

## **Higher Education in Pakistan; Weaknesses and Remedies**

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### **Introduction**

In modern era role of education has been changed. In the past education was considered as a tool for human development. At this age, it is considered as a tool of development in vast meanings such as economical development, social development and also development of human resources.

Education sector is not an island. It is necessarily part and parcel of any society. The overall atmosphere and poor condition of a society is, the lower the standard of education will be.

Nevertheless, the present situation of higher education in Pakistan may be explained as was explained some years back by the then chief economist in the Planning Commission of Pakistan who says:

**“The relevance of the curriculum, the availability of pedagogical equipment and attractive facilities and above all the skills and interest of the tutors need improvement.”**

(Jawaid Azhar in Mehbub-ul-Haq Dr. [ed] : 1986 : 305)

### **Perspective**

“Under the foreign rule for a century, sufficient attention has been paid to the education of our people and if we are to make a real, speedy and substantial progress, we must earnestly tackle this question and bring our education policy and programme on the lines **suited to the genius of the people, consonant with our history and culture and having regard to the modern conditions and vast development that have taken place all over the world.**”

(Quaid-e-Azam 1947: cited in proceedings of  
Pakistan educational conferences 1952 : 5)

In this background the first National Educational Conference (Karachi: Nov. 27, Dec I, 1947) produced a strong philosophy of education as well as a number of ambitious recommendations indicating the future goals of education in Pakistan. Nevertheless, many of its recommendations remained in documentary form only for the lack of institutional or economic resources to pursue them.

In 1959 National Commission on Education was established which recommended that education should be made compulsory upto primary level by the year 1969 and upto middle level by the year 1974. In 1969, the New Education policy emphasized adult literacy.

The Education Policy, 1972 anticipated universalization of primary education for boys and girls by the years 1979 and 1984 respectively, with its extension upto middle level in the forthcoming three years.

The New Education, Policy 1970 recommended a shift to scientific, technical and vocational education for middle level skilled worker. It also emphasized a 50: 50 ratio between science and humanities subjects enrollment.

National Education Policy 1979 emphasized the universalization of primary education by 1986-87 utilizing non-formal sources, open "Mosque Schools" and "Mohallah Schools" for girls on a large scale.

Since 1979 no further expansion is seen in the field of education planning in Pakistan except some new policy-decisions in certain areas as primary education, teacher training and higher education and research. Nevertheless more emphasis is given to universalization of primary education and quite a number of international projects have been launched in this field.

The Educational Policy 1992 was announced by the Federal Minister of Education in Islamabad in June, 1992. The following characteristics are the most important features of this policy

- An emphasis on Privatization.
- Encouraging the private sector in education.

The recommendations of the education policies were highlighted in the forthcoming five year plans of the country and the targets were set accordingly, however, meager resources were generally allocated to education and the education sector could not get a lion's share in any of the budget proposal.

Now, as the Government is giving more emphasis on education and especially on higher

education: is plans for future education are in pipeline it is necessary to discuss issues in details especially the weaknesses.

### **Problems/Weaknesses**

Since the very day of independence, the higher education could not achieve its proper place in education scenario of Pakistan resulting in Lower Product Standard and enhanced number of unemployed graduates.

The present system of college education provides to the student a little choice of disciplines, however, they have to study many subjects which are neither relevant to their present curriculum nor for future studies or employment. A very small number of college students become doctor, engineer or scientists and the majority try their luck in general education. Some of them are definitely successful in getting good jobs through competitive examination by the rest cause increase in the number of unemployed population of the country.

To sum up, we may list the major weaknesses of college education in the following manners:

- Irrational policy making: haphazard changes.
- Sticking with the Pre-Independence Colonial legacies.
- Higher education without determining future goals.
- In-adequacy in educational environment: Political polarization among college students.
- Not developing indigenous model of higher education.

### **Possible Remedies**

Nevertheless, we may need an overall change in the system of college education in the light of the guidelines given by the founder of the country.

**A System – “situated to the genius of our people, consonant with our history and cultural and having regard to the modern conditions and vast development that take place all over the world.”**

*(Quaid-e-Azam 1947: cited in proceedings of the Pakistan educational conference 1952:5)*

## 1. Islamic Perspective

- Ijtehad: To welcome modern views/circumstances in the light of Ijtehad perspective.
- Character-oriented Education: Balanced Personality in Islamic perspective.

## 2. National Perspective

- Strong political will: Long term ongoing policies.
- Specification of National targets/Goals.
- Allocation of proper resources.
- Due regard, respect and status for teachers.
- Developing indigenous model/system which could produce financially sound, balanced and learned Muslim fellow.

### Conclusion

Learning from others is a sophisticated and very delicate process. Sadler's advice in this context is still valid even after about one century when he says:

*"We cannot wander at pleasure among the educational systems of the world, like a child scrolling on a garden and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant"*

(Sadler: 1900 cited in Psacharopoulos : 1992 : 26)

For a very reason, a new model for college/higher education covering above mentioned priorities, goals and targets is presented as annexed. At this stage the model is in need of further improvement, but it is hoped that professional discussion of the ideas may lead to an improvement in primary/secondary education in general and higher/college education in Pakistan in particular.

**Say to them,  
Say to the down-keepers,  
The sun-slappers,  
The harmony-hushers,  
"Even if you are not ready for day,  
it cannot always be night"  
(Gwendolyn Brooks)**

## A Pakistan Model for College / Higher Education

### Salient Features:

1. Twelve Years Schooling.
2. Multiple choice of disciplines.
3. Multiple choice of text books.
4. No compulsory subject after grade X II.
5. Islamiat, Pak. Studies, Urdu English compulsory in school.
6. Medium of Instruction.  
Primary : Mother tongue.  
Secondary : Urdu  
College/Univ : Urdu/English
7. Colleges to be merged in universities gradually.
8. Higher Education for really deserved one.
9. Research und creativity based.
10. Job oriented/professionally equipped.

