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SEEK

A Magazine on Education and Development



Education, Religion and the Creation of Subject

A Look at the Different Educational Systems of Pakistan

Governance of Education in Pakistan
The 18th Constitutional Amendment:
Challenges, Opportunities, Responses

Pakistan's Educational Emergency
What Needs to be Done?

Pressure to Modernize
Is New always Better?

A Sit Down with an Educational Revolutionary
Ms. Baela Raza Jamil

Write to us:

SEEK Magazine

Sindh Education Foundation,
Government of Sindh.

House # 21-A, Block 7/8, Overseas Cooperative Housing
Society, Ameer Khusro Road, Karachi

Ph: 021-34169141-2, 34169144-5

Email: seek.sef@gmail.com, Website: ww.sef.org.pk

Write for us:

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Editorial

"All that is necessary for the
triumph of evil is that good
men do nothing."

Edmund Burke

In this age of ever pervasive media and breakneck paced technology, we have somehow allowed ourselves to be confined to a kind of a rat race. With external influences bombarding us from all sides all the time, vying for our attention and consideration, many have developed selective perception and a myopic sense of morality. In our quest to streamline ourselves to better fit the world of today, most have sacrificed something very important; our link and responsibility to society and on the whole, humanity. Too many times has the mantra of 'Not my problem,' been repeated over and over as we go through our routines, the malaise of apathy deep rooted. There are many under the notion that our social ills will somehow not affect us and eventually be solved themselves. It is precisely this type of expectation that is leading us into a false sense that all these daunting societal problems are in the domain of 'to be solved by others in the future'. Big issues plaguing Pakistan such as increasing inequality and poverty, violence and conflict, pollution and lack of access to quality education, we think, deep down, are the responsibility of government, experts and possibly financial investors who know far better than the ordinary person what is going on and no doubt will get their act together soon. Meanwhile, we can go on in our small corner of the world trying to do our best, living out our daily lives. We refuse to see what is plain in front of us; that no matter how severe the current crisis, it has not enough to shake those that rule into actually doing anything other than business as usual.

So beyond wondering just how many disasters have to happen, the question is how long do we have to wait until the higher echelons decide we need to change the system? When do we expect their ok to tackle inequality and violence and invest in education? How long do we dream on?

It is evident from the ever worsening situation is that we can no longer delay. We have to act now. Sustainability and betterment is not about future generations, it is about now and the citizens of today's generation. The real challenge is to change our lifestyles and boundaries and become more involved. We all need to start coping with nationwide crises and they are all of our responsibilities. Pakistan is collectively shared by us, as is its future.

Change is needed and change shall come from the grassroots up, through the power of education wherein there is created in people the capacity to understand and in turn solve not only the symptoms, but the actual root cause of the problems plaguing the country. Education is necessary to create awareness for the masses, to provide employment to combat poverty, to staunch the violence and security concerns, to shape and design lives in keeping with changing environments, our



well-being and our community needs. We know of the significance of education, yet it has failed to be a priority over and over again and we are far from the 'Education for All' goals pledged at the World Education Forum (Dakar, 2000) to be met by 2015. While there are some admirable efforts being undertaken in education and development by those concerned, the majority still slumbers away in their own bubble. And that bubble unfortunately is not too far away from bursting. There is still a mountain of a task in front of us; the education system is in dire need of deep critical analysis and transformation and not just patch up solutions, an exercise in futility. We can only begin to change the system if we understand it first. Who sets the standards, who delivers, who learns, what is learned, how knowledge is built and shared, where it is happening, and how much and where the funds are coming from, are all key factors affecting how education is perceived and practiced.

Therefore, SEEK aims to bring forth a deeper understanding of the current education system and all its facets, to discuss and suggest solutions to issues plaguing the education and development sector. It endeavors to promote awareness and encourage critical discourse over matters that influence the fate of the entire nation. The magazine is a humble attempt, a small step amongst many such efforts to improve the lot of those less privileged, to provide a foundation on which others can perhaps build upon and initiate the process of transformation and change. Within its pages, SEEK strives to capture the variety of voices, positions, passions and interests that have shaped education and development over the years and are urging all of us to move forward to act. The sense of urgency can be heard in the articles from authors of all ages whether based in the research community, international and national policymaking arena, local and global civil society movements or in the education and development profession.

From all these points of view, the message is clear. No more can we wait. No more can we rest on our laurels as our society descends further into despondency and despair due to ignorance. As the ones who are fortunate enough to count ourselves amongst the 'privileged class' it is our responsibility to help the disadvantaged and in doing so the nation. It is time to act, to work with other citizens, our peers, in multiple ways to make the change, to make progress happen. It is time to shake the daze of apathy and join hands in working towards a common united cause. The time is now.

Raza Azmat

Editor

SEEK

A Magazine on Education and Development

SEEK, a magazine on education and development, is part of the Sindh Education Foundation's continuing efforts to promote intellectual discourse on the issues surrounding the educational sector. It aims to question on all fronts the disparities in the existing models of education and development in order to bring a shift in existing ideologies and encourage social action.

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CIRCULATION MANAGER

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ILLUSTRATION/PHOTO CREDIT

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EDUCATION, RELIGION & THE CREATION OF SUBJECT:

Different Educational Systems of Pakistan

“The forms and the specific situations of the government of men by one another in a given society are multiple; they are superimposed, they cross, impose their own limits, sometimes cancel one another out, sometimes reinforce one another.” (Foucault)

“The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.” (Plato)

“We must...do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.” (Macaulay, Architect of education system of British India)

“Through its textbooks, school teachers, universities, newspapers, novels and magazines, the colonial order was able to penetrate and colonize local discourse.” (Timothy Mitchell, Colonizing Egypt)



The educational system has a unique place in modern nation state. Foucault calls it “the instrument whereby every individual in a society can gain access to any kind of discourse.” Most of the possibilities to progress and prosper are available only through educational systems in the world today. Refusing entry into the educational system is synonymous with refusing entry into the main stream culture and work ethic of a country. All this has placed extraordinary power in the hands of those who design what an educational system looks like and how it defines right and wrong.

Educational institutions are instrumental in shaping how we view the world. Each educational system teaches an entire generation the difference between what is right and what is wrong. That is why Foucault calls educational systems as constituting “doctrinal groups”. Naturally, who defines this right and wrong and what these definitions imply for a society are of utmost importance in modern nation state.

Most of modern nation states have a single educational system for all citizens. It ensures that the definitions of right and wrong, the ethnocentric ideals, and the worldview of all citizens are identical. A single educational system, thus, creates a unity of thought and outlook within a society. Pakistan with its different educational systems is an exception to this rule. While there are certain notable exceptions like the United States where multiple education systems are in vogue, other determinants of popular culture like media and politics ensure creation of a single “national culture”.

There are three different educational systems in Pakistan;

State education system, elite private schools and Madrassahs (religious schools). State education system is the largest and most of the student population is enrolled in these schools. Elite private schools and Madrassahs have comparatively smaller student populations. However, these systems have great sociological significance because students from the elite schools have a disproportionately high representation in bureaucracy, businesses, and state offices (Rahman T, 2005).

Similarly, the students from Madrassahs have constituted a significant portion of sectarian violence in Pakistan (Rahman, 2003).

It can be argued that these differences in educational systems can have influence on various facets. Firstly, the three educational systems represent products of totally different historical evolutionary processes and have divergent ideologies about education.

Secondly, these systems because of differences in curriculum, pedagogical style, and discipline techniques create distinct concepts of “citizenship” among their students. Owing to this difference, students which pass through these systems do not share the same worldview and form different types of “subjects”. Thirdly, it is claimed that most of the problems of radical Islam which Pakistan has been experiencing in recent past are because of these different educational systems.

It does not discount the importance of other socio-political factors like neglect of frontier regions by the government and the US-Pakistan politics in Afghanistan during the Cold War. However, the difference in outlook towards life in various strata of Pakistan induced by the separate education systems



Dr. Muhammad Azfar Nisar is a member of Pakistan Administrative Service. He is a Fulbright Fellow and has completed Masters Degrees in Public Policy and International Area Studies from University of California Berkeley. He also has a Masters Degree in Economics from University of Punjab Lahore and MBBS Degree from King Edward Medical College Lahore.

creates a fertile ground where other socio-political factors can sow the seeds of discontent and unrest.

Historical Evolution of Educational Systems:

Religious Madrassahs:

Religious Madrassahs (places of study) emerged as centers of organized learning in early Islamic history during ninth and tenth century Arabia. These Madrassahs were a new

though fluent in traditional languages like Persian and Arabic, were unfamiliar with language of the Colonialists (English).

All this created a fundamental change in the educational goals of the Madrassahs. They resisted change and refused to adopt modern curriculum or teaching of English. The learning objectives changed from training bureaucrats and state officers to defending the faith against foreign invaders (Talbani 1996). Owing to this static stance, Madrassahs continued to teach their curriculum which was unchanged since the middle ages. As a result, graduation from these

Educational institutions are instrumental in shaping how we view the world. Each educational system teaches an entire generation the difference between what is right and what is wrong

innovation because there was no tradition of organized learning in Arab before the emergence of these institutions. They were designed to satisfy the need for organized teaching of newly emerging fields of knowledge like Hadith, Tafsir, Kalaam and logic. Owing to their attraction of the best minds of their time, very soon they surpassed all forms of private learning. The rigid classification of knowledge based on religious law and dogma inevitably made jurists and traditionalists final authorities in religious and worldly matters.

Within a few decades, Madrassahs became the only legitimized source of Islamic knowledge. There are a variety of reasons for this rapid increase in importance of these institutions. One of the major reasons was the relationship with the state. Madrassahs were mostly state funded and the Kings looked to the Imams in major Madrassahs to legitimize their actions. In return, Imams were given a relatively free reign in religious matters not concerning the state (Fazlur Rahman 1982). This State-Madrassah relationship also had the added benefit of ostracizing any radical religious sentiments against the Kings.

These Madrassahs in the first few centuries of Islamic rule provided the state with most of its bureaucracy and state functionaries. In addition, they served as learning centers for most of the prominent Islamic scholars during the medieval ages. For centuries, these Madrassahs had virtual power over the definition of right and wrong in the Islamic world. For example, fields of study like philosophy and astronomy were not taught at the Madrassahs and were labeled "un-Islamic". These fields had to be studied privately and socially they had a status much inferior to fields such as logic, tafsir, and medicine.

When India was colonized during the nineteenth century by the British, rules of the game changed. The British brought their own educational system. Entry into all major state and bureaucratic jobs was dependant on passing through this new educational system. In addition, the British withdrew all state funding to the Madrassahs. So, the Madrassahs not only suffered a financial crisis but also a social crisis (Zaman 1999). Passing through a Madrassah was no longer a guarantee to any job because graduates from Madrassahs,

Madrassahs stopped having any value in society and the job market. Students of these Madrassahs could only become teachers in other Madrassahs or Imams in local mosques.

All this insulated the Madrassahs and their students from all that modernity and the industrial age stood for. Everything which was associated with the West came to be recognized as evil and hence, worthy to be despised and rejected.

Public Schools and State Education System:

State-run education system was introduced by the British in India. A lot has been written on the educational philosophy behind the educational system of British India. Nothing explains it better than the following quotes from the architect of this education system,



"the effect of training is to give an entirely new turn to the native mind. The young men educated in this way cease to strive after independence according to the original Native model, and aim at, improving the institutions of the country according to the English model, with the ultimate result of establishing constitutional self-government. They cease to regard us as enemies and usurpers, and they look upon us as friends and patrons, and powerful beneficent persons, under whose protection the regeneration of their country will gradually be worked out"

This system was, therefore, designed to establish the hegemony of the British over the colonized people. After its independence in 1947, Pakistan maintained the basic educational philosophy of the British. It was especially true

for the discipline and control methods of the British colonial education system, before independence the British used the state education system to establish hegemony over the locals, after independence it was the religious and political interest groups who managed to exploit the state education system to establish hegemony of certain ideas in society.

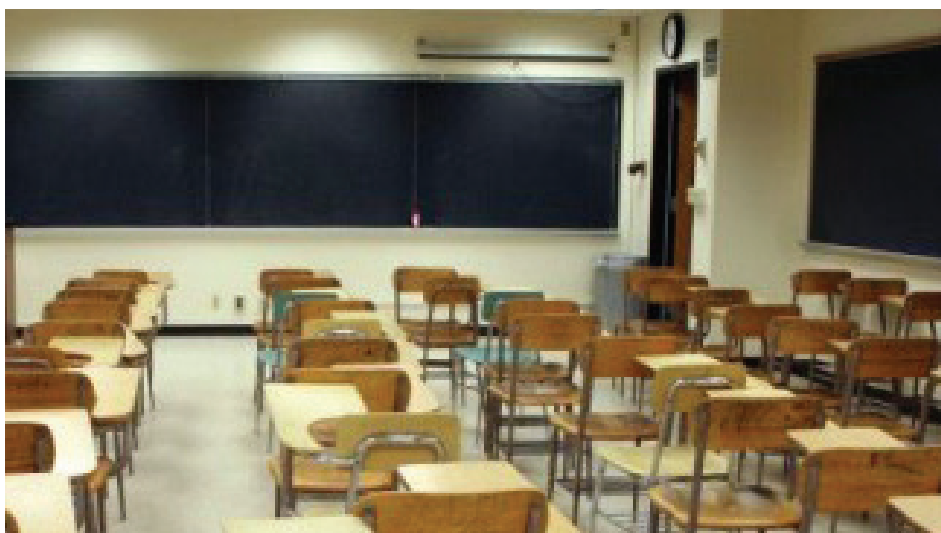
A new educational policy was developed with each political transition in Pakistan. Each new educational policy publically aimed to prepare 'good citizens' but instead, reproduced the government's ideology and its conception of citizenship and citizenship education (Althusser 1972). For example, during the socialist regime of Mr. Z.A. Bhutto, the school curriculum was revised to preach "socialist" values and "all privately-managed schools and colleges" were nationalized in line with socialist ideals (Ministry of Education, 1972, pp. 6, 35). The new educational policy of 1979 under Gen. Zia ul Haq who replaced Mr. Z. A. Bhutto, revised the curricula so that "Islamic ideology permeates the thinking of the younger generation," and society is refashioned according to Islamic tenets (Ministry of Education, 1979, p.2).

The state schools, therefore, continue to indoctrinate the students with the political ideology of the state. The discipline and control methods ensure that the graduating students do not resist the dominant political culture of their society.

Elite Private Schools and British Education System:

Elite private schools are also a product of British rule. Initially, two kinds of elitist schools in India were formed: those for the hereditary aristocracy, called the chiefs' colleges; and those for the newly emerging professional classes, called European or English schools, including armed forces schools which taught all subjects in English. Both kinds of institutions served political and social purposes because the chiefs' colleges were meant to Anglicise young rulers, to encourage loyalty to the crown, and preclude events like those of 1857 (Mangan in Rahman 2005).

The parallel system of elitist schooling did not change because of the establishment of Pakistan. Indeed, as the military and the higher bureaucracy both came from this elite background, these schools multiplied in Pakistan as the professional middle-class started expanding in 1960s. Thus it is no surprise that the government, dominated by members of these two elitist groups, came up with policies that supported these elite schools.



These schools suffered a temporary setback during the 1970s when the socialist regime of Mr. Z.A. Bhutto nationalized all private schools. However, immediately after his government fell, these schools were de-nationalized. 1980s saw a huge increase in the popularity of these schools. Huge profit margins attracted a large number of investors.

Many new schools were built to make profit and cater to the demands of elite sections of society for "better" education. These schools have remained almost an exclusively urban phenomenon which also indicates the elitist character and focus of these schools.

Over the years, these schools have come to represent best possible opportunities for personal growth in Pakistan. Most of the students of these schools either enter foreign universities after graduation or receive admission into one of the elite domestic higher education institutions.

Discipline and Creation of the "Compliant" Subject:

Foucault in his book "Discipline and Punish" has pointed to the importance of control over the physical body of the subjects for creation of discipline by the state, starting in the nineteenth century. He also points to the fact that schools like the military and prison were institutions where this disciplining of the body was carried out (Foucault 1977). This concern for physical discipline is visible in the education system of Pakistan.

The teaching methodology in almost all of the public schools and most of the private schools which follow the government curriculum is surprisingly identical. All these schools idealize discipline; strong emphasis is put on routine, following orders, and completing the assigned tasks in time. Physical punishment is not uncommon especially in boys schools.

Learning mostly involves cramming and copying what has been taught. Until the High School level, students are encouraged not to question what is written in the text books and what is taught to them. Students are supposed to memorize the books, mostly without realizing what they are memorizing.

Most of the assigned homework involves copying from the text books instead of analytical assignments. The curriculum of these schools is set by the government. Teaching of Islamic studies is compulsory at all grades of school. However, it is the

social studies curriculum which is the most ideologically indoctrinated. Both the social studies and Islamic studies books have articles on themes like Pan-Islamism, Islamic identity of Pakistan, Muslim world, revolutionary movements in Islam, history of Western colonization and the idealization of the concept of Jihad (Ahmad 2004).

Interestingly, as with the Madrassahs, no part of curriculum presents perspective of followers of other religions or of citizens of the rest of the world. The only topic which deals with Non-Muslims is the status of minorities in an Islamic state and that is also in a very superficial and non-analytical way. The curriculum does not differentiate between a "good citizen" and a "pious Muslim".

There are hardly any analytical discussions outside of the assigned curriculum in classes and raising questions is not appreciated especially in social sciences. Similarly, examinations are almost exclusively written so that instead of analytical skills or academic grasp of educational concepts, memory, and cramming skills of students are tested. Students who are able to identically copy what was taught to them generally receive the highest marks.

A combination of strict physical and mental discipline permeates these schools. We see here the clear continuation of the controlling techniques which Mitchell captured in his insightful study of colonial educational system,

'A student is not permitted to change his place in any of the classrooms without permission; this order is to be followed in all classes.' There is a meticulous concern for the discipline of rank and place. It is not the particular place that matters - desks can be assigned by drawing lots - but the act of positioning and remaining in place. Punishment is a more overt expression of this concern with order. ... (Students) are now deprived of leave or confined to their rooms rather than beaten with the leather whip. In this way punishment is made an aspect of discipline, of that continuous technique of control whose method is to position, to divide, and to set limits.

Students who pass out of these schools have a world view which idealizes following authority without questioning. Thus students are physically and mentally trained to become conformists, a practice which is the legacy of British colonial experience. However, what is new is the idealization of an Islamic society and Islamic state which is inculcated into the minds of these students. Most of these students come to view Pakistan as an Islamic Khilafat where all the laws should be in conformity with Islam. Any social or legal change which is deemed socially un-Islamic is thus deemed to be a grave mistake by this group of students.

Taqlid and Creation of the "Follower" Subject:

The main objective of Madrassahs continues to be the production of religious scholars trained to defend religion and protect traditional values (Talbani 96). Therefore, curriculum is heavily focused towards Islamic theological subjects like Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, etc. Although many Madrassahs have started teaching English as a subject, sciences or the

English language are hardly ever the focus of study in these institutions. Islamic subjects have essentially remained unchanged in curriculum since the middle ages.

All Madrassahs, including the ones belonging to the Shia sect, teach the Dars-i-Nizami though they do not use the same texts. Dars-i-Nizami was designed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and has remained mostly unchanged. All Madrassahs also teach their particular point of view (Madhab or Maslak) which clarifies and rationalizes the beliefs of their sect (Sunni or Shia) and sub-sect (Talbani 1996). Moreover, they train their students to refute "heretical" beliefs and Western ideas. The world view of these students remains limited to only their own sect. For them all the "truth" is present in the belief system of their own sect, all the "others" are blinded by the "false" beliefs.



Pedagogy is based on rote memorization, which is considered the way to achieve maximum benefit from learning and obedience to authority. Raising questions is hardly ever encouraged. It is especially true of Islamic subjects. The doctrine of Taqlid is taught with faithful diligence. This doctrine implies that Islamic law and practices of the early centuries of Islam are ideal, unchangeable and final; thus they should be followed as they are without raising new questions. Imitation of teachers is regarded as a virtue because they are supposed to be the role models of Islamic way of life.

No part of the curriculum presents perspectives of the followers of other religions or of citizens of the rest of the world. The only topic which deals with rights of the Non-Muslims is the status of minorities in an Islamic state. Even this topic is taught with its medieval interpretation which implies that all Non-Muslims in an Islamic state must pay an additional tax called Jazya to enjoy protection of law.

Strict discipline is inculcated among students and any deviation from the rules is punished by physical punishment. Sometimes physical punishment involves severe thrashing at the hands of the teachers. Raising a voice which questions any taught subject is unimaginable in such an environment. Discipline and punishment in these schools is much harsher than the state education system.

The stagnant curriculum, physical punishments, and a teaching philosophy which refutes all other religious and cultural points of view ensure the creation of a subject

who blindly follows the brand of religion taught to him. His mind is totally closed to the possibility that there is any truth outside his particular sect. He idealizes the Islamic system preached by his own sect and is taught the virtue of sacrificing his life for the establishment of this system.

Pedagogy and Creation of the “Liberal” Subject:

The elite private schools have a totally different educational philosophy than the state education system and the Madrassahs. They do not follow the curriculum, teaching methodology, or examination method of the state. Instead, all of these schools are affiliated with the Cambridge Education System of England and follow its approved curriculum.

The curriculum of these schools teaches entirely different values than the ones taught at Madrassahs or the state run education system. Religion does not play a significant part in the curriculum of these schools. Here curriculum focuses on inculcating into students virtues of a secular, capitalist nation state. That is why most students tend to have a secular liberal outlook towards life.

The teaching methodology is also different as compared to state schools and Madrassahs. Physical punishment is uncommon and asking questions is encouraged. The examinations in these schools follow University of Cambridge guidelines. The focus is not on memorizing the facts. Instead examination questions require analysis and intelligent interpretation of curriculum. All this translates into an analytical and open frame of mind.

All the teaching and conversation among students takes place exclusively in English. These students, therefore, develop a lifestyle and point of view which has nothing in common with the social norms and values of their society

More important than curriculum, however, is the social life within these schools. All of these schools are co-ed. In addition, all the teaching and conversation among students takes place exclusively in English. These students, therefore, develop a lifestyle and point of view which has nothing in common with the social norms and values of their society. That is why, generally, the students who graduate from these schools tend to have a social circle limited to graduates of similar schools.

The conflict of educational ideologies:

Education, according to Foucault, in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, follows the well-trodden battle lines of social conflict. In his opinion, “every educational system is a means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it” (Foucault 1971). Thus, the different educational systems of Pakistan act as indoctrinating grounds for different social groups and serve as the breeding grounds for future social conflict.

Each educational system has its own conception of an “ideal” subject. The strict discipline and literalism of the Madrassahs ensures total submission by the students. The Madrassahs, therefore, serve as the ideal recruiting grounds to create blind followers of a particular brand of religion. Similarly, the state education system acts to create individuals who are passive and compliant to state policies. Elite private schools on the other hand create subjects who share capitalist values but have no roots in their own culture.

All these subjects have very different conceptions of what an ideal society should look like. A Madrassah student is trained to think that an Islamic state is the rightful destiny of Pakistan. His first affiliation is to his religion. He is trained to think that there is no concept of a nation state in Islam. A student of an Elite school on the other hand seldom bothers with this question. He is in awe of the Western culture and its values. For him modernity means, everything which is Western. There is no common ground when it comes to social ideals between a student of a Madrassah and a student of Elite school. They are residents of different planets.

The students of state education system are the most “confused”. On the one hand, the curriculum teaches them that Pakistan was made in the name of Islam. On the other, the discipline and routine method in the schools trains them to be compliant to state policies. Various studies have shown that a majority of these students idealize an Islamic system in Pakistan. However, they are trained not to do anything about it unless the state decides to do so. This difference between “ideal” and “reality” creates social cognitive dissonance.

One of the major reasons Taliban have been so successful in the North-West is because they have come forward with the claim to install the Islamic system which the state has not been able to create in 60 years. In this way they have been able to address this cognitive dissonance created by the state education system. It is especially true for the Pathans of the tribal areas.

The effects of this compliance can be seen in the political and social landscape of Pakistan. It is no wonder that Pakistan has been ruled by military dictators during most of its history. These dictators largely faced very little popular resistance against their rule. Similarly, a culture of public protest for social rights has failed to develop. A lot of it has to do with the passivity and compliance created by the state education system.

Rahman has shown that the attitude towards religious tolerance and pluralism is very different among the students of the different educational systems of Pakistan. His results showed that whereas 65.5% of surveyed students in elite private schools were in favor of giving equal rights to

Ahmadis, this percentage was 46% in State school and only 12.6% among Madrassah students (Rahman 2004). These results clearly show that Madrassah students are extremely intolerant regarding equal rights for all religious minorities.

The most surprising aspect of this study was that it revealed that the school teachers were significantly more intolerant than their students on questions of religious equality. The study showed that only 43% private school teachers were in favor of giving equal rights to Ahmadis (compared to 65% of students). Similarly, in state schools only 27% were tolerant of equal rights (compared to 46% students). The most striking results were from the Madrassahs where only 3.7% of teachers said that Ahmadis deserved equal rights (Rahman 2004).

The results of this study lead us to two important sociological findings; First of all, a lot of religious intolerance in Pakistan is because of the training which students receive at schools. Secondly, and more significantly, the study shows the importance of school curriculum on social attitudes. Almost all the teachers in the schools belong to the age group which grew up in 1970s and 1980s when the state education policy was revised to "Islamize" the population. The effects of this policy are proving detrimental to the society now.

Recently it has been argued that these Madrassahs and their curriculum are not very important in the emergence of radical brand of Islam in Pakistan; therefore, there is no need to reform them. The major rationale provided to justify this explanation is that only 1.5 Million students are currently enrolled in these Madrassahs. It has been argued that this subgroup forms a very small number as far as the total number of student population of Pakistan, so this subgroup cannot be responsible for the deterioration in law and order situation (Khwaja et al 2003, 2004, 2005).

However, in my opinion, this argument is incorrect because even if only one third of the student population of the Madrassahs became radicalized and raise arms against the state, they will form a force of greater strength than the Taliban. It is especially true of the North-West where the rugged mountain terrain makes guerilla style warfare ideal for small groups like Taliban. In addition, statistics prove that the enrollment in these Madrassahs is comparatively more in the Pashtun belt of Pakistan where the Taliban have been created (Khwaja et al 2004). All of this, points to the importance of Madrassah reform in Pakistan.

These educational systems co-existed peacefully till the 1980s when the state decided to glorify the concept of Jihad. The motives for this policy were purely political because Pakistan had decided to cooperate with U.S.A. to coordinate aid and military equipment to the Afghans in fighting against the Russians. Owing to various state policies and changes in academic curriculum, Jihad and armed resistance to fight for an Islamic state became a part of popular discourse during these years (Talbani 1996, Zia 2003, Ahmad 1999).

This new discourse was especially encouraged and facilitated by the state in the Madrassahs of the North-West Frontier

Province. The reason for this was simple. These Madrassahs were used to recruit and train new "Jihadis" for the fight against the Russians in Afghanistan. State also provided them with weapons to fight in Afghanistan. Although after the fight was over, the state stopped using the Madrassahs as training grounds, in many areas of Pak-Afghan border this practice continued (Abbas 2002, Rana 2004). The major reason was the continued fighting in Afghanistan between various factions of militants. From these Madrassahs, the Taliban was formed which today controls parts of the North-West Frontier Province.

It can be argued that these different education systems imply that there are different "governments" for different social groups in Pakistan. The word "government" is used here in the sense which, according to Foucault, is the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups is directed by dominant social groups. It includes "modes of action more or less considered or calculated which are destined to act upon the possibilities of action of other people" (Foucault 1982).

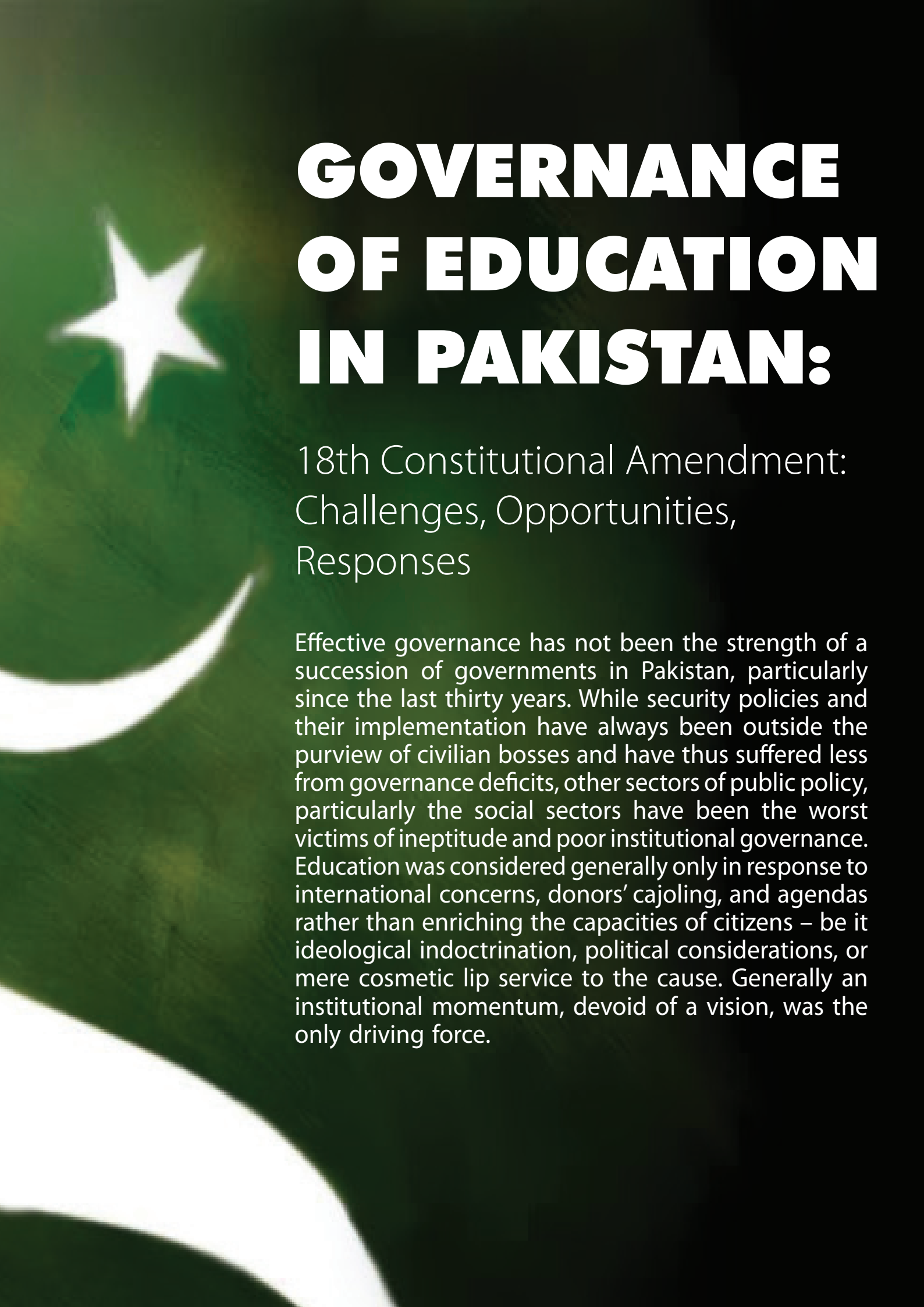
For a modern nation state to become more cohesive and stronger, power has to become progressively "governmentalized." However, the control of different social groups over creation of the "subject" means that this trend is reversing in Pakistan and power relations are increasingly getting away from the state and into the hands of other "potential states." If this trend is not stopped, it will prove fatal for the state of Pakistan in the long-run.

Conclusion:

Pedagogical philosophy of educational systems is instrumental in the creation of modern subject. Modern nation states, therefore, tend to have an educational system (or at least a curriculum) which preaches an ideology that is cohesive and facilitates the creation of the "subject" which the state desires. The three educational systems of Pakistan, on the other hand, create very different types of subjects who have completely different worldviews.

At present, the state is ruled by the subjects taught at the Elitist private schools. However, socio-political developments in the last decade have created circumstances which have facilitated the "Muqallid" subjects created by the Madrassahs to take up arms against the other two groups. They have been able to gain more power by tapping into the cognitive dissonance of the "compliant" subjects created by the state education system, especially in the North-West.

All the developments indicate that if the state does not reverse its policy of letting the three different educational systems continue, the unity of the state will be in greater jeopardy in the days to come.



GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN:

18th Constitutional Amendment: Challenges, Opportunities, Responses

Effective governance has not been the strength of a succession of governments in Pakistan, particularly since the last thirty years. While security policies and their implementation have always been outside the purview of civilian bosses and have thus suffered less from governance deficits, other sectors of public policy, particularly the social sectors have been the worst victims of ineptitude and poor institutional governance. Education was considered generally only in response to international concerns, donors' cajoling, and agendas rather than enriching the capacities of citizens – be it ideological indoctrination, political considerations, or mere cosmetic lip service to the cause. Generally an institutional momentum, devoid of a vision, was the only driving force.

Prior to the 18th Amendment, the 1973 Constitution provided three legislative lists: Federal Legislative List, Concurrent Legislative List and Residual Powers. While 'education' was part of the Concurrent List, historically educational policies were pursued from various platforms of the federal government; educational reforms were generally driven by the central government even earlier than 1973. This suited the centrist mindset of our governance culture and in the name of uniformity, authoritative policies were imposed depriving the federating units any initiative for furtherance of the cause of education and established a culture of dependence on the federal government. Provincial governments did not invest in capacity to plan and implement and soon capacity dating from colonial times turned barren.

This should not allow us to lull ourselves into the belief that the federal government was continuing to build educational governance and management capacities. While the 'Concurrent List' provided legislative powers only, the executive powers were derived through subsidiary specific legislation. In this respect the federal government enacted only one law on the subject of education: 'Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education Act, 1976'.



Dr. Javed Hasan Aly, Former Secretary Establishment Division, has more than 40 years' experience in public policy, public sector management and the education sector.

Before the 18th Amendment, governance of education suffered from a duality of discretion and double default. The federal government merely exploited the 1976 law for purposes of doctrinaire agendas and did not make any statutory regulations about the entire composition and perspective of standards of education. There were really no national standards of education, except standard of content (curriculum); there was no legislation of the benchmark standards of all components of quality of education – quality of the teacher, quality of the teaching environment and quality of the assessment, et al. Thus an opportunity to achieve uniformity in human development in all the federating units was lost that could have helped national cohesion and prevented any marginalized regions or units to feel abandoned or exploited. Lack of quality education in some provinces or areas has denied such regions full and complete participation in nation building through inclusion, complementarity and equity.

The debilitating dependence on the federal government deprived the provincial governments the ability to respond to specific needs of their regions, culture and economic urges. The convenience of inactivity gradually erased the institutional tradition and momentum carried over half a century by these provinces prior to 1973. So, while the federal government did not deliver, the provinces did not need to care. We, therefore, cannot celebrate the fact that the objectives of governance in education were being reached

by leaps and bounds prior to the 18th Amendment.

The 18th Amendment, vis a vis education, places many challenges before the variety of protagonist of governance in education. The implications of this amendment may be categorized as follows:

- ⦿ Legal – repositioning education functions
- ⦿ Political – immediate and long term consequences for the state
- ⦿ Federal – province resource flows
- ⦿ Capacity – new provincial and federal roles
- ⦿ Change Management Issues

While many policy interventions were made at the federal level between 1947 and 2009, some of these fairly noteworthy (the Sharif Commission Report of 1959 immediately comes to mind, its neglect of education for social justice notwithstanding), they were not recognized as central to the success of these policies prior to 2009 governance and management. Even the 2009 policy's plans remained unfulfilled as National Strategy and Provincial Implementation

Plans, matching predictable investment flows were never set in place. The result: poor governance mechanisms remained at the root of non-realization of these noble articulations of ambitious goals.

Article 25-A Right to Education

The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law.



The federal government, over the years, had developed a fairly competent planning capacity; but there was no notable, if any, additions to this capacity after 1989. Consequently the federal government's capacity to plan was under severe duress, if not entirely degraded. Education was pursued from a number of ministerial platforms (Education, Higher Education Commission, Science and Technology, Labour and Manpower, P.M. Secretariat etc.) all functioning in divorce and discord, without any commonalities of purpose. The result was a hotchpotch of policy frameworks, pursued independently resulting in duplications and avoidable wastages of time and resources. These are serious governance issues that the provincial governments now face. Earlier they had drawn a blank to these.

The sub national governments now face a variety of challenges, more so as they were taken by surprise by the 18th Amendment. Unfortunately this amendment did not satisfactorily deal with transition issues which are unavoidable in such a major change management. As a result, unpreparedness for the task at hand is the most daunting challenge to the provinces. They have to identify the legal, political, financial and capacity deficits that have to be bridged to allow moving forward, unhindered by unforeseen obstacles.

Suddenly the provinces face realization of a vacuum –legal and political- that existed in some measure even before the 18th Amendment, when the provincial governments had been lulled into inactivity by the sole proprietorship of the federal government over education policies. Therefore the political implications of this amendment are of both immediate and long term consequences for the state, now

that the units of a fragile federation, of fracturing alliances, may move tangentially without a conscious and conscientious political will and process. The legal challenges could be more positively faced by a competent administration of proactive management – combining vision with practice.

The most important challenge, of far reaching consequences, would be the disappearance of national standards of education (of whatever dubious value) for all sub sectors except the standards for higher education. In a society without well pronounced and cohesive adherence to objectives of a uniform human development across the entire geographical spectrum of the country, an inclusionary commonality of national sentiment is unlikely to deepen its roots, giving strength to centrifugal socio-political forces. There would always be need for benchmark minimum standards to be adopted by all federating units, without causing distress to any province's freedom and discretion to guide its peoples' march forward in the civilization drive way.

If a political will exists, or can be developed in the provinces, the challenges sired by the 18th Amendment can be seen as auguring opportunities to bring educational achievements in a province to full strength. The commitments of communities and provinces to the education of the citizen will always be more rewarding than the attachment of a distant Islamabad. Now the newly acquired legal authority and discretion of the provinces will open new and vast vistas of opportunity to respond to the needs, demands and hopes of the common man, more effectively with direct oversight.

Firstly, though it may be delayed, it is still not too late, the provinces need to invest in their capacity to plan, implement,

Education management will need to be entrusted to a specialized stream, free from political and unnecessary bureaucratic intrusion. The 18th Amendment can prove to be a milestone for taking off in the right direction

monitor and evaluate investments in education. Without a capacity of commitment and quality we cannot ensure productive governance in education: full and accountable utilization of funds, development of teachers and the quality of the teaching environment, standardized assessment, quality assurance, access and relevance in our initiatives in education. Education management will need to be entrusted to a specialized stream, free from political and unnecessary bureaucratic intrusion. The 18th Amendment can prove to be a milestone for taking off in the right direction.

With greater NFC flows to the provinces, it will be a godsend opportunity to increase investments in education budgets; particularly delinking teachers from the shackles of Basic Pay Scales, investing in the teaching environment and infrastructure and enhancing public funding to provide free and compulsory education up to the age of 16, as envisaged in the new Article 25A of the Constitution. Citizens must not be captive clients of the for-profit private sector up to the secondary level and many mechanisms can be in place to utilize private facilities where desirable to provide free quality education to the citizen. The 18th Amendment is a wakeup call to the provinces to realize their obligations and harness their energies to fulfill these obligations.

The Way Forward

There are many responses required of the provinces to the consequences of the 18th Amendment. Without further delay, the provinces must legislate to give effect to the Article 25A of the Constitution; education as a right. The provinces should legislate to demarcate a roadmap for the realization of that goal. The law should commit the province to provide sufficient financial, intellectual and institutional support over a predetermined time frame to achieve the ultimate goal of free and compulsory education of citizens from the age of 6 to 16. This will need to be planned incrementally – organized in a phased expansion, separate for horizontal and vertical growth, of educational facilities of dependable quality.

Simultaneously, the provinces need to legislate in accordance with sub-clause(6) of Article 270AA, to alter, repeal or amend the 1976 law that empowered the federal government to formulate policies of curriculum and text books' development and national standards of education. Each province will need to design its own road to freedom of action under the devolved authority. A legislation must commit the province to development of capacity for curriculum design and ingredients, deal with text books more proactively with an eye on the future, and development of standards of education.

National standards of education up to higher secondary level

have received a raw deal from the 18th Amendment. In their hurry to totally undo the Concurrent List the lawmakers, in my humble view, acted in haste in the name of speed. National standards, as distinct from federally imposed standards, are an inherent need for uniform human development in a society. And uniform human development is the great equalizer that generates equity that can obliterate friction, conflict, frustration and disenchantment in the less privileged segments of a nation.

Even in states with federal dispensation of political power, it is not uncommon to articulate and place securely national standards of education. Standards that commit the entire nation to the cause of education of quality with some stewardship provided by the federal government at the policy level, without intrusion into the freedom of the federating units to plan and implement their own educational policies, exceeding minimum standards. For example, in India, education is in the Concurrent List (entry 25) and Central and State governments have joint powers over education. In the Republic of South Africa, there is a concurrent role of national and provincial education departments and formal



forms for federal-provincial coordination exist. In the Federal Republic of Germany, though there is no separate Ministry of Education at the federal level, there is a Standing Committee of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) which, inter-alia, works for safeguarding quality standards in schools, vocational training and higher education. In the USA education is a devolved subject. Still there is a Department of Education at the federal level, whose limited role includes "leadership role in the national dialogue to improve results of education system".

Hence, is there a case for 'national standards of education' in Pakistan? Can the provinces not voluntarily commit themselves to that goal through the aegis of Council of Common Interests? Such an arrangement could merely be an accord on benchmark, minimum national standards, supported by provincial legislation, and not involving any federal role in its implementation. A point to ponder I think.

LEARNING BEYOND SCHOOLING



Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school.
(Albert Einstein)

Learning in academic tradition has generally been linked with formal ways of education. Schooling in modern times has emerged as a powerful agent in the process of socialization. One central feature of a school, college, or university is certifying and thus legitimizing the knowledge which in most of the cases is “official knowledge”. The structure of schooling in some cases has become so stifling that the cliché term of drop out has become “opt out”. A large number of students, dissatisfied with the kind of schooling they have, are opting out of schools and are exploring the non-formal ways of learning in India and Pakistan. This is an alarming situation which has been addressed by a number of radical thinkers including Evan Illich whose book, *Deschooling Society* on this topic has turned into a classic. On the one hand Illich lashes at the kind of education which is being imported by schools and on the other hand refers to the non-formal ways available for learning. Giroux, in the tradition of Paulo Friere expresses his dissatisfaction with the stereotypical educational dynamics in schools and calls for public pedagogy.

The Beginning of a Journey

My first teacher belonged to the tradition of non-formal education. She was none other than my mother. When I look back on the long winding road of life, going back to my childhood, I see her holding my hand and helping me take my first steps on the treacherous road of unpredictable events. It was a journey of long association which finally came to an end when her death this year parted our ways. My first teacher had never been to school but she was a great teacher. It was she who made the notion of non- formal education so clear to me.

Though she never received formal schooling she was an avid reader and would read all kinds of books. She inculcated this habit among her children. She was particularly interested in poetry and while she would do her daily chores we could hear her humming. She would enjoy reading classical poetry and would remember a number of verses by heart. She developed, in a subtle manner, a taste for literature and its appreciation in her children.

She inherited love for teaching from her father who was a head teacher of a school. Being head teacher of a school was a kind of celebrity in those days. She would narrate some interesting anecdotes of her father who she would proudly say was a Math wizard. She herself would teach Quran to the girls living in the village. I always wondered how she could find

time from her daily chores for teaching for which she never took any fee. That was first living example of community service I saw in my childhood.

Environmental Education

The environmental issue is a matter of great urgency these days. One important concern is the waste we find around us which is polluting the environment. My mother was not an environmental education expert but she always taught us not to waste bread or water. If there was any leftover bread it would go to birds. Similarly she would not throw water on the ground but always make it a point to throw it in the flower pots. I saw it happening so many times that it will remain with me for the rest of my life.

She taught us to respect others. She taught us to appreciate others. She would tell us that appreciating others was not very easy but carried a magical impact. I saw her showering appreciation on people of all ages around her. She was a true pacifist who would always advise us that to live in peace you need to live with others in peace. Tolerance is the secret of human relationship, she would tell us, and if you want to have sustainable and smooth relationships you need to control your temper.

Teaching and Punishment

I never recall a single incident when my mother ever punished us. Though there were certain times when she was visibly upset, she would never transmit her frustration to us. Her patience and tolerance would always help her cope with difficult times. She always gave us freedom of action and expression. In my school days I used to keep long hair. One day my father, in his polite way, asked me to cut my hair. My mother said, "No, I like his long hair." My father smiled and started reading his book again. I still remember this anecdote. I can only guess why she said that. She was just echoing my desire. Her only concern was that I should not go out and play with those boys who use foul language. Decency of language remained a priority of her life. She would always call her children with a lot of respect. I learnt this simple principle from her that to get respect you have to give respect. She would remember a number of sayings, proverbs, and verses and would use them to support her point of view.

Mind as an Ocean

My mother would often recite a verse to suggest that the human mind is like an ocean. A number of ships may sink in the ocean but it will remain silent on the surface, similarly the human mind has the capability to conceal its sorrows and problems and remain unperturbed on the outside. The important lesson she gave us was to remain calm in the times of crisis because even the hard times would pass. She would never ask for anything even from her sons who were employed and were well placed. She never wished for any material benefits. Her only satisfaction was that people should talk of her children in good words.

A Sense of Achievement

Just a couple of months before her death I was sitting beside her bedside. Suddenly she asked me an abrupt question that where she would go after her death. A question each one of us confronts at some point in time in one's life. I looked at her and said, "The way you educated us and brought us up you will certainly go to heaven." A faint smile came to her lips and a glint of thankfulness shone in her eyes and she said, "Perhaps you are right".

I still remember that day, her question and my response and a glint of a sense of achievement in her eyes. I then recall the day, when holding my hand, she helped me start my journey on the winding road of life. And now she was leaving me, taking away the scaffolding, with the satisfaction that I can now travel on this road on my own. The things she taught me at home in an informal way prepared me to take on the challenges of life. Her teachings not only helped me to live my life in a better way but also showed me the ways to live with others in a peaceful manner, and how to respect the environment and how to value the blessings of God.

Going Beyond Certified Brand of Knowledge

My mother's life and her teachings brought some fundamental changes in my life and in my approach to the outer world. She reaffirmed the significance of alternative modes of education. Schooling is just one way of imparting knowledge, perhaps the official version of knowledge. But there are some non-formal sources of knowledge available to us in our life: our community, our people, and our parents. Here I just shared with you one source, i.e., my mother, who herself never went to a school but who could read, speak, analyze in the most convincing manner. In our educational planning alternative sources of knowledge should also be acknowledged. By just confining ourselves to a "certified brand of education" available in schools we are losing on some precious wisdom found in the non-schooling environment. Associating all the cognitive attributes to schools is not fair. Einstein rightly stated that, "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."



Dr. Shahid Siddiqui is Professor and Head of the Centre for Humanities & Social Sciences at the Lahore School of Economics. He has been involved with the educational system of Pakistan in various capacities - as a teacher, teacher educator, and researcher. His areas of interest include language issues, educational change, and critical pedagogy.



PAKISTAN'S EDUCATIONAL EMERGENCY

"There is no doubt that the future of our State will and must greatly depend on the type of education we give to our children and the way in which we bring them up as future citizens of Pakistan"

(Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah All Pakistan Education Conference November 30 December 2, 1947 Karachi)

Humanity has reached an era of modernization. Globalization has transformed the values and the communal pattern of daily life and rapid urbanization and unfair distribution of resources have become the central and chief threats to the modern sociological model. The framework of universal human rights is a "fundamental principle" and is linked with the freedom of an individual. To construct society, an individual participates in the process of development by exercising a justified degree of freedom.

"Education" is an essential factor in teaching an individual on how to serve the society and contributing to its overall social and economic progress. It is established consensus within the discourse of social sciences that education and health are integral ingredients of socioeconomic development, and it is almost impossible to construct the ideal society by compromising on education and health. Social capital is the term that incorporates financial, physical, natural, cultural and human capital. It mainly operates by a degree and/or magnitude of education and health, the society as whole represents the image of social capital. Therefore when children are out of school and working as child labourers, how can policymakers be satisfied with the current benchmark of sustainable social capital?

According to research, the degree of education determines the degree of political system, that facilitates to strengthen the democratization and installing of liberal values, which leads to social and economic harmony. To illustrate the significance of education, under Article 28 & 29 of CRC (The Convention on the Rights of the Child) education is the fundamental right of a child and the State is responsible to guarantee the same.

Since inception however, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has paid inadequate concern to addressing immediate educational needs as ascertained by

the human development index. This has caused a negative acceleration in the socioeconomic development of Pakistani Society with 42 million children out of school and with just 28 million enrolled in schooling. This means that out of ten, six children are out of school. According to the official definition of literacy, those individuals who can write their name and read few of the basic text are defined as literate. With this benchmark of education, Pakistan holds the 167th position in the global education index for 181 countries. It has 10 percent of the



Bilal Ahmed is working as Senior Economist in a prestigious research institute and served as consultant for several National and International projects.

world's out-of-school-children, and this number is ten times larger than the total population of many Scandinavian and European countries. According to ASER Survey 2011; Pakistan is ranked second globally in out-of-school children with every seventh household entirely disconnected to education. 20 to 27 percent of the girls can only read basic sentences of Urdu while the same is applicable to only 30 to 36 percent for boys. The results are similar in the case of English and Mathematics. Finally, out of ten students, just one holds the ability to learn and express their views properly. These statistics clearly indicate the state of educational emergency in Pakistan.

The money spending describes the priority set by the state towards education. Pakistan, from 1947 to present, spends just 2.5 percent of the GDP towards education representing the bias in money spending by Pakistan. That, out of one hundred rupees just two and a half rupees

are invested in education. Hence, it is imperative that we improve this deteriorating situation and shift our priorities toward education because literacy evolution could place Pakistani society back on track to sustainable socio-economic progress.

The question concerning quality of education is self-explanatory and has been illustrated by high dropout rates and unsatisfactory level of schooling for children enrolled. Public sector schooling educates the majority with seventy percent of the children enrolled, while the rest attend private sector schools. However, even though the majority of the schooling of enrolled children is managed by public sector schools, the role of the state is not professional and consistent in providing quality education.

The official categories of public sector school throughout the country show schools without teachers, without buildings, without furniture, without students, without utilities as well as schools that are simply shut down. Where the one-room one-teacher school is the prominent trend at best among functioning units, how can anyone argue for a higher quality of education?

The model of successful education is subject to the level of coordination by teachers, parents and students. The role of each stakeholder within the model is primary and predefined. In Pakistan, this model has serious gaps; parents are mostly absent from this transaction due to many reasons. Moreover, the teachers remain the ultimate controller of this model. How can a teacher operate the ideal implementation for a model in the absence of parents, while they themselves have scarce capacity to teach?

Teachers play a crucial role in operating the education system. They not only contribute to education, but there is also widespread agreement that mistakes made by teachers could produce collective and communal damage to the society; and could negatively affect the social conduct of an individual. Teachers are important

in the social as well as economic progression of the society and hence there needs to be zero tolerance towards biasness in the selection of teachers. Unfortunately, we as a nation are victimized by the politically skewed recruitment of teachers. Sadly, this kind of corruption has been experienced by every individual of our society. The existence of biased political connectivity in the education department has resulted in several irregularities and unfortunately the department has been governed by landlords and non-educational personnel. This professional illness is compounded by an absence of a defined objective, vision and future perspective. The current scenario is not only embarrassing but also, keeping the current model operative, makes it almost impossible to implement a policy towards growth.

Gender discrimination is also a prominent social-issue in Pakistani society and is easily identifiable in primary schooling enrollment. The boy's to girl's ratio in schools is 5:2; while it may be somewhat improving in the private sector, especially in the urban locality, the inequality still persists in public schooling in many localities. According to SDPI, religious dynamics are the main cause for the imbalanced results.

Under the umbrella of Article 25-A of the 18th amendment of the Constitution, the state is responsible to provide free education to every child from the ages of 5-16. Hence, those children who are out of school, numbering around 42 million, demonstrate violations and poor performance by the State. Furthermore, according to child labor laws, children are not to be used as part of the labor force during school going age. However, contrary to this law around 6 to 8 percent of the labour force is made up by child-labour. This further indicates the magnitude of violation of law and worsening conditions.

Educationists reached the conclusion that multiple umbrellas of schooling are the leading cause of distortion. The structure of education in Pakistan forms a triangle of 1) Urdu medium,



in majority of public sector schooling 2) English medium, in private sector schooling finally 3) the Religious Madrassas and their skewed Islamic education. This situation may need to address a few questions;

1. Does the society of Pakistan need such diversification in education? If this model is effective than why are 42 million children are out of school?
2. How could we adjust this triangle of education system, to produce more than just a "literate individual" who could only write and/or read their name?
3. Do we need a three dimensional curricula and pedagogy for setting up the educational foundation of Pakistan society, and is there any need to convert this into one form, if yes than, by which basic doctrine could we address this issue?
4. In the last six decades, the state of Pakistan has presented 23 policies for the betterment of education but the situation is getting worse day by day. How can we accommodate this triangular system, being currently employed, for policy procedure?
5. Does Pakistan retain the ability to balance and adjust the production of each category with special effects of poverty and social evils?
6. Do we need to draw a new benchmark for monitoring and evaluation of education system, if yes, then what would be the way to satisfy this aspiration?
7. Do we need to continue this

confusing and harmful situation or do we need to demand uniformity of the education system for all, which could lead to real socioeconomic development of society in accordance with the prerequisites of global challenges?

8. By which method can our state and society ensure the basic right that is 25-A, to every child living anywhere in society irrespective of race and ethnic factor. Is the state only responsible to perform this task, or society as second respondent, is equally responsible, if yes, than how could we encourage societal development?

The means for corrective action for the above stated questions is attached to the will of development. It is essential that we stimulate our collective will in construction of social development. Whereas, the route of development would start from educational development of society. We need to call for honesty and punctuality in our training; otherwise, issues of bad governance will continue to play the society.

Furthermore, there is a dire need for professional and honest leadership, which could lead the way to development. The minimum resources could produce the maximum output if the level of honesty and punctuality is high. The foremost cause for the distortion of our society and our educational system is absenteeism of will for development. We can only alleviate this situation by pooling forth our resources and working towards a common cause with honesty and integrity.

MOTIVATION

The Missing Factor in the Governance in Education

The surge of public and policymakers' interest regarding education within Pakistan post the 9/11 years has been phenomenal. After decades of neglect, the government has perked up to spruce the education sector. Evidently this move is donor-driven because many in the West believe that extremism in Pakistan has been spawned by the country's failure to provide modern and enlightened education to its youth and make life meaningful for them. In the absence of good schools in the public sector, facilities that would equip young men and women with skills to make them employable and economically productive, the youth has not been absorbed in the national economy. Many of them remain on the margins of society. The vacuum has been filled by madrassas which have churned out suicide bombers it is believed. A lot of this might be myth and all blame cannot be simply placed on the lack of education alone. Other factors, such as rampant poverty and social injustice, have done their part in fueling the ever mounting extremism and violence. However, no one can deny that the state of education has suffered because of criminal negligence of those who rule this country.

To address various issues related to education that are now the focus of attention and believed to be at the root of the malaise, the Sindh Education Foundation (SEF) and the Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development (AKU-IED) organized a dialogue in August 2012 to "encourage a critical discourse on governance of education in Sindh" to quote Dr. Muhammad Memon, Director, AKU-IED.

Here it was conceded that changes are needed not just at the classroom level where all the weaknesses and flaws filter down from the top to destroy education. It is also essential to address policy issues such as curricula, syllabi, resource material, pedagogy and the financial management

of the whole system. These trickle down to the grassroots and determine the outcome at the micro level. All of these are determined by what has now been described as governance.

Governance has emerged as the buzz word of the day. It is said to encompass all the aspects that determine the quality of education. In their article, "A Framework for Understanding Educational Governance: The Case of California", Dominic Brewer and Joanna Smith sum it in three words: what, who and how. According to them, what alludes to the 'function' of governance, who refers to the 'institutions' involved in governance and how suggests the various 'processes' that determine the system.

In my opinion, there is another very important question that should be asked but has yet not been raised.

"Why?"

Only when this question is asked with respect to education and the answers sought do we really begin to think about the motives of education in a country. It is important to know what we are trying to achieve and the goals that are defined must be powerful and meaningful enough to convince the policymakers, the administrators, the teachers and the students themselves that education, when administered efficiently and effectively, will achieve objectives that will make a difference in the lives of people who are studying and also change the environment of the country. Simply put, the stakeholders must be motivated. A person is motivated when he realizes what he will achieve by doing something, an act that will bring him some measure of benefit or gain and maximize his pleasure or minimize his pain. Thus a man who is really thirsty will climb a steep hill to reach a well, because he knows he will be able to get water there to quench his thirst by undertaking this arduous journey.

There are many endeavors, however, which do not bring immediate rewards. Sometimes they even prove to be futile quests because what you had been expecting to acquire is not there for one reason or another. Besides, many abstract processes and intangible goals are beyond the comprehension of many people who cannot think beyond their immediate range of vision.

Without motivation, it is difficult to get a person to work and struggle. Without a clear-cut and achievable goal it is impossible to create motivation in a person, especially at a time when the country is on a slide and people's morale is low.

It is surprising that policymakers and educationists speak about problems of all kinds but no one brings up the challenge we face on account of unmotivated teachers and administrators who fail to do their work with honesty and commitment. As a result the students are not motivated either.

What is motivation and what makes it so important? Wikipedia defines it as a psychological quality that "arouses an organism to act towards a desired goal and elicits controls and sustains certain goal-directed behavior". This goal may be internal, that is the pleasure a person derives from an activity he undertakes. It may be external, that is an outside reward might cause him to engage in a task. But one of the two motives must be present.

In education best results can be achieved if the students are internally motivated. But after decades and decades of rot in the education sector it might be difficult to create internal motivation that prompts a student to go the extra mile. This is possible only if the student feels that it is in his control to perform his best, possesses the basic skills and ability to undertake a task and believes the system in which he works is fair and recognizes his ability if he works honestly, rather than negating his efforts. Internal motivation also comes if the task a person is undertaking enjoys respect and esteem in society. Unfortunately learning and scholarship have lost the public reverence they once commanded.

Anyone who has observed Pakistan's education system can understand why our children are generally not internally motivated at all. The external factors for motivation are so strong that only an extraordinary person – one in a thousand -- would be driven by intrinsic factors to study. The external factors that can create motivated behavior are rewards such as money, a job, grades or threat of punishment.

Our system, as all over the world, has tried to focus majorly on external rewards to motivate our students, which in my opinion is not the most desirable of situations. When the ultimate goal for education becomes solely to earn money or get a job and not knowledge and the pleasure of learning, the danger is that in a downright corrupt and flawed system the players may try to achieve these goals by the wrong means. We see this happening around



Zubeida Mustafa is a freelance journalist from Pakistan. She became the first woman to work in the country's mainstream media, when she joined Dawn in 1975.

us. Resorting to unfair practices in examinations and the politicization of education has created a system where students do not learn. Instead, they seek their goals by hook or by crook and worse still, they actually manage to achieve them.

Those who control governance in education are unfortunately not motivated either. Everyone seems to be doing a job to earn his/her salary and nothing more. Be it the minister who is there by virtue of his position in the party and the dynamics of party politics, or the headmaster who may have earned his position by bribing someone in the education department. They lack motivation to impart education to the children who become victims of the apathy, corruption and ineptitude of those responsible for governance. Motivating children would not be such an impossible task if the policymakers and administrators could somehow be motivated themselves.

At the consultation, Javed Hasan Aly, a former Federal Secretary and author of the White Paper on education (2006), articulated the issue very well when he called for education for education's sake. It is important to shift the goals of education. Instead of focusing on producing a person who can earn money and become wealthy, education should be directed at producing a human being with humanism, integrity, character and dignity who also earns a living for himself and his family. I am not advocating the introduction of religion in the courses of study because that takes away the focus from ethical values to rituals. Besides, an education system based on one religion tends to be exclusive when it should be inclusive. It is only when the joy of learning is brought back in our education that the system can create motivated educationists to improve governance.

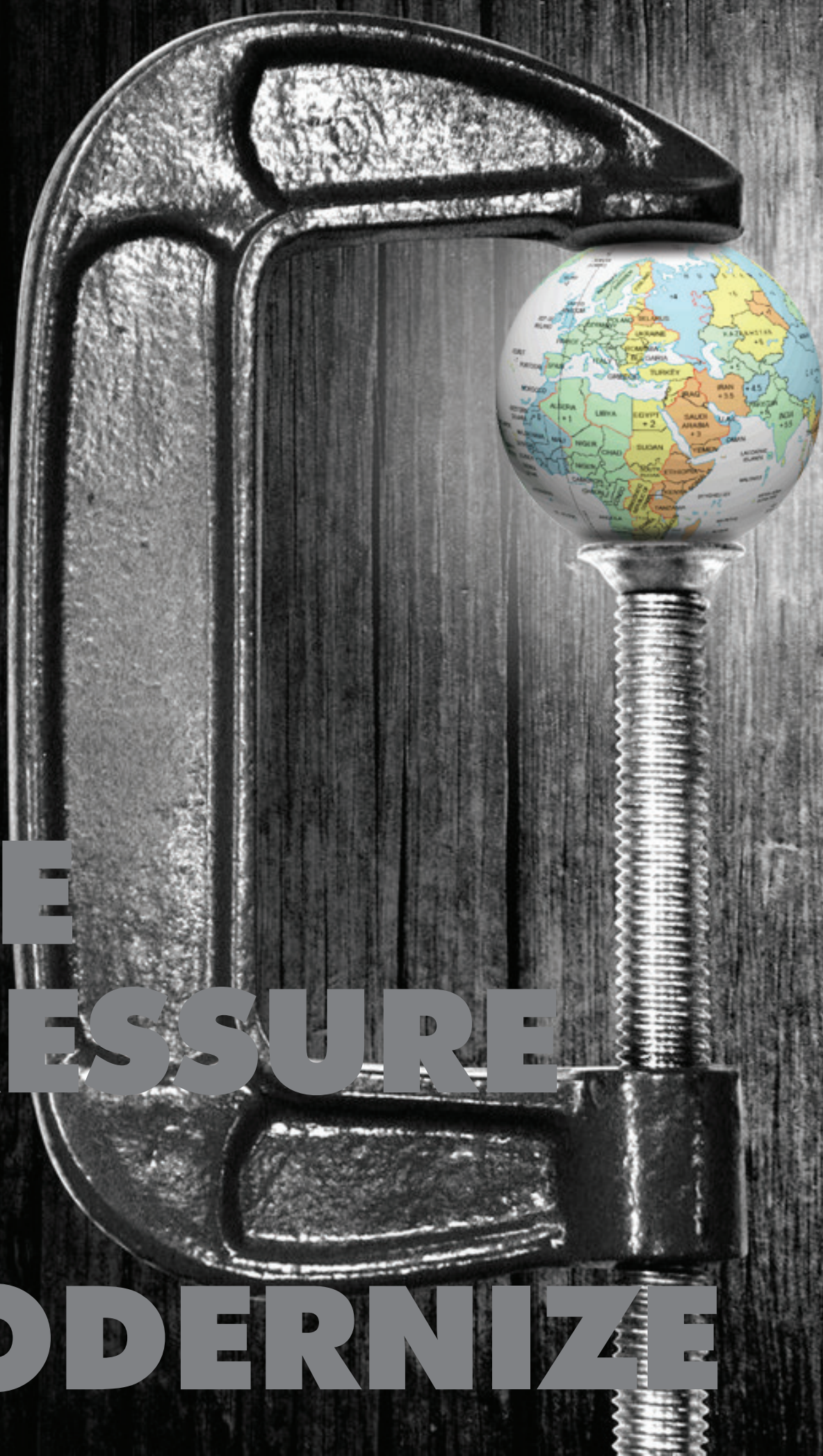
Once the goal is education for education's sake and not solely to make money, some reforms and corrections can be expected. The beginning will have to be made by handpicking honest teachers to do the job purely on a merit basis. With inspiring people heading schools and teaching in the classrooms, it will take no time to motivate the students who are in dire need of role models to aspire to.

www.zubeidamustafa.com

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THE PRESSURE TO MODERNIZE

Why do traditional societies break down upon their first sustained contact with the modern world? The easy answer is that Western culture is intrinsically preferable, that blue jeans are simply better than homespun robes, the nuclear family better than the extended family.

My own view is very different. I believe that the most important reason for the breakdown of traditional cultures is the psychological pressure to modernize. I have come to this conclusion through almost two decades of close contact with the people of Ladakh, or 'Little Tibet'.

Much of the critique of conventional development has focused on the political and economic forces that foist modernization on unprepared cultures, while the psychological side is largely neglected. And yet no one can deny the profound impact of glamorized Western images on the minds of young people who reject their own culture in favor of the 'American Dream'. Rambo and Barbie Dolls are making their way to the most remote corners of the world, with disastrous results.

This article discusses some of the less obvious and insidious ways in which modernization is carried to traditional cultures. I focus on the impact of the media, advertising and tourism, as well as the effects of Western-style education and economic models. Although most of my examples are drawn from Ladakh, virtually identical pressures are affecting people throughout the developing world.

The Modern World Comes to Ladakh

Ladakh is a high-altitude desert on the Tibetan Plateau in northernmost India. To all outward appearances, it is a wild and inhospitable place. In summer the land is parched and dry; in winter it is frozen solid by a fierce unrelenting cold. Harsh and barren, Ladakh's landforms have often been described as a 'moonscape'.

Almost nothing grows wild, not the smallest shrub, hardly a blade of grass. Even time seems to stand still, suspended on the thin air. Yet here, in one of the highest, driest and coldest inhabited places on earth, the Ladakhis have for a thousand years not only survived, but prospered. Out of barren desert they have carved verdant oases—terraced fields of barley, wheat, apples, apricots and vegetables, irrigated with glacial melt water brought many miles through stone-lined channels. Using little more than stone-age technologies and the scant resources at hand, the Ladakhis have established a remarkably rich culture, one which met not only their material wants, but their psychological and spiritual needs as well.

Until 1962, Ladakh remained almost totally isolated from the forces of modernization. In that year, however, in response to the conflict in Tibet, a road was built by the Indian Army to link the region with the rest of the country. With it came not only new consumer items and a government bureaucracy, but a first misleading impression of the world outside. Then, in 1975, the region was opened up to foreign tourists, and the process of 'development' began in earnest.



Helena Norberg-Hodge is a leading analyst of the impact of the global economy on cultures around the world. Ms. Norberg-Hodge is founder and director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture (ISEC) which runs on four continents aimed at strengthening ecological diversity and community, with a particular emphasis on local food and farming.

Speaking the language fluently from my first year in Ladakh, I have been able to observe almost as an insider the effect of these changes on the Ladakhis' perception of themselves. Within the space of a little more than a decade, feelings of pride gave way to what can best be described as a 'cultural inferiority complex'. In the modern sector today, most young Ladakhis, the teenage boys in particular, are ashamed of their cultural roots and desperate to appear modern.

Tourism

When tourism first began in Ladakh, it was as though people from another planet suddenly descended on the region. Looking at the modern world from something of a Ladakhi perspective, I became aware how much more successful our culture looks from the outside than we experience it on the inside.

Each day many tourists would spend as much as a hundred dollars, an amount roughly equivalent to someone spending fifty thousand dollars a day in America. In the traditional subsistence economy, money played a minor role, and was used primarily for luxuries, jewelry, silver, and gold. Basic needs, food, clothing and shelter, were provided for without money. The labor one needed was free of charge, part of an intricate web of human relationships.

Ladakhis did not realize that money played a completely different role for the foreigners, that back home they needed it to survive, that food, clothing and shelter all cost money, a lot of money. Compared to these strangers, they suddenly felt poor.

This new attitude contrasted dramatically with the Ladakhis' earlier self-confidence. In 1975, I was shown around the remote village of Hemis Shukpachan by a young Ladakhi named Tsewang. It seemed to me that all the houses we saw were especially large and beautiful. I asked Tsewang to show me the houses where the poor people lived. Tsewang looked perplexed a moment, then responded, 'We don't have any poor people here.'

Eight years later I overheard Tsewang talking to some tourists. 'If you could only help us Ladakhis,' he was saying, 'we're so poor.'

Besides giving the illusion that all Westerners are multi-

millionaires, tourism and Western media images also help perpetuate another myth about modern life, that we never work. It looks as though our technologies do the work for us. In industrial society today, we actually spend more hours working than people in rural, agrarian economies. But that is not how it looks to the Ladakhis. For them, work is physical work: ploughing, walking, carrying things. A person sitting behind the wheel of a car or pushing buttons on a typewriter doesn't appear to be working.

One day I spent ten hours writing letters. I was exhausted, stressed, and had a headache. That evening, when I

surprising: looking as they do from the outside, all they can see is the material side of the modern world, the side in which Western culture excels. They cannot so readily see the social or psychological dimensions, the stress, the loneliness, the fear of growing old. Nor can they see environmental decay, inflation, or unemployment. On the other hand, they know their own culture inside out, including all its limitations and imperfections.

In Ladakh and elsewhere in the South, the sudden influx of Western influences has caused some people, particularly the young men, to develop feelings of inferiority. They

The books propagate information that is meant to be appropriate for the entire planet. But since only a kind of knowledge that is far removed from specific ecosystems and cultures can be universally applicable, what children learn is essentially synthetic, divorced from the living context

complained about being tired because of having worked so hard, the Ladakhi family I was staying with laughed; they thought I was joking. In their eyes I had not been working. I had been sitting in front of a table, nice and clean, no sweat on my brow, pushing a pen across a piece of paper. This was not work.

Media Images

Development has brought not only tourism, but also Western and Indian films and, more recently, television. Together they provide overwhelming images of luxury and power. There are countless tools and magical gadgets. And there are machines—machines to take pictures, machines to tell the time, machines to make fire, to travel from one place to another, to talk with someone far away. Machines can do everything for you; it's no wonder the tourists look so clean and have such soft, white hands.

Media images focus on the rich, the beautiful, and the brave, whose lives are endless action and glamour. For young Ladakhis, the picture is irresistible. It is an overwhelmingly exciting version of an urban 'American Dream', with an emphasis on speed, youthfulness, super-cleanliness, beauty, fashion and competitiveness. 'Progress' is also stressed: humans dominate nature, while technological change is embraced at all costs.

In contrast to these utopian images from another culture, village life seems primitive, silly and inefficient. The one-dimensional view of modern life becomes a slap in the face. Young Ladakhis, who are asked by their parents to choose a way of life that involves working in the fields and getting their hands dirty for very little or no money, feel ashamed of their own culture. Traditional Ladakh seems absurd compared with the world of the tourists and film heroes.

This same pattern is being repeated in rural areas all over the South, where millions of young people believe modern Western culture to be far superior to their own. This is not

reject their own culture wholesale, and at the same time eagerly embrace the new one. They rush after the symbols of modernity: sunglasses, Walkmans and blue jeans, not because they find those jeans more attractive or comfortable, but because they are symbols of modern life.

Modern symbols have also contributed to an increase in aggression in Ladakh. Young boys now see violence glamourised on the screen. From Western-style films, they can easily get the impression that if they want to be modern, they should smoke one cigarette after another, get a fast car, and race through the countryside shooting people left and right!

It has been painful for me to see the changes in young Ladakhi friends. Of course they don't all turn violent, but they do become angry and less secure. I have seen a gentle culture change, a culture in which men, even young men, were not in the slightest bit ashamed to cuddle a baby or to be loving and soft with their grandmothers.

Western-Style Education

No one can deny the value of real education, the widening and enrichment of knowledge. But today in the Third World, education has become something quite different. It isolates children from their culture and from nature, training them instead to become narrow specialists in a Westernized urban environment. This process has been particularly striking in Ladakh, where modern schooling acts almost as a blindfold, preventing children from seeing the very context in which they live. They leave school unable to use their own resources, unable to function in their own world.

With the exception of religious training in the monasteries, Ladakh's traditional culture had no separate process called 'education'. Instead, education was the product of a person's intimate relationship with their community and their ecosystem. Children learned from grandparents, family and friends, and from the natural world.



Helping with the sowing, for instance, they would learn that on one side of the village it was a little warmer, on the other side a little colder. From their own experience children would come to distinguish between different strains of barley and the specific growing conditions each strain preferred. They learned to recognize even the tiniest wild plant and how to use it, and how to pick out a particular animal on a faraway mountain slope. They learned about connection, process, and change, about the intricate web of fluctuating relationships in the natural world around them.

For generation after generation, Ladakhis grew up learning how to provide themselves with clothing and shelter; how to make shoes out of yak skin and robes from the wool of sheep; how to build houses out of mud and stone. Education was location-specific and nurtured an intimate relationship with the living world. It gave children an intuitive awareness that allowed them, as they grew older, to use resources in an effective and sustainable way.

None of that knowledge is provided in the modern school. Children are trained to become specialists in a technological, rather than an ecological, society. School is a place to forget traditional skills, and worse, to look down on them.

Western education first came to Ladakhi villages in the 1970s. Today there are about two hundred schools. The basic curriculum is a poor imitation of that taught in other parts of India, which itself is an imitation of British education. There is almost nothing Ladakhi about it.

Once, while visiting a classroom in the capital, Leh, I saw a drawing in a textbook of a child's bedroom that could have been in London or New York. It showed a pile of neatly folded handkerchiefs on a four-poster bed and gave instructions as to which drawer of the vanity unit to keep them in. Many other schoolbooks were equally absurd and inappropriate. For homework in one class, pupils were supposed to figure out the angle of incidence that the Leaning Tower of Pisa makes with the ground. Another time they were struggling with an English translation of The Iliad.

Most of the skills Ladakhi children learn in school will never

be of real use to them. In essence, they receive an inferior version of an education appropriate for a New Yorker. They learn from books written by people who have never set foot in Ladakh, who know nothing about growing barley at 12,000 feet or about making houses out of sun-dried bricks.

This situation is not unique to Ladakh. In every corner of the world today, the process called 'education' is based on the same assumptions and the same Eurocentric model. The focus is on faraway facts and figures, on 'universal' knowledge. The books propagate information that is meant to be appropriate for the entire planet. But since only a kind of knowledge that is far removed from specific ecosystems and cultures can be universally applicable, what children learn is essentially synthetic, divorced from the living context. If they go on to higher education, they may learn about building houses, but these houses will be of concrete and steel, the universal box. So too, if they study agriculture, they will learn about industrial farming: chemical fertilizers and pesticides, large machinery and hybrid seeds. The Western educational system is making us all poorer by teaching people around the world to use the same industrial resources, ignoring those of their own environment. In this way education is creating artificial scarcity and inducing competition.

In Ladakh and elsewhere, modern education not only ignores local resources, but worse still, robs children of their self-esteem. Everything in school promotes the Western model and, as a direct consequence, makes children think of themselves and their traditions as inferior.

A few years ago, Ladakhi schoolchildren were asked to imagine their region in the year 2000. A little girl wrote, 'Before 1974, Ladakh was not known to the world. People were uncivilized. There was a smile on every face. They don't need money. Whatever they had was enough for them.' In another essay a child wrote, 'They sing their own songs like they feel disgrace, but they sing English and Hindi songs with great interest. But in these days we find that maximum people and persons didn't wear our own dress, like feeling disgrace.'

Education pulls people away from agriculture into the city,

where they become dependent on the money economy. Traditionally there was no such thing as unemployment. But in the modern sector there is now intense competition for a very limited number of paying jobs, principally in the government. As a result, unemployment is already a serious problem.



Modern education has brought some obvious benefits, like improvement in the literacy rate. It has also enabled the Ladakhis to be more informed about the forces at play in the world outside. In so doing, however, it has divided Ladakhis from each other and the land and put them on the lowest rung of the global economic ladder.

Local Economy vs. Global Economy

In the past individual Ladakhis had real power, since political and economic units were small and each person was able to deal directly with the other members of the community. Today, 'development' is hooking people into ever-larger units. In political terms, each Ladakhi has become one of 800 million, and, as part of the global economy, one of several billion.

In the traditional economy, everyone knew they had to depend directly on family, friends and neighbors. But in the new economic system, one's political and economic interactions take a detour via an anonymous bureaucracy. The fabric of local interdependence is disintegrating as the distance between people increases.

So too are traditional levels of tolerance and cooperation. This is particularly true in the villages near Leh, where disputes and acrimony within close-knit communities and even families have dramatically increased in the last few years. I have even seen heated arguments over the allocation of irrigation water, a procedure that had previously been managed smoothly within a cooperative framework.

As mutual aid is replaced by a dependence on faraway forces, people begin to feel powerless to make decisions over their own lives. At all levels, passivity, even apathy, is setting in; people are abdicating personal responsibility. In the traditional village, for example, repairing irrigation canals was a task shared by the whole community. As soon

as a channel developed a leak, groups of people would start working away with shovels patching it up. Now people see this as the government's responsibility, and will let a channel go on leaking until the job is done for them. The more the government does for the villagers, the less they feel inclined to help themselves.

In the process, Ladakhis are starting to change their perception of the past. In the early days, people would tell me there had never been hunger in Ladakh. I kept hearing the expression *tungbos zabos*: 'enough to drink, enough to eat'. Now, particularly in the modern sector, people can be heard saying, 'Development is essential; in the past we couldn't manage, we didn't have enough.'

The cultural centralization that occurs through the media is also contributing to this passivity, as well as to a growing insecurity. Traditionally, village life included lots of dancing, singing and theatre. People of all ages joined in. In a group sitting around the fire, even toddlers would dance, with the help of older siblings or friends. Everyone knew how to sing, to act, to play music. Now that the radio has come to Ladakh, people do not need to sing their own songs or tell their own stories. Instead, they can sit and listen to the best singer, the best storyteller. But the result is that people become inhibited and self-conscious. They are no longer comparing themselves to neighbors and friends, who are real people, some better at singing but perhaps not so good at dancing, and one is never as good as the stars on the radio. Community ties are also broken when people sit passively listening to the very best rather than making music or dancing together.

Artificial Needs

Before the changes brought by tourism and modernization, the Ladakhis were self-sufficient, psychologically as well as materially. There was no desire for the sort of development that later came to be seen as a 'need'. Time and again, when I asked people about the changes that were coming they showed no great interest in being modernized; sometimes they were even suspicious. In remote areas, when a road was about to be built, people at best felt ambivalent about the prospect. The same was true of electricity. I remember distinctly how, in 1975, people in Stagmo village laughed about the fuss that was being made to bring electric lights to neighboring villages. They thought it was a joke that so much effort and money was spent on what they took to be a ludicrous gain: 'Is it worth all that bother just to have that thing dangling from your ceiling?'

Two years ago, when I arrived in the same village to meet the council, the first thing they said to me was, 'Why do you bother to come to our backward village where we live in the dark?' They said it jokingly, but it was obvious they were ashamed of the fact they did not have electricity.

Before people's sense of self-respect and self-worth had been shaken, they did not need electricity to prove they were civilized. But within a short period the forces of development so undermined people's self-esteem that not only electricity,

Surprisingly, perhaps, modernization in Ladakh is also leading to a loss of individuality. As people become self-conscious and insecure, they feel pressure to conform, to live up to the idealized images—to the American Dream

but Punjabi rice and plastic have become needs. I have seen people proudly wear wristwatches they cannot read and for which they have no use. And as the desire to appear modern grows, people are rejecting their own culture. Even the traditional foods are no longer a source of pride. Now when I'm a guest in a village, people apologize if they serve ngamphe instead of instant noodles.

Surprisingly, perhaps, modernization in Ladakh is also leading to a loss of individuality. As people become self-conscious and insecure, they feel pressure to conform, to live up to the idealized images, to the American Dream. By contrast, in the traditional village, where everyone wears the same clothes and looks the same to the casual observer, there seems to be more freedom to relax and be who you really are. As part of a close-knit community, people feel secure enough to be themselves.

As local economic and political ties are broken, the people around you become more and more anonymous. At the same time, life speeds up and mobility increases, making even familiar relations more superficial and brief. The connections between people are reduced largely to externals. A person comes to be identified with what they have rather than what they are, and disappear behind their clothes and other belongings.

A People Divided

Perhaps the most tragic of all the changes I have observed in Ladakh is the vicious circle in which individual insecurity contributes to a weakening of family and community ties, which in turn further shakes individual self-esteem. Consumerism plays a central role in this whole process, since emotional insecurity contributes to a hunger for material status symbols. The need for recognition and acceptance fuels the drive to acquire possessions, possessions that will make you somebody. Ultimately, this is a far more important motivating force than a fascination for the things themselves.

It is heartbreaking to see people buying things to be admired, respected, and ultimately loved, when in fact the effect is almost inevitably the opposite. The individual with the new shiny car is set apart, and this furthers the need to be accepted. A cycle is set in motion in which people become more and more divided from themselves and from one another.

I've seen people divided from one another in many ways. A gap is developing between young and old, male and female, rich and poor, Buddhist and Muslim. The newly created division between modern, educated expert and illiterate, 'backward' farmer is perhaps the biggest of all.

Modernized inhabitants of Leh have more in common with someone from Delhi or Calcutta than with their own relatives who have remained on the land, and they tend to look down on anyone less modern. Some children living in the modern sector are now so distanced from their parents and grandparents that they don't even speak the same language. Educated in Urdu and English, they are losing mastery of their native tongue.

Around the world, another consequence of development is that the men leave their families in the rural sector to earn money in the modern economy. The men become part of the technologically based life outside the home and are seen as the only productive members of society. In Ladakh, the roles of male and female are becoming increasingly polarized as their work becomes more differentiated.

Women become invisible shadows. They do not earn money for their work, so they are no longer seen as 'productive'. Their work is not included as part of the Gross National Product. In government statistics, the 10% or so of Ladakhis who work in the modern sector are listed according to their occupations; the other 90%, housewives and traditional farmers, are lumped together as 'non-workers'. Farmers and women are coming to be viewed as inferior, and they themselves are developing feelings of insecurity and inadequacy.

Over the years I have seen the strong, outgoing women of Ladakh being replaced by a new generation, women who are unsure of themselves and extremely concerned with their appearance. Traditionally, the way a woman looked was important, but her capabilities, including tolerance and social skills, were much more appreciated.

Despite their new dominant role, men also clearly suffer as a result of the breakdown of family and community ties. Among other things, they are deprived of contact with children. When they are young, the new macho image prevents them from showing any affection, while in later life as fathers, their work keeps them away from home.

Breaking the Bonds Between Young and Old

In the traditional culture children benefited not only from continuous contact with both mother and father, but also from a way of life in which different age groups constantly interacted. It was quite natural for older children to feel a sense of responsibility for the younger ones. A younger child in turn looked up with respect and admiration, seeking to imitate the older ones. Growing up was a natural, non-competitive learning process.

Now children are split into different age groups at school. This sort of leveling has a very destructive effect. By artificially creating social units in which everyone is the same age, the ability of children to help and to learn from each other is greatly reduced. Instead, conditions for competition are automatically created, because each child is put under pressure to be just as good as the next one. In a group of ten children of quite different ages, there will naturally be much more cooperation than in a group of ten twelve-year-olds. The division into different age groups is not limited to school. Now there is a tendency to spend time exclusively with one's peers. As a result, a mutual intolerance between young and old has emerged. Young children nowadays have less and less contact with their grandparents, who often remain behind in the village. Living with many traditional families over the years, I have witnessed the depth of the bond between children and their grandparents. It is clearly a natural relationship, with a very different dimension from that between parent and child. To sever this connection is a profound tragedy.

Similar pressures contribute to the breakdown of the traditional family. The Western model of the nuclear family is now seen as the norm, and Ladakhis are beginning to feel ashamed about their traditional practice of polyandry, one of the cultural controls on population growth. As young people reject the old family structure in favor of monogamy, the population is rising significantly. At the same time, monastic life is losing its status, and the number of celibate monks and nuns is decreasing. This too contributes to population increase.

Ethnic Conflict

Interestingly, a number of Ladakhis have linked the rise in birth rates to the advent of modern democracy. 'Power is a question of votes' is a current slogan, meaning that in the modern sector, the larger your group, the greater your access to power. Competition for jobs and political representation within the new centralized structures is increasingly dividing Ladakhis. Ethnic and religious differences have taken on a political dimension, causing bitterness and envy on a scale hitherto unknown.

This new rivalry is one of the most painful divisions that I have seen in Ladakh. Ironically, it has grown in proportion to the decline of traditional religious devotion. When I first arrived, I was struck by the mutual respect and cooperation between Buddhists and Muslims. But within the last few years, growing competition has actually culminated in violence. Earlier there had been individual cases of friction, but the first time I noticed any signs of group tension was in 1986, when I heard Ladakhi friends starting to define people according to whether they were Buddhist or Muslim. In the following years, there were signs here and there that all was not well, but no one was prepared for what happened in the summer of 1989, when fighting suddenly broke out between the two groups. There were major disturbances in Leh bazaar, four people were shot dead by police, and much of Ladakh was placed under curfew.

Since then, open confrontation has died down, but mistrust and prejudice on both sides continue to mar relations. For a people unused to violence and discord, this has been a traumatic experience. One Muslim woman could have been speaking for all Ladakhis when she tearfully told me, 'These events have torn my family apart. Some of them are Buddhists, some are Muslims, and now they are not even speaking to each other.'

The immediate cause of the disturbances was the growing perception among the Buddhists that the Muslim-dominated government was discriminating against them in favor of the local Muslim population. The Muslims for their part were becoming anxious that as a minority group they had to defend their interests in the face of political assertiveness by the Buddhist majority.

However, the underlying reasons for the violence are much more far-reaching. What is happening in Ladakh is not an isolated phenomenon. The tensions between the Muslims of Kashmir and the Hindu-dominated central government in Delhi, the Hindus and the Buddhist government in Bhutan, and the Buddhists and the Hindu government in Nepal, along with countless similar disturbances around the world, are, I believe, all connected to the same underlying cause. The present development model is intensely centralizing, pulling diverse peoples from rural areas into large urban centers and placing power and decision-making in the hands of a few. In these centers, job opportunities are scarce, community ties are broken, and competition increases dramatically. Young men in particular, who have been educated for jobs in the modern sector, find themselves engaged in a competitive struggle for survival. In this situation, any religious or ethnic differences quite naturally become exaggerated and distorted. In addition, the group in power inevitably has a tendency to favor its own kind, while the rest often suffer discrimination.

Most people believe that ethnic conflict is an inevitable consequence of differing cultural and religious traditions. In the South, there is an awareness that modernization is exacerbating tensions; but people generally conclude that this is a temporary phase on the road to 'progress', a phase that will only end once development has erased cultural differences and created a totally secular society. On the other hand, Westerners attribute overt religious and ethnic strife to the liberating influence of democracy. Conflict, they assume, always smoldered beneath the surface, and only the heavy lid of government repression kept it from bursting into flame.

It is easy to understand why people lay the blame at the feet of tradition rather than modernity. Certainly ethnic friction is a phenomenon which predates colonialism and modernization. But after nearly two decades of firsthand experience on the Indian subcontinent, I am convinced that 'development' not only exacerbates tensions but in many cases actually creates them. As I have pointed out, development causes artificial scarcity, which inevitably leads to greater competition. Just as importantly, it puts pressure

on people to conform to a standard Western ideal, blonde, blue-eyed, beautiful and rich, that is impossibly out of reach.

Striving for such an ideal means rejecting one's own culture and roots, in effect, denying one's own identity. The inevitable result is alienation, resentment and anger. I am convinced that much of the violence and fundamentalism in the world today is a product of this process. In the industrialized world we are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of glamorous media and advertising images on individual self-esteem, resulting in problems that range from eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia, to violence over high-priced and 'prestigious' sneakers and other articles of clothing. In the South, where the gulf between reality and the Western ideal is so much wider, the psychological impacts are that much more severe.

Comparing the Old with the New

There were many real problems in the traditional society and development does bring some real improvements. However, when one examines the fundamentally important relationships, to the land, to other people, and to oneself, development takes on a different light. Viewed from this perspective, the differences between the old and the new become stark and disturbing. It becomes clear that the traditional nature-based society, with all its flaws and limitations, was more sustainable, both socially and environmentally. It was the result of a dialogue between human beings and their surroundings, a continuing co-evolution that meant that, over two thousand years of trial and error, the culture kept changing. Ladakh's traditional Buddhist worldview emphasized change, but change within a framework of compassion and a profound understanding of the interconnectedness of all phenomena.

The old culture reflected fundamental human needs while respecting natural limits. And it worked. It worked for nature, and it worked for people. The various connecting relationships in the traditional system were mutually reinforcing, and encouraged harmony and stability. Most importantly of all, having seen my friends change so dramatically, I have no doubt that the bonds and responsibilities of the traditional society, far from being a burden, offered a profound sense of security, which seems to be a prerequisite for inner peace and contentedness. I am convinced that people were significantly happier before development than they are today. And what criteria for judging a society could be more important: in social terms, the well-being of the people; in environmental terms, sustainability.

By comparison, the new Ladakh scores very poorly when judged by these criteria. The modern culture is producing an array of environmental problems that, if unchecked, will lead to irreversible decline; socially, it is leading to the breakdown of community and the undermining of personal identity.

At my lectures in Europe and North America, people often ask the same question. Having seen pictures of the wide uninhibited smiles of the Ladakhis and the beauty of the traditional art, architecture and landscape contrasted with

the meanness and spiritual poverty of the modern sector, they say, 'How can the Ladakhis possibly want to give up their traditional way of life? They must want the change; there must have been some flaw in the traditional culture that makes them want to abandon it. It can't have been that good.'

It is easy to understand why people make such assumptions. Had I not spoken the language fluently in my first year in Ladakh, had I not been lucky enough to live closely with the Ladakhi people, I would have almost certainly thought the same way. But the Ladakhis I lived with were content; they were not dissatisfied with their lives. I remember how shocked they used to be when I told them that in my country, many people were so unhappy that they had to see a doctor. Their mouths would drop open, and they would stare in disbelief. It was beyond their experience. A sense of deep-rooted contentedness was something they took for granted.

If the Ladakhis had been eager to adopt another culture, they could easily have done so. Leh was for centuries a centre of trans-Asian trade. The Ladakhis themselves traveled both as pilgrims and traders, and were exposed to a variety of foreign influences. In many instances they absorbed the materials and practices of other cultures, and used them to enhance their own. But it was never a question of adopting another culture wholesale. If someone from China came to Leh, the result was not that the young suddenly wanted to put on Chinese hats, eat only Chinese food, and speak the Chinese language.

As I have tried to show, the pressures that lead to the breakdown of a culture are many and varied. But the most important elements have to do with the psychological pressures that create a sense of cultural inferiority and the fact that people cannot have an overview of what is happening to them as they stand in the middle of the development process. Modernization is not perceived as a threat to the culture. The individual changes that come along usually look like unconditional improvements; there is no way of anticipating their negative long-term consequences, and people have almost no information about the impact development has had in other parts of the world. It is only in looking back that any destructive effects become obvious.

By now, most Ladakhis deem development necessary. And although the traditional society compares so favorably with the new, it was of course not perfect; there was certainly room for improvement.

But does development have to mean destruction? I do not believe so. I am convinced that the Ladakhis and other traditional peoples could raise their standard of living without sacrificing the sort of social and ecological balance that they have enjoyed for centuries. To do so, however, they would need to maintain their self-respect and self-reliance. They would need to build on their own ancient foundations rather than tearing them down, as is the way of conventional development.

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INVESTMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

Why Pakistan Needs to Increase its Investment in Higher Education?

Accessible, high quality education that is relevant with regards to the needs of the market is crucial for any developing country's efforts to achieve sustainable development and prosperity. It ensures that the country becomes competitive in the global marketplace and leads to increased productivity, and a better quality of life. With more than 68 million children under the age of 15 to educate, Pakistan must rise to the challenge and create a sustainable path to a better future for the country and its youth.

Education, especially higher education, offers a great opportunity to Pakistan's youth to transform their lives into success stories. Thus, universities, colleges and institutions of higher education must expand their resources to provide affordable education and relevant training opportunities. Depending solely on governmental funding and an annual budget is not enough to meet the increasing demands of access, quality and expansion of higher education institutions. It is necessary that sustainable financial mechanisms that exist in perpetuity and increase each year (such as endowment funds for student scholarships) and training centres that offer support to students wishing to establish their own start-up businesses are placed at each college/university. One of the best areas of investment for Pakistan is higher education. The industrialised countries of Europe and Japan are currently undergoing a negative population growth due to low birth rates. During the next several years, Japan will not have a large enough work force to run its industries. The European Union is already planning on introducing a "Blue Card" immigration visa programme to entice young skilled labor from developing countries to operate its industries. Pakistan, with its population of 180 million and rapidly growing, can take advantage of this historical opportunity to

export its skilled human capital to the industrialized countries which will not only be of considerable private good to the individuals taking the available positions, but also will result in the flow of capital and an economic boom in Pakistan.

Only 8% of the age group 17-23 years old receive college or university education in Pakistan, compared to over 50% in the developed countries. The number of students receiving a Bachelor degree, and those enrolled in PhD programs almost doubled from 2001 to 2004, indicating that there is an increasing interest in attaining higher education. Although the enrollment rates in college and universities are increasing each year, there is a great gap to be filled to achieve the 20% threshold that has been recognized by studies as the point where measurable financial returns to the country from its graduates are visible.

Clearly, the good quality of an institution delivering education attracts more people, even if it is translated to a significant increase in the cost of attendance. Not everyone can afford quality education with a high price tag; the majority of students attending university and colleges are enrolled in public institutions, especially those involved in research and seeking postgraduate degrees. Public education remains the main feeder of graduates and postgraduates in Pakistan. It is therefore crucial to improve the quality of services offered in public institutions in Pakistan to provide a fairly accessible higher education that will increase the opportunity for upward social and economic mobility of the poorest citizens. This alone is a direct benefit to society at large. While private institutions also do their share of providing education to the public, not nearly enough has been done in Pakistan to tackle the issues of providing financial opportunities for those who cannot afford to attend higher education. Public- private partnerships are very infrequent and should be emphasized to better serve the increasing demand for education.



Ms. Rudina Xhaferri is the Executive Director of the PEP Foundation and manages the New York office. She received her Master of Arts degree in International Relations from Eastern Illinois University. Her previous professional experience included working for the International Rescue Committee as Education & Social Services Manager, and as interpreter and social worker for Relief International in Kosovo. She served as a Legislative Assistant for the Washington D.C. Office of the United States Senator (Shadow), Honorable Paul Strauss, Democrat. She participated in political campaign management and official representation at various events.



Dr. Iqbal is Professor and Chairman, Department of Neurochemistry at the New York State Institute for Basic Research in Developmental Disabilities, Staten Island, New York. He is world renowned for his research on the neurobiology of Alzheimer disease, has Honorary Professorship from two notable universities in China, and is the winner of two prestigious research awards: the Potamkin Prize from the American Academy of Neurology and the Zenith Award from the Alzheimer's Association, USA.

The Power of Higher Education in Alleviation of Poverty and the Betterment of the Society.

The increased value of human capital makes educational attainment and success not only vital to the financial well-being of individuals but also for that of the nation, especially for developing countries. It is part of higher education's role in Pakistan to produce professionals, scholars, leaders and highly educated people who can lead the country out of poverty into an economically sustainable nation. The added economic value that accrues from those who earn four-year university degrees and graduate degrees is well documented both in developed and developing countries. In a Unesco study, the attainment of tertiary, compared to the upper secondary education, brings earnings that are as much as 82 per cent higher in Indonesia and 300 per cent in Paraguay (UIS/OECD, Financing Education: Investments and Returns, 2003). There are differences in each country, but it is indisputable that attainment of a university degree ensures financial returns that are several times higher than those with just a secondary or elementary school education. The numbers are even stronger when calculated in terms of lifetime earnings and benefits.

Financial growth is not the only benefit of education. The more education people receive, the more socially engaged and well-rounded they become, resulting in participatory societies. Greater involvement in society's institutions, whether local or national, leads to democratic decisions and societies. In addition to the economic return to individuals and to society as a whole, higher education improves quality of life in a variety of other ways, including health status, and social variables such as participation in charitable and voluntary work, and better education and upbringing of children.

How Higher Education Leads to Economic Gains.

Higher education affects the well being of the individual and his/her immediate family, the local community and that of the nation. The higher the level of education attained by a person, the greater the chances for employment there is, and the less unemployment in times of economic crisis. Equipped with better qualifications and specialized skills, educated workers earn higher wages than the average worker. They also help to raise the wages of all workers in an area by contributing to the local community and government, increasing profitability and business. On the other hand, the establishment of a university or college increases the chances of the local community to attend it. The institution also makes a financial contribution by direct expenditures, creating new jobs, hiring new employees, and other less direct benefits to the community.

How Higher Education is Narrowing the Gender Gap.

Education is not only a source of economic power in developing countries and industrialized societies but also narrows the gender gap at the individual level. In the United States, the number of women as compared to men receiving university education has been steadily increasing for the past many years and the number of households with women as the principal breadwinner has increased from 11% in 1960 to 40% in 2013 according to the Pew Research Center data released this month. As many as 5.1 million wives now earn more than their husbands in the United States. In addition, another 8.6 million single mothers are the sole breadwinners of their households.



Putting More Students through University Education by Increasing Need Based Financial Assistance.

One of the most effective ways for universities to give more financial aid to talented students who cannot otherwise attend higher education is to raise funds periodically to increase the capital in their student endowment fund. For a populous country, such as Pakistan, the power of numbers is impressive and can make a real difference in fundraising for education. The strength of such campaigns comes from the simple mathematical fact that even a small contribution multiplied by thousands of people can mount up to millions of rupees over years of investing them in student endowment funds. Universities need to plan effective, transparent and creative fundraising campaigns where their own students can become a major vehicle during a dedicated educational annual fundraising week. Most importantly, higher education institutions must increase public awareness of how important education is and make their financial needs clear to appeal to the community for their contributions.

Financial independence and Stability through Establishment of Endowment Funds.

Additional funding for educational institutions is needed

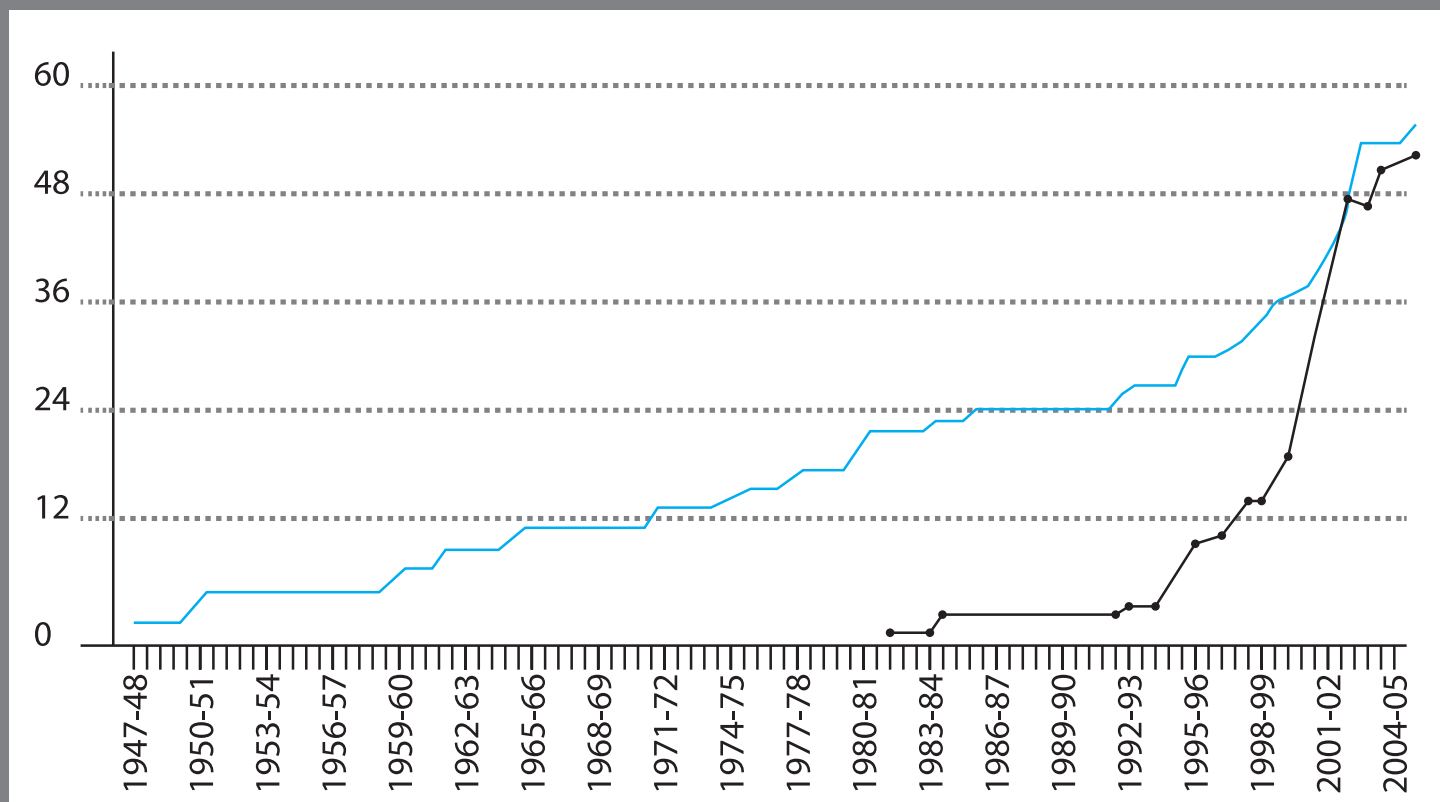
at all times to expand their resources and to offer greater financial assistance to the many talented students that cannot afford to continue their education due to financial constraints. Most donations and scholarship funds are time-limited in duration. In general, they disburse the capital funds

The more education people receive, the more socially engaged and well-rounded they become, resulting in participatory societies

dedicated for financing a scholarship within the time frame directed, with little in the way of long-term perspectives.

Endowment funds are radically different. They are created for "perpetuity", in the sense that only a specific portion, namely, the accrued interest, may be used for the pursuit of the endowment's goals. In short, an endowment seeks a substantial sum at the outset that forms the equity, and scholarships are paid out from investment gains made from this sum.

These types of perpetual funds provide institutions with financial security and the opportunity to better invest and expand their resources, both human and capital. Donors include alumni, local investors and businessmen,



Growth of universities/DAIs (Degree Awarding Institutes) in public and private sector (1947-48 to 2004-05).

Source, HEC Pakistan

philanthropists, people interested in specific programmes offered at the college or university level, or just funds raised periodically for the purpose of supporting higher education. However, it is crucial that the established endowment funds have in place legal rules that allow their administrators to use them specifically for financial aid that directly benefit the students. These funds may not be used for such expenses as salaries or increase in salaries, fringe benefits or pension benefits for faculty, staff or for their residences.

Pakistani Universities Must Initiate Student Entrepreneurship Programs.

Education must respond to the current challenges and demands of a society. It must support student entrepreneurship and innovation. Resources, both in the shape of knowledge and seed money, should be available for deserving students to support their ideas in the form of start-up businesses.

Students need to explore their talents, innovate and experiment with new ideas using their own start-ups as a bridge to success even before they finish their academic training. While pursuing higher education, students are ideally positioned to utilize the time to come up with breakthrough ideas that can become very beneficial to them, to educational institutions and to businesses. A student start-up business centre may become a focal point

for each higher education institution, allowing the centre to be tailored to the institution's strengths and needs, but also open to unorthodox ideas and collaborations.

Such centres can help serve as bridges to connect the innovative ideas of students' start-up initiatives with businesses or "angels" (patrons) that can support them financially. The main goal of the centre is to encourage, promote and support students' start-ups and facilitate their transition to successful businesses. Ideally, the centre becomes a hub of knowledge that introduces and ultimately links together interests and ideas that would otherwise not happen.

While some students may have business initiatives or experience, many are not exposed to the world of business and lack the knowledge and/or financial means to materialize their ideas and make them marketable or profitable. The student start-up business centre may become the missing link between students' academic education and real life experience. Students can benefit immensely by doing research, bringing together new ideas and taking calculated risks to bring to life businesses that otherwise would not be possible.

The writers can be contacted at: info@pepfoundation.org

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CREATIVITY AND EDUCATION

Creativity has become one of those “buzz” words that everyone gives lip services to. Put the word “creativity” into the title of a book and it will be best seller. People ask: How can creativity be fostered? Is it possible to give exercises for creativity? A program? A system of education? Is creativity something that can be trained or taught?

You can certainly train people to carry out tasks in a better way, acquire new techniques and skills, and to accumulate new knowledge. But the whole essence of creativity lies in its freshness, its freedom, its newness. Creativity is often unexpected and exciting. It involves seeing things in new ways and breaking rules. Creativity may result in something radically different e.g. Picasso/ Stravinsky, or it may involve the unfolding of an old, established form with a total freshness- e.g. Bach and the fugue.

It could be argued that there can be no program, no system of training or education for creativity whatever boundary we draw around it, something else that is totally creative will emerge in a different place. Creativity is not a skill, it is not a sort of muscle of the brain, or a technology of the mind. Creativity makes use of knowledge and skill but that is not where its roots lie.

Creativity is perfectly natural. We should not ask how to be creative, rather we must question why we are not being creative! Creativity is the essence of life, of evolution, of consciousness, of nature and of matter. The universe itself is in a constant act of creation so, as its children, we should ask ourselves Why, in such a creative universe, do societies and some individuals at times appear to be stupid, dull, destructive and uncreative? Or are we deceived? Are people really dull or is their creativity simply being shown in other ways? Are we all, in fact, creative and is it just that there are certain blocks which seem to frustrate us in certain areas of our lives? Do we all have the potential for creativity no matter how old we are?

The Child

The whole essence of the infant is creative, learning to walk, leaning to talk, word games, songs, play. Imagine creating a world of your imagination and playing with it for hours on end. The act of physicists creating a theory is just like that, it is a play of ideas within the mind. Playing with mud, with food, with fabrics, with paints, this is totally natural to the child and something that Picasso could do all his life. Dressing up, playing jokes, play-fighting, it's all an immense energy of the mind. It is hard to stop creativity in a young child. Creativity is an energy that constantly bubbles out of a child, even if he or she is forced to sit at a school desk for hours on end. You can't make your child creative, it simply is creative. The most difficult thing in the world is to get out of the way and let this creativity happen.

Blocks

The thrill, the imagination, the play of childhood passes although for some it never really goes. But what has happened, why does the world become so dull for some



F. David Peat is a holistic physicist and author who has carried out research in solid state physics and the foundation of quantum theory. He is director of the Pari Center for New Learning, an adjunct professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies and Schumacher College, a Fellow of the World Academy of Art and Science and a Distinguished Fellow at the University of South Africa.

of us? Punishment and cruelty are obvious answers. And the low value that adults put on play and the high value they put on learning, knowledge, technique, seriousness and making a living.

But praise and reward can be just as serious a block as punishment. In “Science, Order and Creativity” David Bohm and I tell Desmond Morris’s story of the chimps that loved to play with paint and produced some very interesting patterns of form and color. But once the chimps were rewarded they lost interest in their paintings and began to produce the minimum acceptable. Seeking reward can be a significant block, knowing that something you or your friends are doing is valuable and then trying to repeat it. Children lose the fun of painting and begin to look at what their fellows are doing. This can be an important phase in learning, or it can be the first step to becoming over compliant to external values and rules.

As adults we have internalized authority; we have roles, models, values that are not our own, goals that are placed upon us. All this can destroy creativity. The deadline, the writer’s block, the program’s goals - all can kill.

By contrast, creativity is unconditioned, it is its own reward. But external goals, rules, etc. that become internalized can destroy creativity and cripple the mind. It can be likened to an “undetectable brain damage” the result of pain, anger and frustration which all conspires to destroy the subtle nature of the brain and make it dull and mechanical.

When creativity is blocked the mind becomes terribly frustrated. It may become angry, violent and destructive. Or it may become dull, mechanical, depressed. Is our whole society suffering from a creativity that is frustrated?

In advocating creativity and the joy of play one is not advocating anarchy. It does not mean that there are no constraints, no rules, or morals to be placed on a creative person. Creative minds have always become engaged in a dialogue with rules and structures. But these rules are never arbitrary or mechanical, they are established by the medium itself, paint, words, sounds, physical processes, the needs of others, the health of the planet, the fabric of society. Bach chose the limitations of the fugue, Wordsworth

wrote sonnets and theoretical physicists must constantly submit their creations to the court of experiment. Creativity is not anarchy, yet it is free and unconditioned in the way it engages the rules and a particular form and in so doing transforms and enlarges their meaning and significance. Again let it be emphasized that creativity must make use of rules, techniques, skills etc. These are not the origin of creativity, they are simply its tools.

Further Blocks

Our civilization praises the new, the novel, and the unexpected. This can be another block. Let us ask, does creativity always have to involve the novel and different? Or can creativity be a re-visitation, something that is imminent in the known, something fresh like a new loaf of bread which looks exactly the same as every other loaf but has a fresh smell and taste about it. So we should not feel that we have to be different. Simply trying to do something different each time can be another block to creativity.



Creativity to many people means production, I have to write a poem, I have to get down to a new novel, I have to come up with a better theory. Creativity may indeed lead to new structures and forms, to new objects in the world. But is that its deepest essence or simply the byproduct of its bubbling energy? One would suggest that creativity is a mind that is fresh, alert, sensitive. It is a mind that is not dull, mechanical, afraid, restricted. Creativity is an energy which moves through the whole body. Creativity can simply be seeing each day as new, fresh and full of potential. Creativity can exist in relationships, in the way we see nature, in the way we conduct our lives. Must creativity always mean paintings, theories, symphonies, poems and novels? Isn't it creative to teach and to learn? Again, when we think of creativity in children, we must not impose all these goals and presuppositions upon them.

What does the world need today? More novels, theories and paintings? They are certainly significant but one would also suggest that we need a totally different form of living, a way of facing the problems that plague our whole planet. We need teachers, politicians, parents who are highly creative. We need people whose minds are not damaged. Who are alert, sensitive, who listen and watch both themselves and others.

Challenge

We ask how can our children be more creative? The first step is to allow ourselves to be creative. To allow that energy to bubble up from below. To play. To act in a way that is free and unconditioned and not directed by anything outside itself.

The hardest thing is to allow this creativity in ourselves and in others. Can we really stand back and let it happen? Not encourage it, reward it, direct it, structure it, give it goals. Can we simply leave the child alone to play, to take things in its own way?

Creativity is so important to us that we find we can't leave it alone when we see it in others, we can't allow our children simply to be themselves. And so we must praise, reward, direct and intervene. We all know a better way to do things, an easier path and all this does is to divert the creative action from its source by introducing something external. It is so easy to "help" the child, to enlarge its world. But if we are all to play we must learn the importance of having the total freedom to be wrong, to make mistakes, to push something to its limits and then throw it away. (It's said that the test of a really good mathematician is how many bad proofs they produce) The teacher and the parent must develop courage and creativity. There are no rules, no one can tell us when to step in or when to stand back.

Can we learn to be creative in the presence of the other? Can we learn to be creative to ourselves? Can we allow that play to take place without interference? Can we be watchful, alert and sensitive? Can we know the moment to engage with the other, to express our excitement, to share our skill and knowledge? In the end, being a parent or a teacher has to be a creative act in its own right. The creative parent allows the child that security and solitude in which to explore the universe in a creative way. The most important freedom that the parent or teacher can allow is the freedom to play and to make mistakes. But can we act as creative parents to ourselves? Can we allow ourselves the security and freedom to explore, to create and to make mistakes?

Finally let us ask: What do we really want to do? What is the most fun for us in life? Do we really want to do what we are doing now? Can we allow ourselves to play? What do we give the most value to in our lives? What is most important to us? Does play or fun in others make us uneasy? Must everything we do have an end or goal? Does the world truly appear fresh and new to us each morning? If we were given one year to live what would we do?



Baela Raza Jamil, Director Programs, Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA), has been associated with the field of education for over two decades and is an expert on public policy. Baela shares her views with SEEK on the state of education and the different challenges for the educational sector after the 18th Constitutional Amendment. She discusses the impact of the 18th amendment on the country and what she thinks about the current National Education Policy.

A SIT DOWN WITH AN EDUCATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY

What are your thoughts about the current status of education in Pakistan?

I have been living in this country for the last 21 years and I have observed that the education facilities provided to the people are not up to the mark. I believe we are working far below the optimum level in the field of education and the results show clearly that we are lacking a strong educational system. I would like to add that by educational system I do not mean just the schools but also the home, the family, learning institutions and society on the whole. The family unit has a very strong influence in the education of a child through the passing down of family values and ideals. The child will learn what is right and wrong from the family. I visited a school recently where the teachers said that despite the hard work they have put in, sometimes it is hard to teach the children who have very defined characters and attitude problems due to the family's influence. The honorable values of yesteryear, the sort that contributed to the making of an upstanding citizen and leading a better life, have been lost somewhere along the way which is a cause for grave concern.

How do you think this current status quo affects our society?

The below average educational system is troubling and leads to a host of societal problems such as crime, attitude, and tyranny of the mind and of the souls that are evident in our society. These attributes have sadly seeped into the core of an average Pakistani regardless of his status in the society, rich or poor, and have become a reflection of our country around the world. This is essentially a manifestation of the failure of our education system.

It also translates into a massive brain drain since due to the current situation; people want to migrate to other parts of the world according to their status in search of a stronger structure where decisions could be taken to organize their lives better. Decisions taken here are leading to disorganization and disorder rather than a sense of order, a direction, so the enabling environment that needs to be in place for young children and young adults is certainly not happening in this country. Expectations from an education system to provide order, obviously is not happening either whether in public or private schools. Everyone at best is chasing to get a passport to move somewhere else.

What is your opinion on schooling in the country in particular?

Schools today are based primarily on selecting the right candidate who has the ability to attain high marks, rather than on teaching children and developing them as people. This criterion is used starting from as low as primary and all the way up. The institutions show off by flaunting the number of students who have secured As in their O & A levels or the students who have been able to get top positions in F.A. or F.S.C. results. Do you know that even Einstein and Raza Kazim never achieved very good grades?

Competition is so intense these days that the children securing below the third division stand no chance of getting admission in good universities and are not even considered being worth talking to. Imagine the frustration of the children who can be amazing in so many different areas but are just discarded by the system. As long as the system doesn't recognize the value of diversity and the performance of a school is judged solely by the obtained marks of the students, then the provision of education is just for the sake of advertisement. Filtering is constantly taking place and there is so much pressure on the children to attain outstanding marks. The top rankers haven't achieved much either then why not consider the children who are next in line. A handful of people are dominating over the others. The whole society is structured in this way that 5 percent dominate while 95 percent suffer. Then the sufferers are forced to take up crime and choosing arms for their living.

In one of your interviews, you shared that you were not happy with the education system at your own school and had a series of conflicts with the authorities.

I had three major encounters. First one took place when I was four and a half years old and my father was taken to prison to Central Jail Karachi and my mother had to go out to earn for her three children when the Pakistani government had taken out warrants against the Communists during the Ayub Khan regime. My mother got a job in one of the private schools in Karachi and I was put in the early classes and had to study Radiant Reading. I was always in a state of utter protest as I couldn't relate to those books and I feel sad that it is still a part of the curriculum in many schools even today. My mother was told that your child is not ready for school. I, on the other hand was quite happy that I didn't have to go to school anymore and went home with this expulsion.

When I was four and a half years old and my father was taken to prison to Central Jail Karachi and my mother had to go out to earn for her three children when the Pakistani government had taken out warrants against the Communists during the Ayub Khan regime

The second time was when I threatened to walk away from a school in Murree where they used to fine 10 rupees if a student spoke in Urdu. This was in the 1960s i.e. 16 years after the inception of Pakistan. It is happening these days too. It is not just schools who are doing it but also parents who are in favor of this system. This is a nation of wannabes who do not take pride in what is their own. I called my father's friend to pick me up or I would be very happy to walk home. After that I came back to Karachi.

Then there was another incident in 1967 when my Islamiyat teacher used to slap girls whenever she felt like. I held her hand one day and took her to the principal's office. The teacher was thrown out.

I was also a part of the Student Council in one of my schools. There used to be routine tests before the final examination. We asked the teacher to postpone the test for some work but she did not agree. I told my friends to just draw an egg in the Biology test and give out blank sheets. The three of us were expelled just five months before the final exams but we were not worried at all.

The point to all this is that I feel that there are issues for which the students need to stand up for. I have had great experiences that are unforgettable. I have always been in rebellion against the education system. I feel that the students should be given space to discover themselves, to be creative and to have a voice.

What can be done in rectifying the current situation, especially in the case of young children?

I think one thing that needs to be done is to take students and educate them out of their community or the society that they belong to. This will help students become rooted. I agree 100% that the formation and development of a child until 8 years is crucial, and our focus on education is the least at this age. We systematically destroy all the good that a child comes with. We spoil the child as he comes from God and makes them into monsters.

What is good or effective governance in your opinion?

Debates have been carried out on this issue for around 20 years. Some people call it the notion of subsidiarity. For example, there is a school at a local level and if that school or its surrounding community does not have the capacity or authority to take decisions or urgent actions then the school cannot operate effectively. If there is a problem at your home and if the family members lack the capacity to solve the issue there and then, it would result in your home always remaining in crisis. However, subsidiarity doesn't give a blank pass and mean everything is okay. A principal of a school may be loaded with responsibilities but lack an enabling, conducive environment. The society may lack the support system which is required to transform a principal or a teacher into an enabling actor.

If an enabling environment and authority is provided to the principals or heads of schools, how can we ensure accountability?

If they are provided with authority then they have to be held accountable as well. I stated in one of my talks that we have been carrying out our education system according to a derivative design since 1947. In India the decisions about running the country were taken by the parliament but the support regarding education was taken from Europe, Germany and Austria. Those people used to ponder about the ways to run the education system.

How do you feel we are handling policy matters in regards to education?

Today, we have Washington offering its services and money, Rs. 66 million to Sindh and Rs. 33 million to Baluchistan and we have given our financial responsibilities to a consultant from abroad who is working in Sindh under UN jurisdiction. This is what used to happen under the (British East India) Company and then later under the colonial Government. That is still what is happening globally. We are in the same uncanny situation. Some of us who are historians remember these things and there is a real sense of déjà vu here. You can see the resonance in the whole pattern and it's not the UNICEF or the world's fault, it is our own fault. We don't know how to do our job. We don't have belief in ourselves because we are backstabbing each other.

In Pakistan we have handled policy matters in a bogus and irresponsible manner. I come from a family of lawyers, and in a case, every piece of evidence is aligned all the way through by the attorney. Where is the case for education in Pakistan?

In Pakistan we have handled policy matters in a bogus and irresponsible manner. I come from a family of lawyers, and in a case, every piece of evidence is aligned all the way through by the attorney. Where is the case for education in Pakistan? Where are the alignments? In the story of governance of education in Pakistan, there are no alignments from history, from Pakistan's creation or from the creation of education system. Education, which I don't mean in the narrow sense, but as a shared responsibility between the home and society is not happening. Not happening with the rich, not happening with the poor, not happening with anyone. The biggest highway robbery in Pakistan is that no one is living up to their potential. So people, like me are agitating for things to come to the forefront.

What are your views on the 18th Constitutional Amendment?

I think the amendment is a good initiative but I feel it was passed without any debate. No one knows where article 25-A comes from and who decided the ages 5 to 16. We are unaware of the architect of the amendment and many of the new policies. The Concurrent List has been abolished. There has also been an abolishment of ministries on the Federal level which can be a huge disaster. Ministries should be lean and mean at the national level. However, again there was no constructive debate on these important decisions. Also what we need is a transition period. The provinces have now been given responsibility for textbook development among others. The provinces need time to plan and acquire resources, human and otherwise to be able to develop the capacity to undertake the additional responsibilities. The provinces also need to be given due importance, and their concerns and queries addressed.

What problems are associated with the devolution of powers as per the 18th Constitutional Amendment?

One of the problems, I feel, faced by the provinces regarding devolution of powers, is lack of funds. The provinces need to ask for more money; how will they implement Article 25-A without money? We also face several problems when it comes to consolidation of economic surveys, or when we meet at regional or international level to discuss Pakistan's education status. We require representatives who are able to carry out coordination at international levels. Recently I have been receiving emails from the UN asking me which ministry will represent Pakistan at the Educational National. What should I say to them? No such ministry has been assigned this role till now. A province can also represent Pakistan, but there has to be some sort of consensus. Will the UN write letters to 7 different provinces? Of course they won't write 7 letters and the result will be that Pakistan will lose out. We will have no voice.

In such situations, the government starts panicking and starts writing to the civil society and technical institutions, imploring them to take the lead, but this is not how it works. Right now we just got back from Delhi after attending the SAARC meeting on Early Childhood and this is exactly what happened; they called representatives from all provinces. Two provinces showed up but neither of the two provinces was willing to take a stand for Pakistan, or to defend the position of the country as a whole. Each province representative discussed their own particular province, and it's tragic that there was no voice for the country. I had to step in to tell the story of all the provinces' on early childhood care and education. We have thrown the baby with the bathwater regarding the 18th Amendment, and the provinces are hurting because they need something but they are unable to articulate their needs because it will be seen as backstabbing the 18th amendment. They don't quite know what to do. They are desperate; they are desperate about how to address issues of policy. Therefore the gaps by default have influenced global partnership for education which has affected Pakistan.

I challenge you to read the 2009 national education policy and you will see how much the ground realities have changed

What do you think needs to be done to improve the situation after the introduction of the 18th Constitutional Amendment?

At the federal level, Pakistan needs lean and mean ministries. Health is suffering from lack of federal level involvement. The role of federal and provincial ministries will differ. The provinces will have the right to demand grants, extra resources. The federal ministries will have to work very hard for their survival and the provinces will have to work very hard to meet the demands placed on them. You are not telling provinces what their policies or curriculums will be.

The 2009 National Education policy, based on the 2006 national curriculum, was accepted by all the provinces in September 2011 in the Islamabad declaration. But I challenge you to read the 2009

national education policy and you will see how much the ground realities have changed. The premise on which the 2009 policy was based has changed (except for section 4 on Islamic education which was brought through the backdoor without any debate). If you read the policy you will say this is wrong and that is wrong. It will be a joke to implement the original policy. How will that be done? The policy needs to be refreshed with the current realities being taken into account. And at least chapter 3 which is on governance, and which is most out of sync should be refreshed.

We need to instill accountability in our schooling system. There have been 3-4 of revisions in teacher salary in public schools. A higher secondary school teacher is getting more than 6 digits salaries across the country, and middle school teachers are getting 50,000, 60,000, 70,000 rupees and what are they producing for it? Nothing! Where is the accountability? You cannot say that we are giving you the salary so now you have become accountable. It doesn't work like that on the ground. When the rest of the system is not working, what good will salary revision bring? So as I have said the system faces great disruptions in the educational field. Take a look at the curriculum fiasco; primary has social studies. Classes 6, 7 & 8 have history and grades 9 & 10 have Pak studies. Our minister Qazi Sahib, when asked a question about why history isn't taught at the higher level, replied that we don't need to study history after 6, 7, and 8 because after 1947 Pakistan was formed. This is illiteracy and illness. How can you not study history!

We need to involve reputable academics in designing our curriculum. One of the finest historians in the world, Ayesha Jalal has stated that she is willing to sit down with a team to write the National Curriculum Framework for History to serve her country. And that proposal was debunked. Imagine! We have the works of a Nobel Prize winner, Dr Salam, as well as the works of other physicists such as Dr Pervez Hoodbhoy, but we don't make use of their contributions when developing our physics curriculum. This is a tragedy for Pakistan! In India professors such as Urmila Thapur, even if they are Emiratis Professor in the US, assist in making the Indian national curriculum framework. We are running after people from abroad to write our curriculum. We are asking the Germans to write the framework. We need to develop and utilize our own talent and manpower.

Thank you Baela for taking out the time to speak to us
My pleasure.



Advocacy Events





SEF CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY 2014

THE WAY FORWARD >>>>>>>>

Sindh Education Foundation celebrated the 'International Literacy Day 2014' at an educational institute to provide a platform to the stakeholders to share suggestions on how best to improve children's participation in education that will lead to an improved national literacy rate. The theme for Day 2014 was 'Literacy and Sustainable Development: the way forward'. The participants included government officials, social workers, university students and professionals from the public and private sectors.

Sindh Minister for Education and Literacy, Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, presided as the chief guest at the occasion. The panel of experts comprised of notable personalities including Dr. Sulaiman Shaikh (ex-chairperson, Thardeep Rural Development Program), Muhammad Babur (Founding Member, Exploring Leadership and Learning Association) and Fateh Muhammad Burfat (Director, Students Guidance Counselling, Karachi University). Dr. Sajid Ali (Assistant Professor, Institute for Educational Development, Aga Khan University) moderated the event's proceedings.

Managing Director of SEF, Aziz Kabani, paid tribute to the SEF founder, late Prof. Anita Ghulam Ali who had passed away recently, and said that if she were alive, she would have been right there at the event, advocating the cause of education. He said, "literacy is a key lever of change and a practical tool of empowerment on each of the three main pillars of sustainable development: economic and social development and environmental protection. Experience and research show that literacy can be a major tool for eradicating poverty, enlarging employment opportunities, advancing



Name: Aziz Kabani
 Organization: Sindh Education Foundation
 Position: Managing Director
 Participated as: Chief Guest Speaker



Name: Aziz Kabani
 Organization: Sindh Education Foundation
 Position: Managing Director
 Participated as: Host



Name: Dr. Sajid Ali
 Position: Assistant Professor
 Organization: AKU - Institute for Educational Development
 Participated as: Moderator



Name: Dr. Fateh Muhammad Burfat
 Position: Director Student's Guidance Counselling
 Organization: Karachi University
 Participated as: Panelist



Name: Dr. Suleman Shaikh
 Position: Chairperson, Rural Development Program
 Organization: Thardeep
 Participated as: Panelist



Name: Muhammad Barbur
 Position: Founding Member
 Organization: Exploring Leadership & Learning Association
 Participated as: Panelist

gender equality, improving family health, protecting the environment and promoting democratic participation”.

Mr Kabani told the forum that SEF was 2,346 schools with 8,972 teachers who are serving 370,079 students across Sindh. Every day these numbers are growing through the dedication and commitment of our stakeholders, teachers and SEF staff. Sindh Education Foundation also undertakes research initiatives, both qualitative and quantitative, to study the impact of its programs and identify improved systems for community enhancement.

Mr Kabani, relating the aim of the event, said that they wanted to discuss holistic strategies, provide suggestions and explore new approaches that may make the promise of education for every child a possibility. The discourse would be documented and preserved for publications and, ultimately, shared with the Government and the academia as foundations to be built upon.

“We celebrate the International Literacy Day 2014 to show global solidarity, to state that literacy and education is an integral part, a building block of society and aspects that cannot be ignored”, he asserted.

Dr Sajid Ali opened the panel discussion saying that, this year, we should not merely talk about past problems but also need to focus on future strategies and suggestions to tackle the challenges. He believed the ‘weaknesses’ in the education system were responsible for failing us to achieve certain targets to improve current literacy rate.

“It’s a good effort to arrange such events in which we can discuss these problems and their solutions”, he said appreciating SEF’s efforts.

The first panellist at the Literacy Day event, Dr Fateh Muhammad Burfat, related the role of literacy in paving the way for sustainable development. He explained that development is defined by adding growth and change, and, for bringing about change in society, we need to raise awareness among the masses that literacy is the tool to change the society’s mind-sets and, thus, its fate.

“Literate person has this ability to fulfil his needs, it can make a person an individual who could learn, think and lead”, he said.

Dr Suleman Shaikh said that development is essential for both the urban and rural areas of Pakistan. He said sustainable development is only possible if we work together which means education for girls is just as, if not more important than that of boys.

He said contrary to popular belief, a lot of work is being done in Pakistan in regards to sustainable development by hardworking, dedicated people, just that it has not been recognised as it should be, so far.

Speaking at the occasion, Dr Suleman Shaikh, ex-chairperson Sindh Graduates Association, said that the goals to improve literacy were set long time back, but it is unfortunate that those have not been achieved as yet. He suggested that the government needed to take effective steps to strategize course of action in order to increase literacy and ensure attendance of teachers in schools.

“Collective efforts are required for sustainable development of a country”, he said.

He informed the audience that surveys support the fact that women in Pakistan are willing to go to schools if they are situated in their vicinity. Considering this, Government of Sindh initiated a project with the assistance

“Literacy is a key lever of change and a practical tool of empowerment on each of the three main pillars of sustainable development: economic and social development and environmental protection.”



of the World Bank to educate females till middle but, due to some reasons, the project was aborted.

"In order to cope up with the issues pertaining to female literacy, devotion, dedication and support from the government is required; otherwise, it will all be a dream only."

Mr Muhammad Babur said, "Problem with most of the Pakistan's public policies is that, instead of giving solutions to the prevailing problems, they only serve as the critique to the former policy failures. I would suggest avoiding shortcuts, creativity and analytical thinking should be encouraged."

Mr Babur thought that we out to focus on more our stronger capabilities. "People of Sindh are loyal and sincere. Their love for their language is matchless. These people are the assets of the Land of Sindh. We can use these assets in a positive manner. If we want to improve literacy, we will have to change the definition. If older ideas aren't working, we should start thinking about innovative ideas," he expressed, adding that "if we come to know that how can we use our stronger abilities to improve the system of education and literacy, we can make a difference."

Senior Minister, Department of Education and Literacy, Mr Nisar Ahmed Khuhro said that no country has reached sustained economic growth without achieving near universal primary education. Schools can bring together parents, students, teachers, and government officials, offering services that support and lift up communities and families. He stated that education promotes democracy and stability and builds strong communities, and that education lays the foundation for sound governance and strong institutions. "It is not just a building block but a cornerstone of free societies", he added.

Mr Khuhro further said, "it is after quite a long time that provinces have

In order to cope up with the issues pertaining to female literacy, devotion, dedication and support from the government is required; otherwise, it will all be merely a dream.



received provincial autonomy, in 2010, which was otherwise promised to be given in 1983. In 2011, Sindh is proud to be the first province to have adopted article 25 A Act. It was in 2002, curriculum was announced, made and put into practice, and revised in 2006.”

He informed the audience that Sindh Government has developed a curriculum from class 1 to 4 and will be focusing on one for class 5 to 8. “We will go ahead step by step to class 10 and onward. We are coming with the new act called Standard of Education and Curriculum, which will guide in coming up with policies and instructions on how to develop curriculum and what should be added therein,” he added.

Appreciating the Foundation’s initiatives, he said that SEF is an organization that involves community directly to have share in education sector programs via their public-private partnership. Their schools serve communities in the remote areas of the province by providing Rs350 to Rs450 per-child to ‘entrepreneur’ who is responsible to run school by hiring teachers, thus making quality education free for children.

The ideas and concepts supplemented the UNESCO’s message which states that “literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development and that it is at the heart of basic education for all, and essential for eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy”.

The session was followed by a question and answer session between the audience and the panellists.

“Literacy is a human right, a tool of personal empowerment and a means for social and human development.”



PEOPLE'S PODIUM

Opinion of People on the Streets

What role does education has to play in the progress of our country?

"Education is necessary for everyone and for our country. Through education people cannot fool you because you have the power of knowledge by your side. Even reading/writing literacy can make your life easier as you don't need to be dependent on other people to read or write for you and these skills come very handy in work. Success for Pakistan will be based on merit, no matter what the cast, no matter the level."

Kashif – Food Vendor

"Education equips us with consciousness and better environment, lack of education is the reason for the current status of our society. Education is a must. If we are educated, other things will come along on their own like money, character and environment."

Asif – Vegetable Seller

"In present law and order situation, education is not necessary because we cannot run our business. What good is education when we cannot even look out for our safety and conduct our business. Without work we cannot provide for our families and children. First the law and order needs to be improved before we can begin to think about education"

Fahad – Cobbler

"Success is impossible to attain without education. I am a poor person, I am doing labor work to survive, but if I were educated I could do a better job than this. If I were educated I would have had better opportunities and have been able to decide my own future."

Abdul Raheem – Chapatti Seller

"Education is very important for a better job and life. To me education is important for a country because if there is no education then the people taking care of the country will be useless. The young people in the country should receive education because they are the future of the country. To have education is a great thing because it teaches you to think for yourself."

Nasir – Laborer

"We want our children to get education for the betterment of their future so that they can become a useful member of our society. I wish my son becomes a doctor and serve his country and society."

Muhammad Liaqat – Fruit Seller

"The ratio of illiterate people is very high in our country. Illiteracy is the cause of social spoiling in our country. Education is necessary for defense, prosperity, regulation and country's reputation. Lack of education is the reason of our country's disgrace in the whole world."

Lala – Gatekeeper

"It goes without saying that unless a person is educated, he or she cannot get a worthwhile job. Unemployment is a serious obstacle in the development and progress in a country's economic status, thus posing a hindrance to the growth of the nation. The economic status of Pakistan is pathetic, due to the lack of educated people who do not possess adequate skills and thus are unemployed. If I were educated I could have served my country in a better capacity. I could have gone out of country for work. Education is a must for Muslims."

Rehman – Retailer

"No nation can progress without education. Educated people are aware of the current scenario of the country and can help in the progress of the country. The educated are knowledgeable on how to contribute towards the country's well-being. One of the reasons for their awareness is because they have been taught these values in school, colleges and work places. People who aren't educated don't have clues about these facts as they haven't been in a learning environment."

Mairaj ud din – Crochery Seller

"Through education a person is able to financially support their family. However, in our country quality education facilities, like everything else, are only accessible to wealthy people."

Naeem Ahmed – Fruit Seller

"One is able to face world with the help of education. But if you are illiterate then you can only perform labor work. If I had studied my future could have been bright."

Wahid – Painter

"There is no social or moral value. Now the man is behaving like an animal. Animality can be changed with moral education. Education teaches the moral value and social value like co-operation, tolerance, sympathy, fellow feelings, love affection, respect towards elders, helping the poor and needy persons. Government needs to promote education and it should be accessible at every level. That is the only way our country will prosper"

Shahzad – Sheermal Seller

Words of the Wise

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” – *Nelson Mandela*

“Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained.” – *James A Garfield*

“Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is the great equalizer of the conditions of man.” – *Horace Mann*

“Every student can learn, just not on the same day, or the same way.” – *George Evans*

“The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.” – *Chinese Proverb*

“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you.” – *B.B. King*

“Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army.” – *Edward Everett*

“Do not train children to learning by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.” – *Plato*

“Education’s purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one.” – *Malcolm Forbes*

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.” – *Rachel Carson*

“Education is essential to change, for education creates both new wants and the ability to satisfy them.” – *Henry Steele Commager*

Reading Recommendations

Rethinking Education in Pakistan: Perceptions, Practices, and Possibilities

Author: Shahid Siddiqui

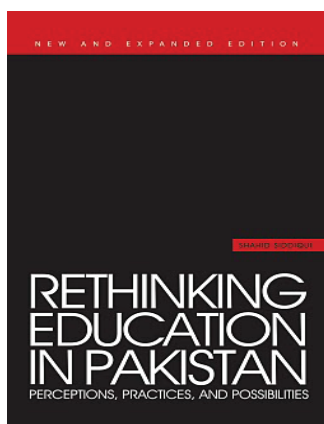
Review by By: Muhammad Ali Khan

'Rethinking Education in Pakistan' is a product of Shahid Siddiqui's scholarly pursuit in the capacity of teacher educator, researcher, and social thinker. The recurrent theme of the book is critical thinking and reflection which is very carefully built up in the book. Dr. Siddiqui's aim doesn't seem to reject or accept any school of thought in totality but to analyse and assess in order to offer a holistic understanding of the beliefs and practices and explore potential alternatives.

The writer draws the evidence for building his case from a very broad range of sources, ranging from his personal experience as a teacher educator and researcher, indepth study of the educational policies of the country, and contemporary literature in the domain of education. Talking about various components of education he refers to teachers as a central actor in action. He firmly believes that teachers can play an important part in initiating and sustaining educational and social change. In his words "A well-equipped teacher can create ways to improve the situation even under given constraint. The pivotal position of a teacher signifies the crucial role teacher education can play in Pakistan."

The structure of the book enables the reader to think and reflect on the Policy issues, Teachers and Teacher education, Curriculum and Materials which has its bearing on the other sections of the book: Language Issues, School, Home and the current Research and Assessment practices in Pakistan.

Rethinking Education in Pakistan offers a fresh perspective on the traditional ideas and notions about issues in education in Pakistan. Written in a lucid manner, the articles in the book form a coherent whole, engaging enough to be recommended to the widest possible audience, i.e., research students, practicing teachers, teacher educators, curriculum planners, and policy makers.



Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan

Author: Tariq Rahman

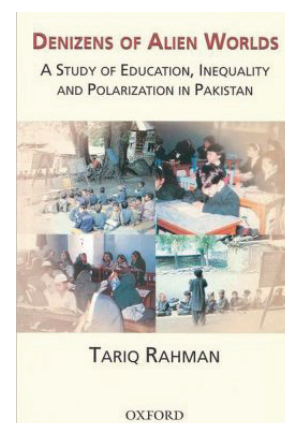
Review by By: Naveed Hussain

Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality and Polarization in Pakistan, the book under review, is a unique effort by Tariq Rahman, a renowned educationist, to highlight inequality and polarization of education along socio-economic lines in Pakistan.

In this book Mr. Rahman critically analyses the education policies formulated by the successive governments in Pakistan, beginning with the first meeting on education held in Karachi on November 27, 1947 until the Education Sector Reforms: Action Plan, 2001-04 chalked out by the President Musharraf-led regime.

The Denizens of Alien World tells us not only about education system in Pakistan but also about the system of distribution of resources and power. Today we have three streams of education - elitist English-medium schools, Urdu-medium schools and the madrassas - functioning parallel in the country. The children of "haves" get education in the elitist English-medium schools, the middle class join the Urdu-medium schools, while the "have nots" frequent the madrassas. Mr. Rahman contends that since fluency in English language is the guarantee of a brighter career in Pakistan, the students of English-medium elitist institutes easily find access to most lucrative jobs, while the students of Urdu-medium schools and madrassas, unable to compete with their counterparts in the English-medium schools, become clerks or semi-skilled laborers. Thus they perpetuate capitalism in its worst form, the lower by creating cheap labor and the upper by creating selfish consumers.

The most important thing about Mr. Rahman's study is that it not only points out the ills of our education system but also prescribes panacea for them. Its unique approach, simple and easy-to-understand language, meticulously collected data and authentic information make Denizens of Education a landmark work in the study of education system of Pakistan.



www.

Websites to Visit

Site Review: Fun Brain

Site URL: FunBrain.com

Content: Fun Brain, a site for kids at the preschool through grade 8 levels, offers more than 100 fun, interactive games that develop skills in math, reading and literacy.

Review: Fun Brain's games help students build on what they have learned in class and acquire new skills in reading, math and problem solving. This makes the site a great supplement for students who may need extra practice outside of school hours.

A special Teachers' Section offers a curriculum guide, game finder and standards finder, along with other materials. These help teachers efficiently locate the games that will most help their students. The games themselves focus on language arts and math, so students can have fun while mastering these subjects.

Bottom Line: Fun Brain offers a wealth of games that can supplement classroom instruction and help students who may be falling behind.



Site Review: Parenting Science

Site URL: ParentingScience.com

Content: Written and maintained since 2006 by biological anthropologist Gwen Dewar, Parenting Science offers scientific information and resources that address everything from child development to parenting techniques.

Review: By placing useful information in anthropological, psychological and biological context and including abundant hyperlinks to reputable citations, Dewar offers a fantastic aid to parents and educators. The content applies to science, health, social studies and other academic subjects and can be used by teachers at many grade levels.

Dewar's in-depth and objective analysis doesn't cover every aspect of child development, but Parenting Science uses a well-balanced and fair perspective while taking ownership of the many issues it does tackle.

Bottom Line: From critical thinking to preschool math lessons, Parenting Science offers comprehensive resources from a gifted scientific writer.





Sindh Education Foundation
Government of Sindh

House # 21-A, Block 7/8, Overseas Cooperative Housing Society, Ameer Khusro Road, Karachi
Ph:021-34169141-2, 34169144-5
Email: info@sef.org.pk, Website: www.sef.org.pk