methods of assessment.

Recommendations to improve the public examination system

- Every examination board ought to have a research unit to continuously analyze examinations, conduct field tests, and remain updated with the best practices emerging elsewhere in the world.
- Research units in examination boards should have accomplished researchers with publications in education journals of international repute to their credit.
- There should be a National Examination Council (NEC) that would evolve strategies to eliminate all kinds of corruption in the examination system to restore confidence in it. The NEC should develop national standards of examinations.
- Examinations have to be from curricula and syllabi rather than textbooks.
- Examinations should assess understanding, and not merely knowledge.
- Teacher-training institutions should emphasize training in assessment techniques, including continuous internal assessment.
- Private examination boards are a welcome development, but the state should ensure that while the society maximally benefits from their expertise, they should not accentuate the existing educational apartheid.
- Government schools should also be allowed to affiliate with private examination boards and the government should ensure that the financial burden of this process is not borne by the parents.

CHAPTER – 10

Teaching of Languages and the Issue of the Medium of Instruction

Language is central to education in at least two ways. Any discussion on language has to start with the admission that the present system of school, college and university education does not provide sufficient training for (1) good communication in any language; (2) an ability to articulate complex ideas, in either Urdu or in English; and (3) good comprehension of spoken or written English. The consequences have been far reaching.

No one disagrees that, for pedagogical reasons, elementary education is best given in a child's mother tongue. Also, all agree that not having sufficient working skills in English at higher levels puts our young people at a disadvantage compared to the rest of the world, both in terms of opportunities for jobs, business and education, and in terms of staying abreast of the expanding global knowledge system.

It should also be recognized that language is a source of power. The language in which official correspondence, particularly court proceedings, are carried out becomes the language of power, and only those with good skills in the language are empowered to exercise their rights. Others remain disempowered, and their rights are trampled. It is hardly surprising that parents pay a high premium to have their children learn English, and learning English is often taken to be synonymous with quality education and a measure of educational achievement.

Languages are also symbols of culture and identity, and hence have the power to mobilize people. The question assumes a serious proportion in Pakistan where language has been and remains a source of discord among people, and where some regions have struggled hard to preserve their language(s) both as official language and as a medium of instruction in elementary education.

However, we would argue that not all languages in Pakistan are developed enough to serve as mediums of instruction: not because of any inherent deficiency but because language development has generally been neglected here. Even the sole national language, Urdu, which was well-developed over 50 years ago, has suffered a decline

in usage and literary contribution, notwithstanding the work of the National Language Authority.

There must be a conscious effort to promote the development of all Pakistani languages and local dialects. This would enable cultural development to people in all regions of the country. It would also eventually contribute to improved national integration based on enhanced self-esteem as well as improved mutual understanding. Pakistan badly needs a national institute of languages, with a mandate to research, preserve and develop Pakistani languages, determine their scripts, document their grammar, and collect their folk literature. This would be essential if there is to be a conscious effort to allow early education in mother tongues.

With Urdu and English as essential components of the school curriculum, using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction would amount to adopting a three-language policy. This may look burdensome but is not unusual in other parts of the world. India, for instance, has a three-language policy in its schools.

Clearly, this issue can easily become contentious in some regions with mixed language groups. It needs to be handled with care, compassion and consultation. The decision will have to be left to the regions alone. Given the linguistic diversity in a province, the decision cannot be left to provincial authorities either. So far, provinces have decided what the medium of instruction would be and when the teaching of the English language would begin. The province of Sindh, for example, has a three-language policy, with Sindhi as the medium of instruction in early classes.

If a three-language policy is adopted, Urdu and English will need to be taught as second languages.

A National Languages Commission should be set up to determine the current state of languages, the needs of each language and a language policy that the government should then adopt to meet these needs and to promote all the languages in Pakistan. The Commission should also make recommendations on the feasibility and usefulness of using the numerous mother tongues as mediums of instruction at the primary level, while leaving the final decision to relevant public representatives.

In addition, the Commission should assess the state of language teaching and identify 'best practices' that can be adopted to make our children and youth more proficient in the use of both the national languages and English. The Commission should also make firm recommendations to the government and the parliament on adopting official language(s) of the country, considering the needs of the times, rapidly changing means of communication, and the necessity of empowering people by making government transactions in languages that ordinary people can understand.

English language teaching

Pakistani curriculum designers and textbook authors have long grappled with different methodologies for teaching English, ranging from English as a second language, to literary English, to focusing on grammar, to 'functional' English. Unfortunately, the net outcome is that student's abilities in English comprehension, speech and writing are many times poorer than they were some decades ago. This is in spite of the

existence of a strong professional body: the Society for the Promotion of English Language Teaching (SPELT), which seems to have been able to exercise some influence on English language teaching policies and practices. The deficiency in English greatly inhibits the acquisition of global knowledge, and puts Pakistani youth at a disadvantage in relation to their counterparts elsewhere.

Some serious problems with English language teaching have been identified:¹⁵

- Syllabi are heavily loaded with old English literature
- Textbooks are outdated and uninteresting
- Examinations perpetuate rote learning
- Teachers themselves lack proficiency in English
- There is a serious shortage of qualified and trained teachers and teacher-educators in the English language
- There does not exist any specialized training in the field of teaching English as a second or foreign language
- Very limited opportunities exist for in-service training of teachers
- In-service training programs are generally short-term and there are few opportunities for continuous professional development related to teaching a second language.

Specific recommendations

Some recommendations with respect to English-language teaching are given below. They apply equally well to the teaching of any language, and similar strategies can be adopted for Urdu and regional languages.

- Research should be undertaken into the needs and provisions of English-language teaching at the primary and secondary levels under the supervision of local and foreign ELT specialists. The action plan for teaching English should be based on the research findings.
- Language Study Skills Centers should be established at all Universities to help students improve their English language competence for academic purposes. These centers should be well-staffed, with foreign specialists if necessary.
- At the federal level, with branches in the provinces, a National Center of English Language Teaching (NCELT) should be established. Its mandate should be to facilitate curriculum designing, develop teaching materials, and the train and professional development of practitioners who teach in public sector institutions. Such centers have been established in many Asian countries: the Centre of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) in India and the Regional English language Centre (RELC) Singapore are two examples.
- The school level English language textbooks contain a substantial portion of text on religion and patriotism. This is locally written material, and is more concerned with inculcating ideology than with sound pedagogy. These have

¹⁵ Abbas H. and Z. Sarwar (1989). *The English Language Teaching Scene in Pakistan*, SPELT Newsletter. Vol. 6 No. 3, 1989, pp. 9-13.

very limited instructional value, and should be replaced with material carefully selected for its instructional and linguistic value.

- It should be mandatory for English teachers at all levels to have ELT training.
- Internet-based teaching materials and sample lesson plans should be made available to support teachers in ELT. Bilingual and multi-lingual teachers' manuals - in English, Urdu and Regional languages - should be written to help teachers to teach the English language.

Teaching of Urdu and other local languages

Urdu textbooks are being currently used, even more than English books, for ideological indoctrination at the cost of linguistic proficiency. Short stories on religious and patriotic issues, written by the authors of these textbooks, dominate textbooks in Urdu and other Pakistani languages, and contain very little material of sound pedagogical value.

Urdu and some other languages are very rich in literature, which should be used as much as possible to enhance proficiency and hence the value of learning. Current textbooks in these languages are short on vocabulary and the use of idioms and expressiveness. The richness of the language will only be expressed when established literary figures are involved in writing language textbooks.

Language textbooks can also be a suitable medium for inculcating good social attitudes, humanistic values, love for nature, creativity and a yearning for high achievements in life. These are best given through short stories and poetry, rather than through heavy sermonizing. Interesting books also help to develop good comprehension, which eventually make students autonomous learners. Language textbooks should be written with all these objectives in mind.

CHAPTER – 11

Technical and Vocational Education

Education policies in Pakistan have always talked of (i) making education more relevant and activity oriented, (ii) providing skills at the middle and secondary levels to enable children who want to drop out to pursue technical vocations to earn livelihood, and (iii) meeting the needs of middle-level technical manpower. The plans, however, are never fully realized. There are only a few schools with technical and vocational streams, and a few technical colleges with diploma programs.

Structure of technical and vocational stream

Technical and vocational education in Pakistan can be divided into three tiers:

- *Pre-vocational training*, which is generally a part of school education and provides only basic skills to stimulate vocational interest. (An outcome of this training is Matric Tech, launched in 2002.)
- *Vocational training*, which seeks to prepare semi-skilled workers in various trades.
- *Technical & Business Education*, which aims to prepare middle-level technicians to work as supervisory staff to bridge the gap between semi-skilled workers and engineers and managers.

The structure and the flow of students in Technical and Vocational training is shown in Table 11.2.

Currently, the entry point to technical education is after class VIII. A class VIII graduate can either gain a short certificate or diploma in a trade before entering the job market, or opt for a technical stream of Matriculation. Admission to diploma programs is equally open to technical matriculates and matriculates of other streams. The entrants then have options ranging from entering the job market after 'short' certificate courses to taking up further studies leading to Diplomas and Bachelor's and even Master's degrees in technology and business (commerce).

Magnitude

The Table below gives the number of technical institutions in Punjab. The situation in other provinces may not be the same. In fact, the situation of technical education may

be the best in Punjab and the worst in Balochistan. If this is the case, then the figures for the most populous province show how poor technical education is in Pakistan.

Table 11.1: Technical Institutions in Punjab, 2006

Type	Institutions	Number
Technical Education	Gov't. Colleges of Technology	7
	Polytechnics	16 (12 M + 4 F)
Vocational Institutes	Technical Training Institutes	34 (30 M + 4 F)
	Vocational Training Institutes (Women)	113
	Technical Training Centers	80 (72 M + 8 F)
	Agriculture Training Schools	8
	Apprenticeship Training Centers	5
Colleges of Commerce	Colleges of Commerce	22
	Institutes of Commerce	91 (80 M + 11 F)
Service Centers / Specialized Institutions		25
TOTAL Institutes		402

Source: TEVTA

According to the *Economic Survey of Pakistan 2003-2004*, until the year 2000-01, the total number of vocational secondary institutions in the entire country was only 630 with a total enrolment of 83,000 and only 9,441 teachers on the staff. Of these, 236 were women's institutions, staffed by 1,959 teachers and with an enrolment of only 14,000.

These numbers paint a dismal picture. According to one researcher¹⁶ the current demand for middle-level technical manpower is about 1 million, whereas the supply is only a tenth of this. In Punjab alone, the supply is only 70,000 against an estimated demand of 650,000. Because there are so many trades to cover, the number of teachers is woefully short. Training equipment is in short supply, and funding is a pittance, because of which the training remains mostly theoretical, with very little hands-on practice. For the year 2005-06, the budget requirement of Punjab Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) was Rs. 60 billion, but the Authority received only Rs. 1.5 billion.

Technical graduates in Pakistan are both far fewer than needed and inadequately trained. Given that Pakistan's economy, unfortunately, depends so heavily on the export of technical manpower, and that the employment of manpower is in stiff competition with many other countries, the opportunity costs of an inefficient and under-supplied technical education system are extremely high.

Allowing entry into the technical stream only after class VIII seems to ignore the reality that most students drop out at class V. Notwithstanding the government plan to

¹⁶ Zaheer Paracha, TEVTA presentation, Lahore, 2006

make education compulsory up to class X, the reality is that most children enter the job market after primary school. In order for primary education to be attractive and meaningful to the investing parents, primary education should include a component of vocational and technical education. This suggestion definitely militates against the scourge of child labour and Pakistan's commitment of making education compulsory up to high school, but in the given situation of prevalent abject poverty, and of the government perennially failing to meet its commitments, it should be heeded at least provisionally and as humanely as possible.

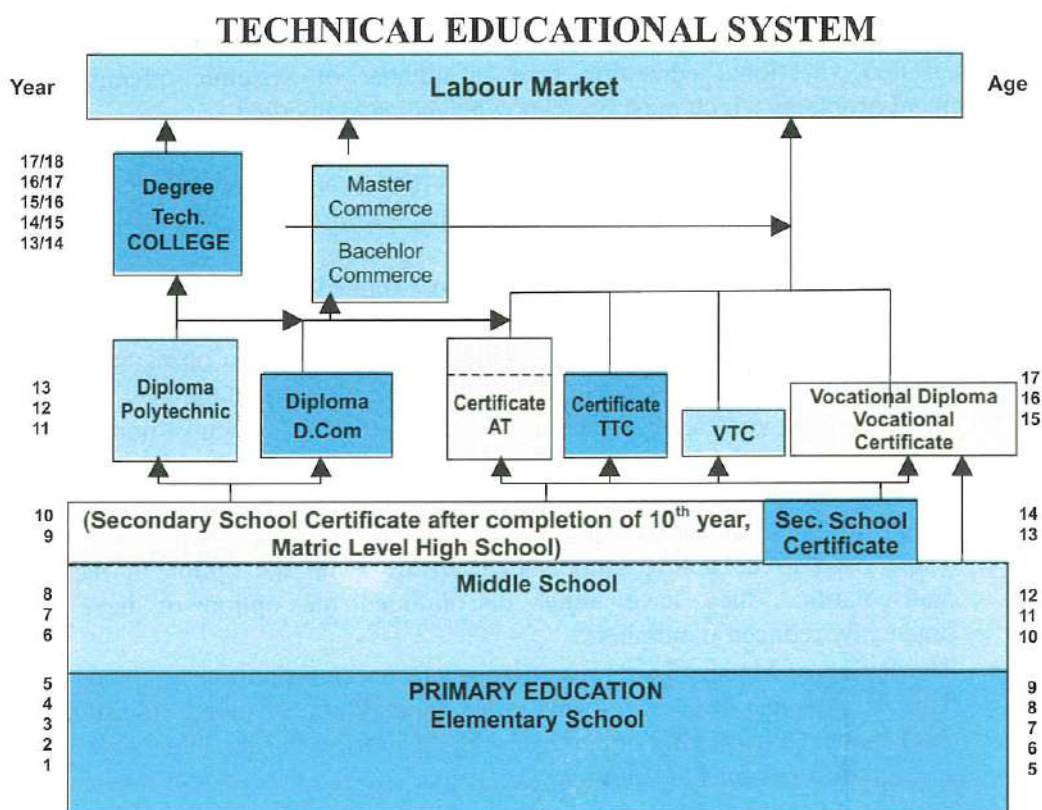
Specific recommendations

Technical and vocational education faces a number of systemic, planning and management problems which must be acknowledged and remedied.

- There is an acute shortage of laboratory and workshop facilities owing to under-funding. The sector must be provided with funding commensurate with its legitimate needs.
- Institutions complain of a shortage of trained teachers, although the student/teacher ratio is at least 3 times better than that of the arts and science colleges. Engineering university graduates should be taken on as teachers of these institutions at salaries that they would earn in the open market.
- Technical and vocational education at the school level is almost non-existent. Every school, or at least every cluster of schools, should be given adequate workshop facilities, together with funds, for students to learn how to use tools, work with their hands and express their creativity.
- There used to be a few schools in each city with the option of technical matriculation. They have either discontinued the option or have been drastically reduced in numbers.
- The option of Matric (Tech) is not being offered in proportion to the demand. This is perhaps because of the large expenditure involved in setting up workshops. Constructing collective workshops for a cluster of schools would seem to be a reasonable solution.
- In many instances, government technical high schools were turned to general education. They should be returned to providing technical education.
- TEVTA has complained that the quality of technical teaching staff is very poor. This is in spite of the claim by NISTE of an extensive program of training of teachers of technical institutions. There is some 'disconnect' here that needs to be investigated. NISTE and TEVTA should work together to resolve the problem.
- The Pakistan Engineering Council should consider instituting a certification system to standardize technical education, and to make the output of technical institutions globally acceptable.
- The apprentices (the *Chhotas*) currently engaged in learning trades in the traditional way under masters (the *Ustads*) should also be given access to technical education at the primary level, perhaps by giving them a year's training. This way they will also learn to read and write on the side, and may find it more attractive than the generally tyrannical *Ustad-shagird* system. The state should provide scholarships to *chhotas* on merit for completing their education in the technical stream.

- Each large industry should be asked to open a technical institution on its premises to train workers in the specific skills needed by that industry. The cost would easily be recouped through improvements in productivity. Workers would have to agree to remain with the employer for a fixed period of time.
- Training in trades of specific interest to women, for example related to electronics, computers, pharmaceuticals and secretarial skills, should be provided in each district.

Table 11.2: Structure and flow chart of the technical stream of education¹⁷



¹⁷ Source: Punjab TEVTA

CHAPTER – 12

Philanthropy vs. Commercialism: Private Sector Education

Private education is often seen as a new phenomenon in Pakistan, but in fact Pakistan has experimented with public and private education from its inception. In traditional South Asian society, and in the history of Muslim societies, education was mainly a non-governmental matter. In the case of Islamic civilization, state intervention came with the formalization and state patronage of the *madrassa* education during the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad. Yet private *madrassas* around great teachers continued to operate in their own ways. In South Asia, education – be it the Islamic clerical education, the Hindu Vedic education or the Persian and Arabic education for statecraft – was all private. The state patronage only came in the form of kings sanctioning land for sustenance or giving grants for buildings.

The British introduced to South Asia a state-controlled education, defined, funded and used by the state. This introduced for the first time the notion of education being a public good that has to be supported by the public exchequer. The British Indian government also permitted private education in parallel to the public system. *Madrassas* continued to exist, as did Vedic schools, missionary schools, and also educational institutions run by philanthropic individuals and citizens' associations.

The model continued for the first 25 years of Pakistan's existence. There were government schools in parallel with private schools – missionary, philanthropic, religious and commercial. In 1972 came the nationalization of education. The abject commercialism of a large section of private schools, which charged high fees and delivered low-quality education, pushed the government to extend the nationalization agenda to include education. The entire education system, save for a few elite schools, was nationalized. The curriculum and management were brought under state control in return for the state taking responsibility for meeting financial needs. The control, however, was bureaucratic in nature and, as a consequence, the quality of many institutions of high repute began to diminish. Nevertheless, quite a few public sector institutions continued to maintain their reputation.

The second wave of private education started in the 1980s, when some entrepreneurs ventured into opening elite institutions at a time when the quality of public sector

education had come under attack from the agenda of Islamization. These were the push and pull forces that determined the fate of education in the decades to come.

The public education system itself suffered from several weaknesses, including the inefficiencies of a nationalized system, bad examinations, poor curricula and textbooks. In addition, it was as resistant to change as any bureaucratically controlled system can be. It was unable to face the challenge of the new private options of education, particularly when they also offered the possibility of an alternate and more credible system of examinations and certification. This meant that even those responsible for managing public sector education opted for private educational institutions for their own children because, being resourceful, they could afford it. This led to a downward spiral for the state education system. The newly available options meant that the managers of public-sector education had no personal stake in it anymore, and the more the state neglected public sector education, the more it was relegated to becoming education for the under-privileged.

Once the floodgates of private education were opened, several inevitable results followed. For example:

- (i) it led to growth of inequity in education,
- (ii) expensive private education became both a necessity in the face of deteriorating public sector education, and a status symbol for those who could afford it,
- (iii) public sector education deteriorated further because of neglect by the state.

Private education can have several positive aspects. Private institutions, for example, have the potential to establish and maintain good educational standards by using good curricula and textbooks, making sure through good management that teachers give their best to their students; preparing students for challenging examinations; and having credible certification systems. They can choose to adopt teaching practices that inculcate essential cognitive skills in students.

On the other hand, elite private educational institutions, more often than not, bring up children who are alienated from the local cultural ethos. With such alienated cultural upbringing and their class background, coupled with the high quality education they have received, the graduates of these schools seldom stay to serve this society. They are often a net loss to the society.

Moreover, not all private educational institutions provide good education. Many operate only for commercial reasons, fleecing money from parents for a bad education. Among other things, they offer a claustrophobic environment to students with very narrow, poorly lit and badly ventilated classrooms, and no playground or other recreational facilities. They exploit parents and teachers, to whom they pay much less than their due.

The political consequences of private education are serious. They give rise to the educational apartheid so ubiquitous now in Pakistan in the form of English medium and Urdu medium education. Because they are expensive, they cater to the affluent and the privileged, which relegates the dispossessed to a poor quality public

education. Graduates of private English medium schools have all the opportunities of the world open to them, while those in the public sector education are deprived of a promising future.

Privatization has also allowed the government to shirk its responsibility to provide quality education to all. As the need of the powerful in the government is met by the private sector, they are less inclined to worry about the declining standards of the public sector.

Concerned with this attitude and the official neglect of public education, it stands as a valid observation that the public sector education will never receive the attention it deserves *unless public servants and public representatives are obliged by law to send their children to public schools in Pakistan.*

Some would argue that no other commodity in Pakistan has increased more in cost than education in elite private institutions. Knowing that parents are a captive market, even non-elite private institutions raise their charges without hesitation. It has therefore been increasingly demanded that there be a regulatory control over private educational institutions.

The demand for regulatory control needs to be seen in the context of the origin of the demand. It has come from two different quarters. One source of the demand is the parents who want control over excessive fees, and a quality of education and school environment commensurate with the fees. The second source are those religious-political forces which had sought control over young minds through curricula and textbooks over the last 25 years or so, and who see the private, English-medium schools escaping their net.

The first concern is certainly valid. Giving free rein to the private sector is fraught with deep social problems. There is *a definite need for a mechanism to regulate the fees charged against the quality of delivery of education.* The second concern is absurd. There should be no attempt at compromising the quality of children's education by forcing them to absorb ideological and patriotic material that has no educational content or value.

The question often asked is: who will regulate the private sector, and for what? Certainly the government officials who have failed to ensure decent public education are not qualified to regulate those who are providing decent education. The areas where the government's intervention can be helpful and constructive are in regulating fees in relation to the quality of education and financing infrastructure such as libraries, laboratories and classrooms. The government should definitely refrain from interfering in curricula, syllabi and textbooks. It should also not enforce its bad and discredited examination system on private schools. The regulation mechanism should, however, support rather than punish less resourceful schools.

The state sector must, on the other hand, benefit from the private sector by adopting its good teaching practices like preparing lesson plans, ensuring regular attendance, holding frequent quizzes and tests and regularly checking homework. It can also benefit from teacher-training institutes in the private sector to overcome the deficiencies of public-sector training institutes. The public sector must neither shy

from competition from good private institutions, nor should it let itself be relegated to being a poor service provider to the powerless and the dispossessed sections of society.

Specific recommendations

1. The elite private schools must continue to set good benchmarks for quality education. However, if they are really for good education and for the uplift of society, they must make it a point – like elite private institutions in developed societies – to not refuse admission to any talented candidate on account of his or her inability to pay the fees. They should, instead, offer talented but indigent students full scholarship support. The state on its part must make recognition of private institutions conditional to this practice.
2. Private institutions must also make sure that the students they produce are not alienated from society. They should especially emphasize training students in the Pakistani and local cultural ethos, and empathy for the socially disadvantaged.
3. There should be a regulatory body tasked with monitoring the functioning of private schools. The regulatory body should look into the following:
 - categorization of private educational institutions
 - infrastructure and physical facilities, including libraries, laboratories and playgrounds
 - the student fee structure
 - the salaries, number and qualifications of teachers.

The regulatory mechanism should also be extended to public schools. The regulatory body should consist of:

- educationists of good standing
- representatives of civic bodies and/or local governments
- Parliamentarians, both national and provincial
- representatives of private educational institutions
- officials of the education department, not exceeding 20% in strength.

CHAPTER – 13

Policy Issues in Higher Education

Higher education (HE) in Pakistan has seen tremendous growth in the last 5 years, particularly since the University Grants Commission was restructured into the Higher Education Commission (HEC). The budget allocation has increased 6 or 7-fold in that time.

The HEC emphasis on expanding HE is in response to the prevalent low participation ratio in Pakistan compared to international standards. Expansion, and hence a larger participation ratio, is taken to mean preparing a larger workforce for high value-added and intellectually competent human labour, resulting in greater and more efficient participation in national productivity.

The most serious criticism of the higher education policy concerns the disregard for quality in the face of expansion. Both the public and private sectors in higher education grew rapidly in the last five years. The number of students also grew proportionately. What was missing was a high-quality faculty, without which the quality of graduates cannot be ensured.

There is only a limited pool of qualified faculty available in the country, and it can meet only some of the demand. Consequently, the output of universities is also, in general, of low quality. Graduates of Pakistani universities are known to be less competitive than those of, for example, Indian universities.

The rapid expansion has allowed a number of entrepreneurs – some of poor quality – to open universities. It is only now that the HEC is trying to enforce quality standards among these institutions.

It must be kept in mind that institutions of higher education can be of several kinds:

1. A classical university, like Cambridge, Oxford or Harvard, consisting of students, teachers and free researchers. Such a university is a self-governing community of scholars engaged in free inquiry, discovery and teaching. The results of their research are peer-reviewed and published for all. They need an open and free environment, and hence academic freedom is essential.
2. High-technology creating institutions, like MIT or Stanford, which are wellsprings of economic activity. They have a high quality staff that

undertakes research on fundamental as well as applied issues. They enjoy generous sponsorships from industry.

3. Traditional engineering colleges needed for industry, like GIK, and NUST. Their function is to generate quality human resources for local industry.
4. Liberal arts and general education universities that again are wellsprings of scholarship on social issues. They also need an open and free environment, and their teaching is expected to be based on critical inquiry.
5. Universities that are meant to only cater to the market demand, and are exclusively teaching centers.

Sadly, Pakistan can in no way claim the existence of an institution like Oxford, Cambridge or MIT. Its general universities are devoid of scholarship of even mediocre standard. Many of the universities that had good reputations for quality in previous times have deteriorated to an abysmal level. Most of the universities have failed to ever produce a single work of worthwhile scholarship. Most of the students produced in them are, unfortunately, incapable of competing in the international job market.

Of the long list of problems which Pakistani universities face, the following stand out:

- Poor intellectual and academic environments
- Continued state control on their management
- Low teaching standards
- Rote learning is common, rather than critical inquiry
- Social conservatism is prevalent
- The political environment is dominated by regionalism and religiosity
- The ethical environment is poor, as evidenced by unashamed cheating in academic matters. Incentives for publications has given rise to dishonest academic practices
- Many teachers have a mercenary attitude, spending less time on academic pursuits and more on earning money
- They suffer from political interference at the cost of academic excellence.

The purpose of higher education is critical thinking, promoting a desire for life-long learning, and the creation and development of knowledge. Sound scholarship should be the sole benchmark of a university education, but most of the universities in Pakistan seem to fail in this regard. The welcome effort by the Higher Education Commission to uplift the universities needs to be measured on this yardstick.

The impact of HEC reforms

There have been both positive and negative impacts of the HEC reforms in higher education.

Positive impacts

1. High speed internet connectivity has been made available to campuses and there is a sizeable digital library that can be accessed from all the public university campuses.
2. Higher education is now also available through internet and television channels

3. The shortage of qualified faculty is being met by hiring faculty (Pakistani as well as foreign) from abroad and a large number of students are being sent abroad for Ph.D. training
4. A much larger amount of money than ever before is now available for scientific equipment.

Negative impacts

1. There has been a vast over-expansion in the number of universities, most of which have a traditional orientation
2. The numerical targets HEC has set for measuring the quality of university in terms of number of papers and number of Ph.D. students supervised, and so on, are problematic. They set false standard, and incite university faculty to indulge in dishonest practices.
3. Many of the so-called research projects supported by HEC are fraudulent, and the consequent waste of scarce national resources is regrettable.

The implications

1. The HEC policies have given rise to hugely enhanced, unrealistic expectations
2. The policy of incentives is likely to further diminish academic ethics
3. When the experiment folds up, there will be a huge disillusionment, with serious socio-economic consequences for the future of higher education in Pakistan.

What should HEC do?

1. It should determine what it can reasonably expect to accomplish, so that a sustainable culture of rigorous scholarship will be achieved.
2. The nation will achieve nothing by indulging in the numbers game. Having fewer but stronger universities is better than a hundred substandard ones.
3. The expansion should target only need-oriented disciplines for manpower generation.
4. HEC should institute entrance tests for students and for teachers.
5. A National Faculty Academy should be created, to develop good faculty for universities.
6. HEC should work to liberalize university environments and should help to restore student unions for healthy student activities.
7. Foreign faculty hiring has been useful. The scheme will bear quick fruits if it is also extended to India and other parts of South Asia.

The goal of true education must, on the one hand, be far grander than what the Policy envisages and, on the other, it ought to be more realistic and focused on actions that can transform the country into a modern, sustainable society. Mere competence in the modern fields of knowledge – encompassing both science and technology and the arts and humanities – is not enough. The ability to think critically and to acquire a desire for life-long learning is essential: it is more important than the passive acquisition of knowledge. Equally important is the transformation of acquired knowledge into products and more knowledge – from cars and airplanes to theorems, medical advances and literature. In the words of Q. Isa Daudpota:

“If the role of critical thinking is to be *central* in higher education, as it ought to be at all levels of education and academic research, it is imperative that no ideology be accepted uncritically. The present Policy’s repeated stipulation that a system be put in place that will ‘preserve the Islamic values and the cultural identity of the nation’, must, by its nature, restrict the role of critical thinking to areas of thought distinct for Islamic and Pakistan studies. However, critical thought cannot flourish in an environment where certain subjects are declared to be above and beyond analysis and criticism.”¹⁸

Social sciences in universities

The objective of higher education in social sciences ought to be to generate in students the faculties of creativity, objectivity, academic integrity and an interdisciplinary outlook. There is also a need for social science scholarship to be relevant to the many social issues that beset the country. The situation in Pakistani universities has not been very encouraging so far. Although there have been quantitative changes over the years, there are also many failings, some of which are listed below.

1. Social science research has been far more focused on rhetoric than on objectivity.
2. There have been very few examples of creativity in scholarship. In particular there is very little fundamental theoretical work, and very few attempts to prove or disprove aspects of theoretical questions. There have also been very few attempts at inter-disciplinary research.
3. While it is acknowledged that a universal social science is not possible, the poverty of social science in Pakistan appears to reside in the fact that ‘indigenization’ of theory and analysis has so far appeared only in the form of the ‘Islamization’ of the social sciences, and that also from the state, rather than independent research.
4. The infrastructure needed to support the social sciences in Pakistani universities is not of the desired quality.

In short, the social sciences in Pakistan are in a ‘pre-science’ phase. The attitude of scholars to knowledge continues to be utilitarian. The university faculty is more concerned about salaries than producing knowledge. Furthermore, there is no attitude of critical self-appraisal.

Improvement in the social sciences can be brought about through professional associations. The HEC should encourage the formation of such professional bodies, and lend support to those that already exist.

Discussions on higher education should also include Bachelor’s programs in degree colleges and in universities. These form the weakest link in the educational chain.

Part One of this Report has presented a critique of the National Education Policy (1998-2010), and made a number of recommendations. That part of the Report could

¹⁸ Q. Isa Daudpota, *Dawn Education Supplement*, 21 May, 2006.

not have been prepared (a) had not we not been able to analyse the necessary literature and (b) without the consultations of the five workshops held by SDPI.

Because the essential motive in conducting these consultations was to ensure that all stakeholders of all the provincial and federal capitals related to the present education system had a chance to contribute to the content of this report, we consider it necessary to include in the report summaries of important discussions, recommendations given in the consultations and the names of all participants who attended. Each of the five presenters was an expert in his or her field. Two discussants for each session provided thoughtful comments that broadened the perspective.

The greatest benefit of the workshops was that it was possible to garner expert opinions from across the country. Since many education-focused issues reflect specific geographic, demographic, socio-economical and cultural contexts, the participants had useful insights into regional (i.e. sub-provincial) issues. Some participants were eager to register their opinions, while others were more reticent. Overall, the experience was positive and added immensely to the report.

Part 2

Regional Consultations



PESHAWAR WORKSHOP, March 20 to 21st 2006

Five major themes were discussed: the provision of and access to education, the quality of education, means of assessment, the management of education and teachers' training.

Provision of and Access to Education

The presenter discussed the low literacy and participation rates in NWFP, noting that half of all students do not complete the primary cycle; 40% of primary-level rural girls have no access to middle level education; a large number of children are out of school; poverty determines access and there is overwhelming preference for educating boys.

Other issues include the lack of a District-based census, urbanization pressures and child labor, all contributing to gaps in the demand for and supply of schools. Some schools, however, are under-utilized, since they are built for political, rather than educational reasons. Furthermore, many of the teachers' positions are vacant either due to (1) appointment policies linked with a lengthy selection process through the Public Service Commission or (2) the lack of available teachers in remote rural areas. Teacher's chronic absenteeism is also a major problem, whether because of low salaries and/or teachers' involvement in other means of earning.

Equity

Equity refers to providing equal opportunities for education, irrespective of gender, caste, creed, faith or political affiliation. The presenter noted that, in Pakistan, there exist numerous kinds of inequities, based on the distribution of wealth, regional differences, gender, socio-economic background and public-private education. The causes for these inequalities are many and varied - poor governance, political instability, spending on defense (*i.e.*, more than 36% on defense and only 3% on education), a lack of transparency in resource allocation, corruption and nepotism and poor fiscal policy and defective recruitment policies.

Non-Formal Education

The Non-Formal Basic Education (NFBE) Schools Programme funded by the Federal Government was launched in April 1996 in NWFP. Its task was to establish NFBE Schools throughout the province. In 1996, 716 NFBE Schools were established and in 1999 1,269 NFBE Schools were established. During 2002-03, 234 NFBE Schools were established in NWFP and FATA. The total number of NFBE schools in NWFP is now 1,519. The schools employ 1,527 teachers and have a total enrolment of 60,584 students. All the NFBE teachers were trained when the schools were established. In order to ensure proper school monitoring, the services of NGOs were acquired in April 1999. Presently, 43 NGOs are working with the Project. Each NGO is paid Rs. 200 per month per school. In return they are bound to inspect each school every month and to submit monthly and quarterly progress reports to the Provincial Project Coordinator.

Some of the initiatives taken by the NWFP government include provision of free education to all up to Matric level, so as to enhance literacy. There is greater emphasis on girl students from Class *Kachi* to Class X. Other initiatives include the establishment of 198 computer labs in existing secondary schools with the help of NGOs; 169 computer labs in GHS/GHSS; 100 Science labs in HS/GHSS; the appointment of 169 IT teachers and 169 Computer Lab Incharges; PTAs constituted in all schools; and the beginning of a mentoring system of professional development.

In addition, transfers only take place in July, and the student-teacher ratio at the primary level has been improved to 1:30. A ban on corporal punishment in schools has been implemented. An awareness campaign has been running on radio and TV to popularize education (*i.e.* the NORAD project). *Madrassa* reforms have been initiated by introducing formal subjects in *Deeni madaris*. Finally, an Elementary Education Foundation has been established.

However, in spite of the initiatives taken by the NWFP government, some things are still missing. For example, the NFE system has not been able to bring students into the mainstream and the differences between regions and age groups have not been considered. A third problem is that there is a lack of available data in the system, which hinders effective planning.

In light of these issues, the following policy recommendations were made by the workshop participants. Finances should be decentralized to better allocate and utilize resources. Fiscal policies should ensure continuity of access and quality.

- There should be a district-based census system to ensure increased availability of information.
- The Textbook, Directorate and Examination Boards should collaborate with each other.
- Teachers must be recruited on merit and their salaries should be according to their level of qualification.
- Teachers' hiring should be based on a region's needs and hiring should not be influenced by politics. Nor should political interference influence teacher transfers. More female than male teachers should be hired, especially in urban or peri-urban areas. Maternity leave should be made available.
- Teachers should be assigned to work in their localities and a spouse policy (in which teachers married to teachers work in the same locality) should be adopted.
- Teacher absenteeism should be controlled.
- A solution must be found to the problem of low enrolment for girls. One possibility is co-education up to 3rd class, then the separation of girls' and boys' classes.
- Research on education issues relevant to specific geographical area should be conducted.
- Monitoring systems should be efficient. More EDOs and ADOs are needed so that monitoring can be improved. The quality of private schools should also be monitored.
- To make education policies demand-driven, the practice of community-based schools should be encouraged: *i.e.*, community members should donate the rooms, and then assess the needs of the school (space, teachers and other resources) before building new structures.

- Standardization of statistics is necessary and there should be uniformity of benchmarks in all provinces to prevent manipulation.
- Fund lapses occur in annual development programs. It takes a long time to implement and utilize the funds for a one-year project. There should be at least 3-year projects to ensure continuity.
- Education and teacher training should be improved to the extent that graduating students are able to become useful citizens.
- Compulsory primary education for both genders should be mandatory.
- All of the basic necessities for high quality education should be available in all primary schools.
- Literacy for All (LFA) should be implemented in letter and spirit.
- Particularly intelligent students should be helped to enter the formal education system.

Quality of Education

The presenter noted that the poor quality of education contributes to children leaving school. He went on to note that some of the major causes of dropouts were economic (parental income, poor nutrition, seasonal migration); psychological, geographical (proximity to schools), cultural (including *purdah* barriers, tribal feuds and early marriages) and managerial factors.

The quality of teachers was also emphasized, as quality education is not possible without quality teaching techniques and methods. It was agreed that for teachers' quality, three things are important: subject matter, pedagogical skills, and communication skills.

Suggestions

- Educational policies should be in accordance with International Human Law/Charter of Rights.
- All education policies should be based in legislation.
- Education should be relevant to modern times, and should assure the development of interactivity amongst people across cultures, countries, religions and languages.
- Early education should be given in the child's mother tongue. Other languages should be taught as second languages.
- Teachers' quality should be improved. To improve teaching skills, there should be focus on mastery of subjects, training in pedagogical skills, provision of teaching guides, monetary and non-monetary incentives as well as knowledge of child psychology, counseling and student-assessment techniques.
- The curriculum should be decentralized. Provinces should develop their own curricula with the help of the Federal government.
- Quality cannot be improved unless textbooks and examinations are improved.
- Although too-stringent regulations will discourage the private sector, quality control mechanisms should be implemented there.
- School management must be involved in improving the quality of the learning environment.

- Quality infrastructure (library, playgrounds, toilets) is essential to improving quality.

Teachers' Training

The presenter noted that there are two primary sources of teachers' training in NWFP: one is the Directorate of Curriculum & Teacher Education NWFP (DCTE) and the other is Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU). DCTE had the capacity to produce 3,000 PTC teachers every year; however, it was suspended between the years 2000 and 2005. Then RITES was institutionalized in 2002-03 but their work was not satisfactory. Now AIU is the sole source of PTC/CT teachers in NWFP. Currently, it has the capacity to produce 5,000 PTC teachers every year. However, the supply is greater than the demand. Between 1993 and 2003, there was a surplus of 64,315 PTC teachers.

Many factors affect the demand for and supply of teachers, including the declining birth rate (from 3% in 1998 to 2% in 2002). Another factor is increased urbanization, which now stands at 4% per annum, and results in fewer children in rural areas and more in urban areas.

High pupil-teacher ratios and the rise in the number of private schools also mean fewer children in government schools. According to statistics provided by NIPS Islamabad, one of the government's targets is to attain 91% enrolment by the year 2007-08. This means that 12,405 teachers are needed if an acceptable pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) is taken to be 33.4:1. If a 40:1 PTR is considered then 3,516 new teachers will be required.

Regarding B.Ed and M.Ed programs, there are three major sources: public sector universities, distance learning universities and private universities. From statistics provided by NIPS, it came to light that AIU is still outscoring all other universities by providing 52% (1,500) of the total B.Ed. and 82% (800) of the total M.Ed. graduates in the province.

It was also noted that no professional regulatory body, such as the Engineers' Council or the Medical and Dental Councils, exists for teachers in NWFP.

Two contentious issues are: the usefulness of teachers' training, and the absence of evaluation of public sector teachers, who, once recruited, are never assessed again. The recruitment policy was also criticized. As shown in the statistics cited earlier, there is no problem in the supply of teachers. However, most do not meet high standards, making the basic issue one of improving their professional skills. The 9 months' training for the PTC was said to be too short and the minimum qualification of Matric for the PTC was thought to be very low.

Another hard reality is that people are reluctant to join the profession. Rather, people become teachers when there is no other job available. This situation clearly depicts the negative perception of teaching as a profession. Many reasons were given for this, but the major one was the low salaries, which keep out many talented people.

Suggestions

- Three aspects of teachers' training – refresher courses, pedagogical skills and communication skills - need to be considered in designing an improved system.
- There is a need for a teachers' education regulatory body, in particular for training teachers. A Commission or Council should be established for this purpose.
- There should be special training for master trainers, and special instructors to train these trainers.
- Entry-level qualifications for PTC/CT should be raised.
- The significance of high-level training curricula should be emphasized and the curricula updated regularly. Educational psychology and child psychology should be added.
- In-service training is too brief. The summer vacations should be used for in-service training and for refresher courses.
- There should be a national education cadre. In the summer, university students should be employed so that they may develop an aptitude for teaching.
- The present education bureaucracy should benefit from private sector experience and standards in training their teachers.
- Teachers' salaries should be increased, in line with the perceived need to increase investment in education. Salaries should be in accordance with professional qualifications.
- There is a great need to improve the quality of the education system that AIOU presently provides. They offer good courses but the implementation and evaluation systems are unsatisfactory.
- If the 'entry test' method was adopted, there would be less likelihood of excess teachers, as merit would balance the demand and supply.

Management of the Education System

This theme covered school management, school financing, SMCs, community participation and organizational problems. There are two types of schools: formal (government, O-level and private) and informal (NGO-run or community-based schools). Many problems associated with the management system were discussed. For example, it is generally perceived that there is no regular monitoring of schools, especially private schools. However, there was an Ordinance in 2001 by the Government of NWFP which provides legislation for two things: (1) District Committees and (2) a Regulatory Authority. There are three lines of this law; University, college and school. It does therefore seem that the perception that there is no monitoring of private schools is inaccurate.

However, monitoring in the public sector is more controversial. This law states that a district Committee will be informed when a new public school is going to be opened. The criteria are determined by area, infrastructure, and other factors.

The only citizens' participation is from one member who represents the *Zila-Nazim*. A regulatory authority determines the Committee's guidelines. These Committees access these institutions on the basis of the guidelines laid down by the regulatory

authorities that are based on pay, fees, infrastructure and such. If these guidelines are violated, the judiciary will intervene. However, only government officials can approach the judiciary, which again limits community participation.

Another issue strongly emphasized was the role of EDOs and DDOs. There is a great shortage both: there are only 150 male and 150 female ADOs in NWFP. In some places one ADO is responsible for as many as 120 schools, making it practically impossible to supervise each one.

Political interference is also a problem. EDOs are usually 'political' appointees. Since the ToRs of the EDOs and DDOs are not properly defined, no one knows what they are actually responsible for. In the district level management cadre all employees come from the Education Department, but many do not understand basic management principles.

Finally, although NWFP's EMIS is more powerful than others, there is a shortage of qualified staff to maintain it.

Suggestions

- Educational bureaucracies, PTAs and SMS require sufficient attention to ensure they are meeting all relevant needs. If they are not, there must be mechanisms to make them accountable. These and other factors will contribute to ensuring that SMCs are taken seriously.
- The roles of the EDOs and ADOs need to be revised to ensure their effective participation in the education system.
- The mobility of supervisors should be strengthened and there should be no political interference in supervising the schools.
- BISE should be reformed.
- There should be a teacher's training cadre in addition to the teaching and education management cadres.
- The "Learning Coordinator" concept should be adopted: *i.e.* first the teacher learns, then he or she trains other teachers.
- The role and effectiveness of the EMIS should be enhanced.

Assessment

Assessment is one of the most important elements of any educational activity. It is, as defined by the presenter, an evaluation of the learning levels of students against pre-determined learning objectives. Generally in NWFP public-sector schools, the assessment of students and teachers is measured in term of annual results, without addressing a range of educational objectives. The assessment is carried out in two ways: at the elementary and middle levels, it is conducted by the teacher with a counter-assessment by the ADO circle. At the secondary school level, assessment is annual and external and is conducted by the concerned Examination Boards. However, at all levels, assessment is done only once a year and there is no system of continuous assessment, although schools have enough funds to conduct periodic internal assessments.

It is also the case that assessment is not included as a separate subject in the teacher training manual, which means that trainee teachers do not learn about assessment techniques and learning goals. Building teachers' capacities in the art of assessment is essential for the proper evaluation of students' competencies.

A serious issue raised by the presenter was the Notification of the Curriculum Wing of the Ministry of Education on September 3rd 2005, according to which the secondary school examination in 2007 and onwards shall be conducted as a composite examination for classes IX-X, thus taking back the decision to bifurcate Classes 9 and 10. However, it was disclosed that not a single stakeholder (*i.e.* Boards, public sector schools, private schools or students) had been consulted in making this decision.

It was also said that all the BISEs under the rules are provided with research officers whose duty is to assess results, examination quality and other factors. However, the presenter argued that these research officers either do not function at all, or function poorly.

The examination system is riddled with problems. Examination halls are usually overcrowded and the chances for oral and written cheating are always present. Invigilators are not properly trained, and are prone to corruption and blackmailing. In fact, there is corruption on the students' and on the Boards' side. Furthermore, checking examination papers is not a financially rewarding job, as teachers are not paid enough for this task. In summary, three types of major flaws exist in the assessment system: poor testing methods; corruption in the examination system, and poor teaching techniques.

Suggestions

- Researchers and psychologists should be part of the assessment system.
- When a new assessment system is going to be initiated, students must be informed in advance.
- The Boards should be monitored.
- Course development should be intellectually based, and different universities should collaborate in course development.

Participants
Sarfaraz Khan, Area Study Centre, Peshawar University
M. Shafi Afridi, Govt. College Peshawar
Samina, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Peshawar
Noorul Islam, PhD Student
Ziaudin, IMS Peshawar University
Mukhtar Bacha, Civil Society
Shafiq-u-Rehman, Chairman, EPM Peshawar University
Zubair Mahsud, Law College, Peshawar
Laiq Ahmed, Ex-Director Schools
Kaisro Khan, Ex-Director Schools
Azhar Iqbal, EMIS, Peshawar
Mohammad Muzzafar Shah, Ex-Chairman, Board of Intermediate &

Secondary Education, Mardan
Mohammad Rafique Khattak, Chairman, Board of Intermediate & Education, Mardan
Jamaluddin, Civil Society, Peshawar
Khalid Rehman, Civil Society, Peshawar
Mohammad Mushtaq, Peshawar
Khursheed Ahmed, Provincial Education Schools
Mohammad Masood, Peshawar
Bisharat Ali, Peshawar
Mrs. Qaisar Khan, Distt. Councilor
Mohammad Naseem, Peshawar
Qaisar Khan, ANP, Peshawar
Shah Jahan Baloch, CEF, Islamabad
Sadaf Zulfiquar, CEF, Islamabad

LAHORE WORKSHOP, 1st and 2nd April, 2006

The main themes of the Lahore workshop included the provision of education, the aims, objectives and quality of education, teachers and teachers' training, school management and technical and vocational training. All six themes were presented by experts and relevant discussants gave their comments in order to cover the broader aspects of those themes. Every theme was also discussed by the whole forum.

Provision of Education

Some of the issues raised included: the role of the state in providing education; resource allocation for education, educational ideologies; the role of private schools; the status of non-formal education and the value of education to society. It was suggested that over the past 50 years nobody has taken education seriously enough, in part because formal education has never been deemed necessary to become a well-established person. The social status of a teacher is very low, and no one enters the profession by choice. This low status has a direct relationship to the low salary paid to teachers. However, one workshop participant from a rural background felt that teachers are still well-respected in rural areas.

It was stressed that the value of the conventional *Ustad Shagird* system should be acknowledged, and the out-of-school population should not be ignored. For this, EFA and NFA should be utilised. Participants gave examples of countries like Germany and Australia where apprenticeship is also practiced, albeit in tandem with formal education.

The role of the private sector in providing education became one of the most controversial subjects in the discussion. Some participants were in favor of private sector education, acknowledging the value of private-sector efforts for education. The justification was that the government has very limited resources and cannot finance education, so the private sector should contribute to meeting the need. However, opponents of private sector participation argued that providing education is the sole

responsibility of the state. Some participants suggested a middle approach, saying that there should be public-private participation, as many private schools do provide quality education. They also noted that private schools do not receive any concessions, such as free books from the government, as public sector schools do.

Suggestions

- Available resources should be utilized more efficiently.
- Rather than creating new policy, education sector reforms should be introduced. An inter-linked, sector-wide approach to education policy is needed. Teachers' involvement is essential to make any policy successful.
- PERSP should be analyzed to assess the extent to which it has succeeded.
- Demographic differences (*i.e.* different provinces, districts and rural/urban areas) need to be considered in light of educational requirements.
- Because the private sector plays a key role in providing education, relevant policies are required to ensure proper operation. There is a need for public-private school collaboration in this regard.
- There should be a regulatory body for private schools.
- There is a severe shortage of teachers, especially in Mathematics, English and Science. A rationalization policy should be adopted in hiring new teachers. The teachers should be recruited on the basis of a needs-based assessment.
- *Masjid-Maktab* schools should not be eliminated. Rather, they should be brought up to the same standard as regular public schools.
- Support for education can be provided by NGOs, which the government should support, especially in rural areas.
- Performance-based budgeting should be devised. Every Nazim should take responsibility for the performance of schools in his or her district.
- The basic system of *ustad/shagird* needs to be formalized.

Aims and Objectives of Education

Education has always been controlled by the state. This control has at times becomes damaging, as it tends to spread its own ideology. That is what happened during the colonial period. Now that we have entered into independent nationalism, our curricula have shifted toward national heroes. Different political regimes have created the aims and objectives of our education policy. Nationalism was our aim until the 1980s; in the Zia period, it turned into Islamization, followed by a new corporate culture. We have to acknowledge that the state has always influenced the development of educational policies to their own ends.

The medium of instruction was also questioned by the participants, who considered the extent to which it serves the aims and objectives of education policies. The concern was that by incorporating a different language (*i.e.* other than the child's mother tongue) we promote rote learning because a child cannot fully understand what is being taught. We must also acknowledge that there are many problem associated with teaching methodologies. We discourage questioning, for example, although the ability to pose useful questions is the basis of critical inquiry.

Suggestions

- Educational policies should take into account the process of social change. Those policies should not be influenced by ideologies.
- Students should be informed about social conflicts, and taught that cultural values can change over time.
- Educational policies should be broader in scope and should address the educational problems of deprived segments of society.
- The educational system should be secular and free of any prejudice.
- Promoting regional languages can improve the quality of education.
- Political pressures with regard to education should be eliminated.

Quality of Education

The quality of education depends on teachers, good pedagogical practices, excellent curricula and teachers' competency. Clearly, the educational standard of schools will vary but minimal standards must be met.

Some of the flaws in our current system stem from an imbalance between assessment and objectives. They also stem from the lack of: portfolios, observations, oral presentations, visual & written projects, log books, research projects, field trip reports, plays, peer assessment and conferences. Furthermore, examinations and tests are methods of assessment which focus primarily on recall and basic comprehension. Examination papers are not analyzed after marking to provide feedback to the students. Curriculum assessment is done by managers and administrators without inviting teachers' involvement. Key performance indicators are also missing. Moreover, job descriptions are not defined and there are no benchmarks by which to evaluate institutional standards.

The difference between public sector and private sector schools was also highlighted. The reason that quality education is provided in private schools and not in public schools is that public school teachers have relaxed and flexible terms: teachers can take leave any time and/or they can ignore the school timings. These detrimental practices cannot be followed in private schools where the monitoring and evaluation systems are very strict and high professional standards are required.

We have to consider whether our Bachelors' or Masters' degrees meet the standard of a certain level of education. The reason for the difference in the educational levels of students ostensibly holding the same degree is the different standards of the institutions they graduate from. Another problem is that textbooks do not represent the cultures and environments that the children come from.

Suggestions

- It is necessary to define key performance indicators such as teacher-student ratios and total teaching hours.
- Every school should be rated by the same system and according to the same standards.
- 'Quality circles' (short term plans which are followed closely) should be developed. Teachers should prepare and follow academic calendars.

- Ideally, there should be ISO standards regarding educational institutions.
- A time-based payment system should be created for teachers to check papers.
- There should be proportionate inclusion of vocational training in the higher education system.
- There is little or no accurate documentation or data about existing schools. There is a strong need for a proper MIS system.
- The current education policy should also include mid-term plans.
- Ways should be found to increase the use of libraries for teaching and learning.
- Assessment should be in line with established objectives.
- Schools should create internal performance evaluation methods.
- Livelihood skills should be taught in schools so that economically poor students would be able to support their families.
- There should be a Teacher Certification Agency, which awards certificates to teach specific subjects at specific levels.
- There should be a District Monitoring Committee.

Teachers' Status

This issue, which has been neglected in our education policy, was actively debated in the workshop. The presenter described four necessary components of an education system: the student, the teacher, the community and good management. Regarding teachers, the main problem is one of low social status. The reasons for this include low salaries, an inferiority complex and low self-esteem. Teachers have no say in the community. Furthermore, the new contractual job system has created job insecurity. These factors have a cumulatively adverse affect on the performance of a teacher. Enforced transfers also add to their miseries.

Other problems are associated with recruitment policies. For example, when a teacher is recruited, he or she is not evaluated on their command of the subjects they are supposed to teach. Lack of management is another problem, as are inefficient monitoring and the fact that teachers are not included in decision making about new policy.

EDOs must supervise so many schools that it is not humanly possible to visit them all. Eventually this leads to inefficient working of the schools. The influence of politicians in recruitment, appointment and transfer of teachers was also strongly criticized.

Another issue raised was that of education-monitoring committees, which, lacking specific TORs, have undefined responsibilities and cannot be held accountable.

Suggestions

- The role and responsibilities of school councils should be clearly defined and adhered to.
- Community involvement and a sense of ownership are necessary. A paradigm shift from administration to management is necessary and 'management by objective' is required.

- Effective financing, monitoring, management, assessment and specialization in education are required.
- There should be an education management sector, and district education managers responsible for human resources. Post training evaluation is also required.
- The Head Teacher should be trained to communicate effectively with parents and other community members.
- Former students should be involved in school education committees as resource persons.

School Management

The presenter pointed out two major flaws in the existing management system: the first is that the whole evaluation is based on an annual, rather than continuous, examination system. This leads to selective study. The other problem is that the assessment is textbook, rather than curriculum, based. In this way, critical thinking cannot be developed.

Suggestions

- Management officials in educational institutions should be given up-to-date training in finance, management and administration.
- Mobilizing community members is a significant factor in achieving high quality education. Regular parent-teacher interaction should be encouraged.
- District Monitoring Committees should have the power to monitor private schools. These Committees should be taken from the Union Council level to the District level through an electoral process. Committee members should work according to well-defined ToRs.
- There should be rewards for teachers who do excellent work.
- Internal examinations set by teachers should account for some proportion of a student's total marks.
- There should be no formal assessment of children prior to elementary level.
- Invigilators should be properly trained, then monitored while they are on duty.

Technical and Vocational Education

Technical education and vocational training encompasses semi-skilled workers, technicians, and technologists. The scope of technical education and vocational training begins with elementary schools and continues, through post-secondary education, up to the technology degree. According to the presenter TVE is "a comprehensive term referring to those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences, and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life."¹⁹

The education policy focuses on three tiers of technical education: pre-vocational training, which is generally a part of school education and provides only basic

¹⁹ Definition of TVE used in UNESCO and ILO recommendation for the 21st century adopted by the UNESCO's General Conference in 2001.

manipulative skills to stimulate vocational interest (known as 'Matric Tech', launched in 2002); vocational training, which imparts lower-level training for the preparation of semi-skilled workers in various trades; and technical and business education, which is imparted through post-secondary courses for preparing middle-level technicians to work as supervisory staff to bridge the gap between semi-skilled workers and Engineers/Managers.

In order to bridge the skill gap and to comply with both the TVE system and the National Education Policy 1998-2010, the Government of Punjab established two autonomous bodies: the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) and the Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTTC). There are a total of 402 TEVTA Institutes in Punjab. Some of the steps taken by TEVTA include: establishing a District Board of Management; establishing a specialized R&D section; establishing TEVTA 'helpdesks' at Chambers of Commerce; establishing an academic audit/quality assurance section; establishing an academic calendar for the first time in the history of TVE for each stream; establishing 'quality circles' in ten selected Institutes and standardizing a list of equipment for laboratories.

Other steps include: developing curricula as per the current job market; revising curricula according to employers' demands; establishing job placement offices at the district level and 60% enhancement in apprenticeship intake. Furthermore, two new Polytechnic Institutes have been established and 20,000 new students have been enrolled.

However, TEVTA is currently facing some problems. For example, its total budget is Rs.1.5 billion, while it needs Rs. 60 billion, as technical education is very expensive, involving as it does costly mechanical and technical instruments. TEVTA also faces a lack of proper lab equipment and many of its teachers are not properly trained. All of this requires substantial financing. The present number of trained manpower is one *lakh*, whereas the required number is 1 million and the demand is increasing.

Participants discussed the perception that only average students enter technical education: this is wrong and efforts should be made to change it. It was agreed that there is a need for an effective media campaign. However, Punjab's technical education is the best case in Pakistan, whereas Balochistan's is unfortunately the worst. Another issue was that technical education is considered appropriate for men only. It is a serious concern that women are kept out of the mainstream of technical education.

Suggestions

- Personnel, funding and equipment are the most important requirements for the improvement of technical and vocational education.
- Technical education is much more expensive than general education, so it should be given importance in resource allocation.
- Technical education for women is also important. There should be a policy of "flexible working hours for women" if they require it.
- There should be collaboration between general and technical education.

- There should be restructuring of the TVE sector at federal level by merging functions, institutions and facilities. Sound policy planning is also required, as is efficient institute management.
- TVE Institutes should also be established and promoted through private-public partnerships.
- There is a need to adopt rapid technological changes so that our technical graduates are globally accepted. Similarly, strengthening industry-institute linkages is required.
- A dynamic corporate, autonomous training organization or agency at the Federal level, having national and international creditability, should be established.
- There should be strengthening of faculty training facilities. Performance-based budgeting is required.
- The examination system should be improved.
- The Apprentice Ordinance (1962) should be revised.
- A proportionate vocational training element should also be included in the higher education curriculum.

Participants
Abbas Rashid, SAHE, Lahore
Tauqir Anjum Rasool, Schools teacher, Faisalabad
Muhammad Irshad, School teacher, Faisalabad
Tahir Nadeem, School teacher, Faisalabad
Sibte Hasan, Punjab Textbooks Board
Qamar Abbas, Former Professor of University of Punjab
Amir Riaz, Civil Society
Syeda Nabila Zaidi, Lahore
Baqir Nadeem Hashmi, TEVTA, Lahore
Eng. Zahir T. Paracha, TEVTA, Lahore
Saddaqt Ali, TEVTA, Lahore
Lubna Khurshid, School teacher
Qudsia Kalsoom, School teacher
Dr. Mubarak Ali, Historian, Lahore
Prof. Mehdi Hassan, Becon House
Fareeha Zafar, SAHE, Lahore
Neelam Hussain, Civil Society
Nadeem Omar, NCA, Lahore
Haroon Hussain, SAHE, Lahore
Mohsin Syed, TEVTA, Lahore
Eng. M. Qamar Bashir, TEVTA, Lahore

KARACHI WORKSHOP April 15-16, 2006

Day 1, Session 1: Provision of Education

State injustice and poverty are the main factors responsible for regional disparities and therefore lower enrolment and literacy rates. Poor families are not in a position to send their children to school and the state has not been able to meet the demand for education from all sectors of society.

Another issue discussed was the number of new schools needed to match the increasing population. When opening a new school, accurate data about the area and its actual needs must be taken into account. Most importantly, the structure needs to be decentralized. It was also suggested that employment and posting of teachers should be according to plans based on careful analysis. The posting involves two things: one is the number of teachers and the second is their grasp of the subjects they are going to teach.

One participant said it is time for the government to involve communities, teachers and students in developing educational policies that are based in reality. Policy documents should not just remain 'on the shelf' but should be implemented in their true spirit.

On the subject of non-formal education, it was argued that non-formal schooling had become second-class education. The participants noted that the government was simply changing its policies from time to time and that there was no continuity of implementation.

Our experience is that schools also have a 'mortality rate'. The government should start schools in rented premises for three years; then, if those schools flourish, it should construct buildings. Asking communities to donate land is not appropriate as many rural people do not own land.

The problem of policy documents not being comprehensive was also raised. The need to collect accurate data about existing educational institutions was also noted, with reference to the establishment of an EMIS.

It was recommended that the government should make an estimate of the cost per child, then allocate money for the provision of education. With shared resources come shared responsibilities. This means that community-based schools should be given funds by government and then be monitored. The state's responsibility is to ensure the provision of education, but not necessarily to provide education. There are many government schools, which were closed, and are now run by NGOs: some of these could be government financed.

Session 2: Assessment

Assessment, said by participants to be an unclear element in education policies, needs to be both clarified and looked at holistically. Assessment should not simply be periodic checking; rather it should be a continuous process. Internal assessment

systems should be adopted and teachers' capacities to assess their students' progress should be enhanced.

A related issue is the use of single textbook, which causes students to memorize the contents. The policy is that the Examination Board can only use books recommended by the Textbook Board. There are no national assessment standards in place.

The following recommendations were made by the participants:

- Examination Board needs major improvements in conducting examinations.
- Education Research and Development is required.
- A teachers' training program for assessment is required. There should be national standards for assessment.
- There should be internal examinations at the primary level.

Session 3: Quality of Education

The session began with the definition of 'quality education'. One definition of quality education is 'education that enables the child to explore'. However, the whole education system is based on competition. Parents' levels of education and environment also affect the quality of education. There is in addition a need for good infrastructure such as proper buildings, libraries, and highly committed teachers. When quality is needed, special rewards, such as health coverage, pensions, medical care and so on must be provided. Teachers should be involved in developing and improving curricula.

Day 2, Session 1: Management of Education

There should be clear policy provisions and planning strategies for the effective management of the entire education system. Those policies should be clearly communicated to everyone in the system. It was argued that the data collected by the EDOs is neither verified nor consulted. Nor does the EMIS use the information.

Some of the participants noted that the basic problem is the lack of leadership, not resources. Nor have we moved forward: many of our practices are the same as those of 50 years ago.

It was recommended that a national level assessment system should be held for some kinds of institutions. Some institutions were doing very well in the past – the Sindh Madrasa-tul-Islam is one example – but that is not the case any longer and overall, standards are deteriorating.

Suggestions

- Devolution (as it affects education) must be furthered.
- Decentralization of education management is required and local School Boards should be established and provided with resources.
- Community participation is required if education is to improve.
- Institutional capacity should be enhanced and accountability systems should be devised for individuals and institutions.

- There should be an assessment system for education managers and institutions.

Session 2: Language Teaching

In this session most of the participants emphasized the significant role of language in education. It was strongly recommended that education should be imparted in the children's mother tongue.

One participant argued that the present education policy is an extension of the Sharif Commission report. It is the opposite of the 1991 report, which had recommended that early education should be in the children's mother tongue. In the 1972 policy, a language bill was presented which approved Sindhi as the province-wide medium of instruction. From 1984 on, Sindhi was compulsory from Class 3. However, there is no Local Language Commission; language teaching is very poorly done and specialists are not appointed. There is also no collaboration, as all the Boards work under the Provincial Governor. In language texts there should be more grammar and technical instruction related to specific languages.

It was noted that many parents make decision about sending children to school on the basis of the language teaching they offer. Most of the participants of the session agreed that the best learning takes place in one's own language. The participants did, however, emphasize that teaching a second language is necessary because globalization and modernization present increased challenges. Many participants agreed that English, being an international language, must be taught. The only question is when to start. Most agreed that English should be started from class 6, with the children's mother tongue and some functional Urdu languages in Class 1.

Some participants were emotionally charged and said we are facing a language crisis today. We have not been able to find the best roles for Urdu, English and regional languages. This needs to be a separate issue in educational policy. Every district should be allowed to decide for itself and there should be multiple choices in adopting and learning languages. In the interior there is a great demand for English. Dropouts have come down drastically in schools which start English in Class 1. There is a demand for Urdu as well, but there are problems with teaching methods. We have to create attractive books and supplementary materials, and improved methods. The problem is not only which language should be taught; the problem lies in teaching language properly. It was recommended that no language be imposed on people against their will. It was suggested that a Language Commission should be established.

Session 3: Political Economy of Education

The session began with a discussion of political influence on the formation and implementation of educational policies. Many participants agreed that education has become a commodity and a business in which multinational corporations, with the support of the government, are profiting by supporting privatization. Most agreed that in many parts of the developing world, neo-liberal reforms have failed and that health and education should not be left to market forces. Nor should education become a profit-making enterprise.

Three suggestions emerged from the discussion. The first was that the state should not abandon its responsibility to provide education to all sectors of society equally and with uniform standards. Second, the private sector, which is not always efficient, should be regulated and it should not decrease the significance of the public sector. Finally, in order to be an effective actor in the education system, the public sector should be made to work efficiently.

Participants
Iffat Farah, AKU, IED, Karachi
Mohsin Tejani, Educationalist
Mehr Rizvi, AKU, IED, Karachi
Syed Jaafar Ahmad, Karachi University
Duishon Shamatov, AKU, IED, Karachi
Aftab Khushk , AKU Examination Board, Karachi
Rana Muhammad Afzal, AKU, Examination Board
Razia Fakir Muhammad, AKU, IED, Karachi
Muhammad Memon, AKU, IED, Karachi
Mushtaq Mirani, Mehran University, Jamshoro
Zakia Sarwar, Educationist
Muhammad Ibrahim Joyo, Educationist, intellectual, Hyderabad
Taj Joyo, Govt. Degree College, Qasimabad, Hyderabad
Riaz Ahmad, Karachi University
Sajid Khaskheli, Karachi University
Rashida Qureshi, AKU, IED, Karachi
Bernadette Dean, AKU, IED, Karachi
Sajid Ali, AKU, IED, Karachi
Sadeqa Salahuddin, IRC, Karachi
Tom Christie, AKU, Examination Board, Karachi
Hina Ashraf, AKU, Examination Board, Karachi
Arshad Salim, Concept Education Consultants (Pvt.) Ltd. Karachi
Unaiza Alvi , AKU, IED, Karachi

QUETTA WORKSHOP

Day 1, Session 1: The Quality of Education

Participants discussed issues related to the definition of quality and its various attributes. Quality was defined as consisting of not only physical or financial structures, but also as being applicable to the status of educational institutions, especially in the context of Balochistan. Most of the participants were in agreement about the government's failure to meet the educational needs of the people of Balochistan, which is the most deprived province in the country. Almost all of the educational issues were seen in the political perspective of the 'voicelessness' of Balochis in all walks of life.

Contributors deplored the government's careless attitude towards educational development in the province. Establishing more schools and a better infrastructure was deemed to be one side of the equation; while the other is the commitment, talent and dedicated role of all sectors of society in ensuring quality education.

Policy documents were severely condemned by all, with participants saying that these documents pay only lip service to the issue of providing quality education or indeed any education. The reasons for the low quality of education were many and varied, including: lack of serious implementation of governmental policies; low budgetary allocations; a failed management system; the absence of a vigorous monitoring system; the lack of trained and qualified teachers; and political influence in recruitment.

One of the most powerful reasons for the educational malaise was held to be the geography of Balochistan. Most of the province consists of mountains and deserts, resulting in the absence of basic facilities in the schools like electricity and water. Many schools are inconveniently located, which makes it hard for the children to attend.

It was argued that the issue of quality education could be solved only by taking into consideration existing socio-economic conditions and disparities. There should, for example, be appropriate identification of education issues in Balochistan so as to relate policies directly to ground realities. For example, the syllabus is unnecessarily 'bookish' and has little or no relevance to social realities. There should also be regular economic and social audits of the educational institutions and strict measures taken to respond to local problems. The need for a sufficient budget for the educational institutions was noted.

On the issue of the medium of instruction, participants agreed that quality education is possible first and foremost through the mother tongue. It was noted that there are some myths in this regard, such as problems of implementation, differences in dialects and assumptions of 'backwardness' related to local languages. Without instruction in the mother tongue, however, teachers can only convey information, without addressing other aspects of cognition such as psychology and the ability to reason.

The need for accurate assessment of teachers and students was emphasized as essential to raising the level of quality, with the skill and knowledge levels of the

teachers being emphasized repeatedly as the source of the present low quality. Teachers should regularly update their knowledge and should understand the psychology of children. They should also be dedicated and committed to their vocation.

Standard and modern knowledge textbooks were taken to be another determinant of quality education. Increases in teachers' salaries and training programmes, along with improvements teachers' social status, were acknowledged to be essential for a high quality educational system.

It was recommended that a needs-based approach be adopted to ensure quality education and that technical education should be made available. The objectives relating to the kind of education desired should be articulated clearly and should be realistic.

Another issue is that of the rationality of the curricula as irrationality leads to sectarianism and extremism and can contribute to social imbalances.

Regarding the devolution of the educational system, participants noted that there is no specific job description for Nazims, which can lead to a lack of uniformity in educational provision, standards and quality.

Session 2: Management of Education

Management was considered the most neglected in Balochistan due to the bureaucratically-centralized system in the country. Good management should be oriented towards culture, contexts and people. However, the presenter, discussants and participants were unanimous in stating that institutions are (a) controlled by a handful of elites and (b) very poorly managed.

Management is also a political issue, because of power inequalities and centralized policy. The perception is that there is no positive and productive management system in Balochistan. Better management requires that authority be diffused throughout the system and that the provinces be empowered with regard to budgetary allocations, recruitment and curriculum design.

Other reasons for poor management were identified as: political intervention, the absence of localized hiring, outmoded management techniques and a lack of understanding of local people and culture. Unrealistic goals in education policy were seen as another reason for failed management, as was the absence of long-term management plans.

It was noted that the monitoring system needs to be greatly improved, and that monitoring results should be published so that the public could be involved in the processes and able to question any identified weaknesses. Participants felt that the wider public had the right to know about the problems in the education system, so as to encourage community participation. The policies should be published in a way that non-expert can gain access to and understand them.

It was recommended by all participants that budgetary allocation authority be given to the provinces. Training EDOs and Nazims is necessary: this will equip them with modern management ideas and methods. On a similar note, education planning should be an on-going process. Plans should be communicated to the public; they should be long-term; they should be clear, all stakeholders should be involved, and the processes should be democratic.

Poor fiscal mismanagement is also an issue. Management was seen as a crosscutting theme in which political instability, inconsistent government policies, continuous political shifting, and the need for proper implementation and institutional building were identified as factors that need to be addressed.

The examination system is also problematic, with educational sessions at different times for the hot and cold areas, and extended summer and winter vacations. Marking procedures suffer because the checkers are over-burdened. There is no coordination between all the boards and institutions like BISE, PITE, Textbook Boards and the EDOs. Sometimes they all focus on the same schools while other schools are neglected.

Suggestions

- Education management should be decentralized.
- SMCs should be autonomous and should have financial autonomy. SMCs should be considered serious partners in education. They should be institutionalized, and provisions made for them in recurrent budgets.
- Parents should have the opportunity to be involved in the education of their children.
- Monitoring Committees and SMCs sometimes conflict with each other. Better co-ordination should be institutionalized. Monitoring should also be institutionalized.
- There should be monthly progress reports of the students, and daily diaries in government schools.
- There are many areas where NGOs and the government are working simultaneously, leading to wastage of resources. They should collaborate with each other and ensure there is no duplication.
- A database should be established and previous records made available. All records should be district based.
- Teachers' appointment should be through the Public Service Commission.
- Gradual promotion should be established for teachers.
- There should be Teachers Associations with an acknowledged role to play.
- The army should be excluded from running the education system.

Session 3: Assessment

Effective assessment – *i.e.* measuring achievements against objectives - is very weak and the system has no capability to assess students and their talents. At present, assessment in schools is intermittent at best, when it should be institutionalized as a continuous and evolving process. Assessment is restricted to quantitative measures, but should be extended to include qualitative measures.

It was noted that there is a lot of corruption in the assessment of examinations. It was recommended that the Examination Board be de-centralized to contribute to solving this problem.

Day 2, Session 1: Provision of Quality Education

The session began with the critique of the National Education Policy document. It was said that the policies are devoid of local understandings and are full of confusion and distortions. Participants argued that public opinion should be involved in policy-making processes and that regional disparities should be kept in mind when policies are being established. We have imposed western models of educational development onto local scenarios, when what we need to do is involve local people - teachers, students and researchers - in the development of educational policies.

We have an iniquitous system of education. It was agreed that the State is responsible for providing basic education to all citizens but it seems to be failing to do this. Balochistan is, unfortunately, a grave example of failure, as 80% of the education budget is going into building infrastructure. Some say there are “mafias” involved in misappropriating and misdirecting education funds. Balochistan is one of the most excluded areas in terms of provision of basic education, although people have the same entitlement to education as others in the country.

It was argued that, although there are discontinuities and problems in the education system, it is possible to improve the system. For example, the lack of available women teachers was linked with the lack of transportation. To address this issue, we purchased 30 vans for 26 districts, to provide ‘pick and drop’ facilities to these teachers. This is need-based assessment in the best sense.

Suggestions

- Our educational mechanisms should focus on inclusion. We should develop alternative systems and should make people’s wisdom part of the system.
- Non-formal education is better for Balochistan but its quality requires improvement.
- Educational equality must be based on gender, regional representation, and stable financing.
- The problem of ghost schools should be seriously looked into. Madrassa schools should also be streamlined to bring them into the education mainstream.
- There should be no conflict between different religions or between Islam and science.
- Transferring teachers should be banned during the academic session.
- In Balochistan there are very few literate women so the requirement to meet the target of 70% female teachers is inappropriate.
- Political interference should not be allowed in curricula development.
- There should be an autonomous board for curricula development and there should be coordination between the curriculum board and the textbook board.
- Research-based educational policy and action should be adopted.
- The current assessment system is inadequate.

- The language issue needs thorough research. There should be a Language Commission to address all issues related to language and education.

Session 2: Aims and Objectives of Education

In this session it was argued that education should go beyond books and bring some practical social changes. The National Education Policy of 1998-2010 is full of lofty ideas, unrealistic goals and unachievable objectives. We should set goals and objectives which are based in reality, people-oriented, and address contemporary concerns and realities.

Most teachers in Balochistan are under-equipped, unskilled and not teaching what they are required to teach. The PITE teachers' training course is only 9 months long. There should be a University for teacher training. However, there is an institute in Balochistan to train College teachers and it is unique in Pakistan.

Currently only 70% of the total 'primary pass' children go to secondary schools. One reason is the small number of schools. There is also the need to make a great deal more effort to recruit women teachers and to keep girls in school as long as possible. Currently, Rs.4 billion out of total Rs.5 billion is going into salaries. The confusion about the combined or separate matriculation examination, teacher absenteeism and lack of training are all issues which add fuel to the situation. Another problem is that many PTMCs and SMCs are inactive.

Suggestions

- Teachers should be the focal point of efforts to improve the system.
- Teacher's training and training of 'master trainers' are essential.
- Both national and provincial educational objectives are required.
- Rote memorization should be discouraged. Teachers from different fields should assess the papers. Assessment should not be book-based, rather it should be syllabus based. Level specific assessments should be conducted.
- There should be no examination up till 2nd class, and no failure up till 3rd class.

Participants
Nadir Shah, Education Department, Quetta
Umar Barakzai, Private School
Saleh Mohammad Nasir
Mohammad Ali Zaheer
Malik Ijaz Ahmed, Ex-Director Education
Akbar Khan Achakzai, Balochistan Education Foundation
A.N.Sabir, Government Teachers Association, Quetta
Abdul Malik, Quetta
Saeed Ahmed Mengal,
Sadik Ali Bugti, BUITMS, Quetta
Sohail Qadir Baloch, Balochistan Agriculture College, Quetta
Babrak Ali Panezai, BUITMS, Quetta
Fauzia Shaheen, Women Political School, Quetta
Javed Iqbal Nasir, Education Deptt. Quetta

Ahmed Jan, IDSP, Quetta
Razik Faheem, IDSP, Quetta
Saleem Bark, School Teacher
Aziz Bugti, writer, historian
Shah Jahan Baloch, CEF, Islamabad
Daood Khan, Civil Society, Quetta
Munir Ahmed Badini, Former Secretary Education, Balochistan
Asif Lehri, Quetta
Liaqat Chama, Balochistan, IT University
Mohammad Saleh Planning Commission, Quetta

ISLAMABAD WORKSHOP, 28-29 April 2006

As Islamabad does not represent any specific region or province, the themes for this workshop were more related to ideological issues and concepts. Higher education was also added as a theme, as all decisions regarding higher education are made here. Experts were invited to speak on the following themes: the aims and objectives of education, the economics of education, higher education, the quality of education, and private education.

Aims and Objectives of Education

There are many good aims and useful objectives identified in the previous education policies of Pakistan. These include social justice, equality, and education as public investment. However, there are also many contradictory points in these policies. The larger and more significant issue in policy formulation should have to do with the genesis and growth of the state of Pakistan.

There are basically three things which explain the weaknesses of our education system; one is the genesis of the state, another is the constitutional history of Pakistan, and the third is the allocation of resources. There is a contradiction to be found in the Constitution of Pakistan itself, as in one place it states that the purpose of the creation of Pakistan was to establish a country where people could live according to the tenets of Islam, while in another, it is also stated that the only way to survive in the modern world is to be a nation state. This contradiction is also reflected in the historical development of the curriculum.

Regarding constitutional history, our religion is reflected in all the policies. The challenge is how to formulate a policy which is enlightened, inclusive and progressive in nature. Another very important thing is that usually there have been provisions to achieve universal literacy and primary education but these have never been achieved. The question is: what is the legal position on this and who is responsible for implementing these provisions? The problem is that the government has never taken education seriously.

The issue of language education is also a major one. In fact, the crisis we are facing now is not of 'IT' or science but a language crisis. Many intelligent students do not know how to express themselves well. The emergence of new ideas is linked with the

knowledge of language. Language is not only an issue as the medium of instruction but also as a source of the scientific approach.

Suggestions

- Education should be the priority of the government. This will lead to allocating more resources. Issues of efficient school management, child-centered and student-focused education, and the quality of *curricula* all hinge on the availability of resources.
- The issue of language education needs to be emphasized as strongly as scientific and technical subjects.
- It is the responsibility of the state to provide facilities for proficiency in Urdu, English and the respective mother tongues of its citizens. This responsibility should be incorporated into any new policy. Moreover, functional language should be the medium of instruction.
- Scientific thinking is more important than just producing technicians. Rationality and critical thinking are very important.

The Economics of Education

Education has always been a source of political and intellectual debate. The history of policy-making in education is the history of repeated admission of failure of all policies, plans, projects and schemes. Nearly all the Five Year Plans have failed to achieve the targets of primary school enrolment. The Third Plan set the target of achieving 70% enrolment but it was only 54% at the time of the Fifth Plan. The Fifth Plan set the target of achieving 100% enrolment rate by 1987 but it was 60% at the time of the Seventh Plan by 1998. The Eighth Plan set the target of 48% by 1998 but the actual enrolment rate was 39%.

All the educational policies set the ambitious target of achieving 100% literacy. The 1959 educational policy had achieved only 21.7% literacy by 1972. The 1979 educational policy set the target of 35% by 1983 and 100% by 2010 but the achievement was only 26.17% by 1981. The same problem exists with the national literacy plan and the nationwide literacy program, which set the targets of 33% literacy by 1986 and 54% by 1990 respectively, but achieved only 34% literacy in 1992.

The last educational policy set the target of 70% literacy by 2010. It has been observed that each policy commences with a lament about the failure of past; each plan reviews the performance of the previous plan and opines about the failure to achieve the targets. Each PC-I of an education scheme justifies a project in terms of the failure of past schemes. Apart from many other critical issues, the drafting and finalization process of the (1998-2010) policy also violated three fundamental requirements for developing a viable plan of education: openness, transparency, and critical debate.

According to the presenter, two major economic issues are striking features of education in Pakistan: a slowdown in productivity and increasing inequality. Many economists and policy-makers agree that improvements in human capital - the skills and experience of workers - may hold the key to improving productivity growth, and

that high-quality education is critical to that goal. Over the last two decades, inequalities have increased in Pakistan and much of the increase can be attributed to poor education. The gaps between the income of educated graduates and those with no schooling or who are quasi-literate is increasing enormously. The market places a greater premium on skilled (educated) workers, thus providing better education and ensuring that a larger fraction of the population perceive education as a way of enhancing opportunity and reducing inequality. There are a number of social returns: the fertility rate of educated married women has dropped significantly and the incidence of mortality and contagious diseases of educated mothers have dropped significantly.

A special problem in Pakistan is that the country has multiple and parallel systems of education. First, there is the well-known division between the so-called English Medium and Urdu Medium schools that exacerbates existing social and economic divisions and leads to a virtual system of educational apartheid in the country. Second, and equally important, is the divide between 'formal' educational institutions (*i.e.* being under some nominal supervision of national educational authorities) and 'informal' institutions, especially the *Madaris*. Education remains unequally distributed among various income groups and regions. Access to education for children of all ages is still inadequate. Educational institutions lack physical facilities. The target of minimum essential competencies for quality education has not yet been achieved. Educational institutions face a shortage of qualified and motivated teachers, especially female teachers. Due to financial constraints and want of managerial capacity, education targets remained unaccomplished. The whole educational system is divided into English and non-English medium of instructions with different text books, methods of learning, classification of elite and non-elite, government and non-government, military and *madrassa* and rural and urban.

This brings us to the issue of educating the economically disadvantaged, particularly impoverished, areas of rural Pakistan. It is a fact that very good students receive very inadequate education and support at the primary and secondary levels, which leaves them without the skills for college and university education. Without adequate skills, people earn low wages, and are forced to continue to live in poverty.

After the PRSP, real expenditures on health and education have not changed significantly, which indicates that donors have not brought any influence on the government to increase public expenditure on these two sectors.

Regarding the role of the state as the provider of education, it was stated that education is not a pure public good as the marginal cost is not equal to zero to provide extra good to additional individuals. However, marginal cost is equal to average cost, which, according to economic theory, suggests that there are those who justify public education in terms of market failure, which focuses on the importance of externalities. The benefits are not only for individuals but the nation also. Hence, access to education should not be based on dependence on the parents' income; it should be publicly provided while addressing the issues of equality.

Suggestions

- More resources and funding for education should be provided (*e.g.* through higher taxes on profits and by spending less on defense).

- There should be an end to the apartheid system of inequality at all levels of language, courses, regional and access to disadvantaged communities. A curriculum is needed which seeks to transform the present system to a more humanistic system.
- There should be commitment to egalitarian policies that should aim at achieving more equal outcomes regardless of factors such as social class, gender, 'race' and disability.
- Egalitarian redistribution of resources within and between schools is also needed, via positive discrimination for under-achieving individuals and groups.
- Local community involvement in schools and colleges should be made possible.
- There is a need to increase the powers of democratically elected and accountable local government with respect to education.

Higher Education

The goals of higher education vary on the basis of the kind of university. According to the presenter, there are five kinds of universities: classical universities, hi-tech creating institutes, traditional engineering colleges, vocational institutes, and liberal arts and general education universities. A classical university aims at research and development on world issues in a free and liberated environment, while other universities are more technical and scientific in nature.

In 1947 Pakistan had only one university. The number increased to 23 in 1997 and now there are 47 public sector universities along with 19 degree-granting institutions. All private-sector universities are in addition to this number. The total university-level enrolment is 1,60,000. When private sector and college students are included this number rises to around 2,00,000, which, if seen as a proportion of the total population of the relevant age group, is only 2.7%.

There was also discussion on the reforms introduced by the Higher Education Commission. The positive initiatives include: internet connectivity, distance education, digital libraries, hiring foreign faculty, students being sent abroad for Ph.D. studies and money being allocated for scientific equipment. HEC has increased the total budget on higher education by 1,500% in the last 15 years, which is remarkable.

However, these programs are not entirely satisfactory and participants indicated their reservations: foreign faculty are paid much more than local faculty; some students are not being sent to good universities abroad and money is not being allocated rationally.

There are also other negative effects including the rapid growth of universities, false numerical targets set for Ph.D.s and fraud in research projects. The implications of these programmes include: further degradation of research system in Pakistan, disillusionment and continued low quality.

However, we must not assume that if we produce high quality graduates, this will 'kick-start' and have a positive effect on the economy. This is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for economic growth and development, global competitiveness and innovation. It also depends on whether there is a receptive institutional economic

environment outside of higher education that can utilize the competencies of high level graduates.

Suggestions

- We should have a deep understanding of existing realities and not allow unrealistic visions and aspirations to affect objectivity.
- Any serious higher education reform agenda must prioritize quality as a key policy driver.
- Clarity about purposes and goals is essential in order to arrive at informed and meaningful policies and actions.
- At various levels, consensus on the fundamental values, purposes and goals of higher education is critically important to the success of reforming higher education.
- In situations of large-scale or comprehensive reforms, it is imperative to establish priorities.
- It is vital that the core business of higher education and its institutions (teaching and learning, research, community service, and innovation and renewal in these areas) is not relegated to a side issue in the clamor around policy reform and the reform of governance, financing and other areas.
- A policy framework should exist that can select, enable, and retain capable and appropriate leadership, management, and administration and faculty in Higher Education institutions.
- The successful reform of higher education and higher education institutions requires an enabling and supportive macro-policy environment and simultaneous reforms outside of higher education.
- All of the key actors in HE need to keep examining their own work critically.
- There should be national University entrance tests for students and faculty.
- A free and liberal environment is crucial for the proper growth of research and development.

Private Education

The dominant issue in this session was the monitoring of private schools. This monitoring includes not only the overall performance and functioning of these schools but also lesson plans and teachers' evaluations. All participants argued that both students and teachers should be evaluated regularly.

The more controversial issue was the adoption of lesson plans. Proponents of the value of lesson plans argued that lesson plans help to raise the quality of teaching. Opponents argued that imposing lesson plans indicates distrust. They argued that it degrades the teacher and could lead to low self-esteem and de-motivated teachers.

Another issue was how and at which levels to monitor. The issues raised included regulation of curricula, finance, management and the quality of the teaching and learning environment. It was argued that if all curricula – public and private - are to be set by the government, there is no need for private schools and no need to pay much higher prices than those of government schools. Parents send their children to private schools primarily due to the different curricula which they offer.

Suggestions

- There should be a regulatory body tasked with monitoring the functioning of private schools.
- There may be curricula outlines given by the government, but private schools should be free to choose the books. These schools should only be given the topics to be taught, not the material.
- Teachers should be evaluated regularly and properly trained.
- There should be high-priority provision for quality education in the education policy.
- There should be quality control mechanisms for both public and private schools. Private schools should not be allowed to operate unless they meet high standards.
- Civil society and teachers should be involved in curriculum development.
- There should be research on language issues.
- Teachers should be respected and their salaries should be commensurate with their experience. Teachers should be made active agents of the education system.

Participants
Harris Khalique, SPO, Islamabad
Tariq Rehman, QAU, Islamabad
Hajra Ahmad, Khaldunia High School, Islamabad
Khursheed Hasnain, QAU, Islamabad
Faheem Hussain, QAU, Islamabad
Sajid Kazmi, SDPI, Islamabad
S. M. Naseem, Former Professor QAU, Islamabad
Pervaiz Hoodbhoy, QAU, Islamabad
Isa Daudpota, Physicist
Zulfiqar Gilani, CHET, Islamabad
Dr. Inayatullah, COSS, Islamabad
Ahmad Nawaz Hakro, QAU, Islamabad
Shah Jahan Baloch, CEF, Islamabad
Aftab Somro, National Book Foundation, Islamabad

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY INSTITUTE - SDPI

**Mailing Address: PO Box 2324, Islamabad, Pakistan. Street Address: # 3, UN
Boulevard, Diplomatic Enclave I, G-5, Islamabad. Telephone: ++(92-51)
2277146, 2278134, 2278136, 227064 Fax: ++(92-51) 2278135
Email: main@sdpi.org URL: www.sdpi.org**