



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Problems of Education System in Pakistan: A Critical Analysis and Solution**

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**ABSTRACT**

Education system has importance in the development of any country. Without better education no country can make progress. The main objective of the study is to review the problems of education system in Pakistan. For this paper literature regarding problems of education system in Pakistan was critically analyzed. It was find out that major issues faced by our educational system were gender inequality, insufficient educational budget, outdated curriculum, poor examination system, Internal and external influence on education system, lack of quality teachers, political interference, The lack of faculty training and development, dropout ratio, lack of uniformity in education system, Education without Direction and failure to achieve millennium developmental goals. It was recommended that should take steps to decrease gender inequality. Sufficient budget should be allocated for educational purpose. Steps should be taken to minimize drop out. Internal and external interferences should be avoided to improve quality of education. Curriculum should be updated according to needs of people.

**KEYWORDS** Critical Analysis, Education System, Solution

**Introduction**

Education plays the role of bone in the development of any country. Without education no nation can survive and achieve respectable status among the nations. For this reason every country tries to enhance its education system. In Pakistan due to instability of political system due protocol is not given to education system. Pakistan is a developing country with weak economy. Stable education system promotes economy of the country and people become prosperous (Ahmad, 2014). According to Hussain (2001) economic challenges faced by Pakistan are raising poverty and unemployment, heavy external and domestic indebtedness, high fiscal deficit and low investment.in Pakistan, Politics cannot be separated from Education because education system is headed by a minister who is not an educator but a politician (Sultana, 2018). Education system in Pakistan is surrounded by a lot of problems and there is a need to address them one by one. Ahmad, Ali, Khan & Khan (2014) discussed different issues which were faced by education system in Pakistan which included lack of uniformity, education without direction, outdated curricula, lack of quality teachers, lack of professional development of teachers, alarming dropouts, poor supervisory standards, interference in education system and low budget for education system. This paper is an effort to highlight different issues faced by the Pakistani education system.

## MDGs and Pakistan

The MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) is to increase global equilibrium among developing and developed countries. This was achieved through the adoption of the MDGs in the year 2000 by The United Nations. The Republic of Pakistan, United Nations member country, is a signatory of the Millennium Development Goals for the year 2015. The MDGs in 2015 were, in their turn, substituted with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Education system of Pakistan is confronted with different obstacles for quite a long time now. The MDG 2 was devoted to the agenda of assisting all the boys and girls to pass the relevant courses of the primary level education. Nevertheless, the advancement in this noble objective does not free Pakistan from its obligations to implement quality education for all.

Revealed the Pakistan Education Statistics Report 2019-20, the proportion of enrollment into primary school was 63% for boys and 57% for girls, indicating that there is still a reasonable share of children out of school. Interestingly, the standards of the education are another issue, among those many out of school children are those who could not even read nor write after finishing their years of education in school. The Pakistani government has taken steps to put in place and foster reforms in the education system. The enrollment is at different levels across each year's curriculum with the enrollment gradually getting higher.

**Table 1**  
**Student's Enrollment at different levels**

	Years	Primary	Middle	High	Higher Secondary
Students Enrollments	2013-14	19441.1	6460.8	3109.0	1233.7
	2014-15	19846.8	6582.2	3500.7	1665.5
	2015-16	21550.6	6582.2	3652.5	1698.0
	2016-17	21686.5	6922.3	3583.1	1594.9
	2017-18	22931.3	6996.0	3861.3	1687.8
	2018-19	23588.0	7362.1	3969.0	2139.9
	2019-20	24591.7	7634.1	4213.5	2328.3
	2020-21	25676.4	7931.5	4486.7	2548.9

Source: Pakistan Economic Surveys

Education system in Pakistan is not in a position to achieve MGDs due to different issues. Let's discussed some of them.

## Gender Inequality

Gender discrimination in education is an urgent concern in Pakistan and it is of grave importance for the development and prosperity of the country as a whole. It appears that the gender gap in education is due to different causes as it can be an effect of poverty, cultural norms, and stereotyping criteria.

It is stated by UNESCO in the report made in 2020 that Pakistan has the highest rate of out-of-school children in the world and estimate the number of children out of school to be about 22.8 million. Girls are the most vulnerable group in this situation, as they are more likely to end their education or miss the whole school term because of the local restrictions on their movement. A major challenge of girls education in Pakistan is cultural norms and social bias. In very many regions of the country, girls' roles are centered on taking care of the house while boys are bossed to pursue education and

careers. It means that girls enjoy enrollment in public schools less than boys, in addition to they have higher dropout rate, and lower degree compared to boys (World Bank, 2019).

The issue of gender inequality in education, if not resolved, may pose some serious consequences for the country's progress and growth. Educating girls can help in creating sustainable economies, better health conditions and improve the social development (UNESCO, 2020). It is also necessary for Pakistan to eliminate these disparities by providing equal access to education for both school going boys and girls.

### Low Educational Budget

Education budget in Pakistan has traditionally been lower than the ones in developed nations since the times of history. According to UNESCO, in 2019, Pakistan's permanent contribution to education was only 2.6 per cent of its GDP, which is much lower than the advisable 4-6 per cent for developing country. The detail of educational budget of Pakistan from 2010- 2022 which varied between 280 and 420 billion Pakistani rupees is presented here.

**Table 2**  
**Allocation of Educational Budget from 2010-2022**

	Recurring budget	Development budget	Total Education Budget	% of GDP
2010-11	3259 billion	1,48,118 crore	304 billion	10.7%
2011-12	2767 billion	3,767 billion	21,000 crore	15.0%
2012-13	3,203 billion	1368 billion	31 billion	15.8%
2013-14	3,985 billion	3,591 billion	57.4 billion	92.49%
2014-15	642.4 billion	228.2 billion	3.937 trillion	3.8%
2015-16	4.451 trillion	133.9 billion	148 billion	4.71%
2016-17	4.39 trillion	300 billion	4.39trillion	5.28%
2017-18	5,103.8 billion	3,521billion	90.516 billion	7.6%
2018-19	5,932.5 billion	6,409.3billion	97.42 billion	9.89%
2019-20	2,300.6 billion	1,686.2 billion	21.04billion	6.38%
2020-21	2,240.7 billion	1392.2 billion	10.68 billion	15.92%
2021-22	2,653 billion	66,950 billion	90.556 billion	6.49%

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan

**Table 3**  
**Comparison of GDP Spent by Different Countries**

Sr. No	Countries	Spends GDP On Education
1	Pakistan	2.6%
2	India	3.1%
3	United States	6.6%
4	United Kingdom	5.2%
5	Japan	3.8%
6	Bangladesh	2.2%.
7	Germany	4.9%,

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2019)

### Outdated Curriculum

Education is an upshot from the story of a nation's advancement. Nevertheless, the negligent attitude about updating the curriculum of Pakistan is perhaps the most crucial problem for the development of the country. Lack of investment in education sector is the major reason behind an outmoded curriculum in Pakistan As per Akhtar

(2019), the government has always dished out small budget allocations for education which makes the facilities old-fashioned and the teaching methods outdated. Moreover, political instability and constant changes in educational policies make it yet worse.

The inadequate curriculum in Pakistan has much negative impact on students and the society. Workers with suiting qualification and sufficient skills are in high demand which puts those that are not so into an unfair competition and makes them unemployable. Khurshid (2018) reported that 40 percent of Pakistani graduates are jobless due to inadequacy of the skills to the demands of the market. Moreover, the outdated curriculum does not provide students with result which in turn results in lack of integrated thinking, thinking skills and problem solving.

### **Poor Examination System**

An underlying problem with the examinations of Pakistan is that they are not free from cheating. The same data is available in the data given by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan that cheating is the usual case in examination centers. The result was such that 95% of the students confessed to have resorted to cheating in their examination in varying forms (Bukhari, 2019). According to a study by the Center for Applied Research in Education (CARE), up to 70% of students in Pakistan are observed having tried cheating in some manner during the exams (Jalil & Hussain, 2018). This massive scenario of cheating has really an adverse effect on the quality of education in Pakistan. It is the root of the weak credibility of the examination system which in turn leads to the devalued ethic value of pra education.

The other concern about the examination system in Pakistan has to do with the stress on rote learning. The student of Pakistan are taught to memorize the information pro lo-cation than understand it. Such a way of teaching, however, has been a target for criticism, critics arguing that it fails to allow students to harness critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This creates a narrow minded approach towards education, failing to come up with innovative and innovative ideas.

Additionally, the Pakistan paper checking system is also condemned because of sharp focus on didactic knowledge rather than applied skills. In taking this educational course, students will not have the skills they need to meet the challenges of the modern workplace. The most current hiring board is looking for graduates who are familiar with practical skills from critical thinking, communication, and teamwork, which are rarely taught in the examination system (Bukhari, 2019).

### **Internal and External Influence on Education System**

In Pakistan, the education system is being shaped by a lot of internal and external factors that have an either positive or negative effect on it.

#### **Internal Influences**

Political instability, absence in the education system on policy and a lack of sources of funds have been significant among the internal factors that affect the education systems in Pakistan. After independence the educational system have experienced several rehabilitation that in most cases they have reflected the political ideology of the ruling parties rather than a clear long term vision. This pattern has led to a fragmented education system, which in most cases the disparities that are extra regional and socio-economic are massive. As per the UNPD study on educational policy of Pakistan, it has been influenced by political ideologies, conflict in educational goal setting and strategic

planning, fragmented institutions, and absence of a single vision to guide them into a unified state been observed (UNDP, 2016).

In the case of Pakistan, the political and socio-economic instability are recognized as the internal factors which negatively affect process of education. As defined by Ayesha Jalal (2014), the state's insufficient capacity to supply essential services, of which education falls, is contributed to political corruption, poor management, and weak civil society that deteriorate the situation. There is a shortfall of capital in education, with less money allocated to schools, insufficient investment in teachers' training and super-small wages, along with a lack of infrastructure, inclusive of facilities such as classes, libraries, and toilets. Consequently, a large number of children of Pakistan cannot even get an opportunity to go to school or receive a good educational program that would be needed to have an educated citizenry in the country.

### **External Influences**

External influences may be of different types such as

#### **Globalization**

Education in Pakistan has experienced a change of shape throughout the globalization process, particularly in the curriculum and the methods of the teaching. In the era of enhanced interconnectivity and international trade, there is a clear expectation from the young people to be prepared for the challenges of a global economy. That is why in Pakistan, the education system nowadays is very focused on the STEM subjects, such as science, technology, engineering and maths, that are considered to be very important for the success in the global arena.

#### **International Aid**

Besides international aid, education has also been structured to advance the education system in Pakistan. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank have invested funding and technical assistance to support Pakistani education sector development. To this effect, we have initiated programs with the aim of opening up the path to education, aligning teacher training to meet the local demands, and developing instructional materials that are compatible with the environment.

#### **Lack of Quality Teachers**

As Shahzad, Saleem and Mahmood (2021) have pointed out, the unavailability of quality teachers is a pivotal dilemma of the education system in Pakistan. They mention that the level of education in Pakistan has been deteriorating because of different reasons among which not enough well-trained and qualified teachers is one of them. They contemplate that Pakistani educational system has suffered from acute shortage of teachers from many decades and the shortage is being magnified by growing demand of education. The problem of shortage of qualified teachers is due to several causes including low salaries, poor working circumstances and non-existence of incentives to teachers to work in remote areas (Ali et al., 2021).

On the other hand, the idea that poor quality teachers plays a critical role in the education system of Pakistan is also verified by the research work of Rashid and Ahmad (2020).

The deficiency of quality teachers in the Pakistan sometimes lead to low levels of student learning outcomes. The documents by the National educational Assessment System (NEAS) points out that only 37% of the students grade 5 could be able to read a story in Urdu while only 27% can manage simple division (NEAS, 2019). Rural-urban learning gap is also discussed in the report stating that there is a large disparity between urban and rural areas.

### **Political Interference**

The problem of political interference in Pakistani education has been there for long, and it has made very hard for the educational sector to develop in the country. The problem has been the topic of many deliberations of academics, state policy markers and civil society leaders all coming up with the negative repercussion of education quality and independence in the nation (Khan & Shahid, 2021; Hussain, 2016).

In their opinion, the most negative effect of political interference in education has been the appointment of unprofessional and politically interfering people to the leading positions of institutions in the educational field, which has caused the decrease in the quality and standards of education. Political leanings and partisanship have affected this area too and as a result, propagation of certain political agenda and ideologies is on the rise at the cost of academic freedom and critical thinking. According to Hussain (2016), politicization of education has brought about the phenomenon that certain regions and communities have been left out of the educational provision, with the resources and opportunities being diverted to regions or groups that are politically favored. It has therefore added to current injustices and risk of being excluded of already excluded communities.

The recent adverse effect of political interference on our education in Pakistan has also caught the eye of international agencies. A report from the Global Campaign for Education (2019) calls on political leaders to demonstrate more determination and faithfulness toward the resolution of these issues. This is to make sure education is free from any political interruptions, hence, ensure that the education is delivered in a fair and equitable manner.

### **The Lack of Faculty Training and Development**

The faculty training and development that are most suitable for the education system next to Pakistan roar as an important element because if this is not rendered then the quality of education go down. This issue has been a topic of discussion and study over a long time which has been advanced through research, education, and decision-making by scholars, policymakers, and educators (Khan & Shaikh, 2021; Ali & Naqvi, 2017; Siddiqui & Azhar, 2019; Iqbal, 2017).

In their work, Khan and Shaikh (2021) come to the conclusion that there is deficient training and development of faculty members that has led to obsolete teaching techniques and poor curriculum development. It has caused the absence of these thinking skills making the students in the future to lack analytical skills and problem-solving abilities.

Ali and Naqvi (2017) continue by stating that professional development programs were scarce thus low job satisfaction, commitment and motivation among teachers became public. Therefore, high attendance rates, low spirits of them and negative impact on the students are the types of development.

The shortcomings of training and development regarded as faculty have been acknowledged by the government and international bodies as well. The National Education Policy (2017-2022) of Pakistan stresses out that there should be more teachers controlled development considering that they get a chance to unravel themselves and also be able to increase their skills and knowledge base (Government of Pakistan, 2017). UNDP emphasized in recent report that professional teachers training is the main factor for quality education improvement of Pakistan (UNDP, 2020).

### The Dropout Dilemma

One of the highest proportions of children in this world are out-of-school in Pakistan which approximately reaches to 22.8 million children aged between 5 to 16, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UNESCO UIS, 2021). Parents will be facing this big challenge so that the need for competent teachers who can respond to this phenomenon and keep kids to remain in school becomes the crux point for this problem in teacher education. Here are the dropout rates by countries or nations.

**Table 4**  
**Dropout ratio of Students in Different Countries**

Sr. No	Name of Country	Dropout ratio (%)
1	Pakistan	22
2	India	3.2
3	Bangladesh	17.1
4	Afghanistan	25.8
5	Nigeria	19.4
6	Ethiopia	15.2

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2021)

On top of that, researches also proved that a lot of students tend to drop out (especially girls and children from poor households) contribute as one of the most threatening enemies of an effective educational system (Siddiqui, Ahsan, & Khatoon, 2020). Performing another analysis by Pakistan Education Statistics 2018–19, the status of school dropout rates in country is 21.8% and 41.6% in primary and secondary schools respectively (Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, 2019).

A combination of issues including poverty, gender discrimination, substandard school facilities, insufficient effective instruction, and support substantially contribute to such high turnover rates (Siddiqui et al., 2020). There have been so many programs to improve the teacher preparation and spread the opportunities for the poor to have an access to education in Pakistan in a bid to reduce drop out rates. Thus, for instance, the Pakistani government has initiated a program to employ and train more teachers and also introduced some financial incentives to compensate parents who make sure that their children stay in school (UNESCO, 2021). These groups and international funding agencies have also tried to extend educational opportunities to people in need and also underprivileged zones (Ali & Lashari, 2021).

### Education without Direction

Education without direction identifies a situation where the educational system does not have a specified or well-defined purpose and this interferes with the shaping of the students who are supposed to ready the society to meet all the challenges of life. In Pakistan, education system of learning by rote, which focuses on recalling the facts, dates,

and figures without developing critical thinking skills, is used. The findings of UNESCO \*(UNESCO, 2019)\*<sup>1</sup> showed that only 60% of the Pakistani children complete their primary school and only 30% have completed secondary level education. This 15 percent rate of graduation is an indication that some kids do not have an education required to make it in life.

Education without direction is largely one reason which is because, the government of Pakistan itself does not invest enough in education. Pakistan on average currently expends 2.4% of its GDP on educations that are just about half the share given to educations by other regional countries. The absence of investing, therefore, has the effect of coming with few classrooms, underperforming teachers, and unneeded school materials, hence decreasing the quality education system as a result.

Also, the educational system in Pakistan has proven to be biased towards the religious and cultural aspects, and being a factor in restricting the education. Often, the students are not educated about themes such as science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM), which are very much important to the development of a country. On the contrary, the concentration is centered on theological wisdom, which is rarely useful in daily life.

Beside this, the concern of "education without any direction" not only affects the students in Pakistan but of course affects the others too. It is an international concern and some of the countries have organized career guidance projects to address this issue. For example, the government in Australian has created a National Career Education Strategy to arraign career guidance services for the students across the range of education levels (Department of Education and Training, 2019).

### **Lack of Uniformity in Education System**

And, among a host of other problems reported by different studies, the irregularities in the educational system of Pakistan are one of the most crucial ones (Memon, et al., 2020; Naseer, 2018; Riaz et al., 2017). The system is full of mishmash with no one common curriculum, similar teaching quality and standard examination, for example. In this essay we will be lighting up all angles of issue and its impact on the education system of Pakistan.

One of the main reasons that explain the heterogeneity of the Pakistani schools system is the diversity of the country's geographical regions and cultural backgrounds (Memon et al., 2020). Such diversity has effectively contributed to different views concerning education which has resulted into lack of consensus and standardization in the subject matter to be taught and teaching methods. Another key issue is that the Pakistani education system is multi-tiered encompassing various types of schools such as public, private, madrassas and vocational training centers each with their own curriculum and standards as laid out by Naseer (2018).

One more reason is the excise of teacher training and professional development where most teachers lack necessary skills (Riaz et al., 2017). Teachers are among the major issues Pakistan is facing today because many do not possess the competencies and the latest pedagogical methods to impart knowledge to their students. Besides, there is a big teacher's gap that causes the demand of the trained and qualified teachers in many schools since in most schools there are untrained and under qualified teachers.

The non-uniformity in the education system of Pakistan causes many negative consequences, these are table ones, such as unlevelled distribution of education and



chances to the various regions and social classes (Memon et al., 2020; Naseer, 2018). Thus the poverty, or inequality, or institutionalized. Moreover, there is also standardization issue for the recognition and acceptance of Pakistani degrees across the world and hence it becomes difficult for the Pakistani students to reach to the next level of higher education or job opportunities (Riaz et al., 2017).

**Conclusion:**

It is evident from the discussion that without a stable education system, it will be difficult to achieve MDGs. Government of Pakistan have to focus on education system and should take it on priority basis.

**Recommendations**

- 1) Government should take steps to minimize gender inequality. Due to gender discrimination a great part of population remains out of school and become burden on the economy of the country.
- 2) There should be sufficient allocation of budget of GDP for educational purpose. Each year it should be increase.
- 3) Curriculum should be according to demand of time and it should be revised.
- 4) Amendment should be made to improve examination system. Due to corruption in examination quality of education suffers a lot. Steps should be taken to minimize this.
- 5) In education system of Pakistan politician leads the education as education minister and it results interference from political parties. More and more involvement of educationist will decrease this interference
- 6) Quality of teachers should be improved by offering effective teachers training programs. It will have positive impact on overall education system.
- 7) Policies should be made to minimize dropout because government of Pakistan have failed to reduce dropout.
- 8) Education system and all stake holders must have clear concept of educational objectives and education should be provided with clear directions.

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