

"Resources can be rich only when properly utilized."

Outline :-

1) Introduction :-

Thesis statement: Both natural and human resources possess great value but their richness is only realized when utilized properly. Lack of political will, management issues and technical expertise lead to improper utilization of resources. Therefore, there is a dire need to revisit the policies to get maximum out of available resources.

2) Correlation between resources and their utilization :-

3) Why resources are not properly utilized :-

- a) Poor Planning of projects results in scarcity of resources.
- b) Lack of political will and corruption
- c) Interprovincial conflicts over resources
- d) Overutilization of non-renewable energy resources
- e) Less focus on Human Resource development
- f) Lack of technical innovation
- g) Lack of infrastructure impedes the process of resource distribution.

4) Implications of Improper utilization of resources :-

- a) Emergence of energy crisis and food shortages
- b) Trade deficit because of overreliance on imports.

- c) The project of national cohesion remains unfinished.
- d) Unemployment prevails as a result of poor management of human resource.
- e) Poverty because of unequal distribution of resources.
- f) Environmental degradation is the result as a result of over reliance on non-renewable resources.

5) Way forward :-

- a) Political will and Policy reforms are required.
- b) Sustainable Management of resources
- c) Skill based education should be provided for human development.
- d) Increased Investment in research and development should be prioritized.

e) Conclusion :-

Hazrat Omar (R.A) used to say that if a dog dies out of hunger at the river of Euphrates, Omar will be responsible for his death on the day of judgment. His words clearly indicate how important it is to manage resources so that their utilization would be proper and equally distributed to everyone. Pakistan is blessed with abundant resources like coal, oil, gas, minerals and a huge young population. However, poor planning, lack of political will and corruption, interprovincial conflicts are the hurdles in the way of efficient management of ~~these~~ resources. Moreover, over utilization of resources, less focus on human development, and lack of technical and infrastructural development adds insult to injury. These hurdles result in persistent energy crisis and food shortages, trade deficit, unemployment and poverty. Various ethnic and environmental issues are a result of improper utilization of resources. To address these issues it is important to have a political will. Sustainable management of resources along with skill based education and increased investment in research and development would solve the issues. Hence, Both natural and human resources possess great value but their richness is only realized when utilized properly. Lack of political will and technical expertise lead to improper utilization of resources. Therefore, there is a dire need to revisit the existent policies to get maximum out of available resources.

Resources constitute all those things which can be used for the benefit and betterment of society. These resources could be natural, financial, technical or human. ~~the~~ whereas, the utilization of resources means that how effectively ~~and~~ these resources are used to fulfill the needs of ~~the~~ a society.

When it comes to Pakistan, Pakistanis among those countries which are rich in resources but still faces resource curse because of improper utilization. Poor Planning of developmental projects by the government is a leading hurdle in the efficient management of resources. Before starting ~~and~~ any developmental project planning is a crucial step. Pakistan faces water crisis and one of the reasons of this crisis despite having a whole channel of canals and ground water is improper urban planning. For instance, urban cities like Lahore use most of the water while nearby areas face water shortage. This unequal distribution of water between urban and rural areas ~~the~~ results in water scarcity in rural places.

There is a lack of political will over the issue of resource utilization. Political ~~the~~ actors are more interested in accumulation of power rather than resolving the issues of common people. Almost every sector be it agriculture, industry, tourism or mining requires special attention of government for reforms. ~~The~~ The mining sector of Pakistan ~~is~~ is crucial for the extraction minerals and other resources essential for development but, this sector has been largely overlooked by the government. Mining is still done by labourers in poor working conditions, whereas,

developed countries use new technologies such as surface excavation machines. (Analysis of Minerals and Metal Sector in Pakistan, a report by Yasir Nawaz Farooqi). Therefore, ~~serious~~ Another case in point of lack of political will is the distribution of sui gas. Even though, sui gas is transported to the province of Punjab ~~it~~ constitutes 56% of Pakistan's total natural gas output still Balochistan faces gas shortage. Therefore, it is not the inavailability of resource but lack of political will which keeps Balochistan deprived of natural gas.

Interprovincial conflicts over the resources are also a factor contributing to improper management of resources. The conflict over water between the provinces, mainly Punjab and Sindh, is the reason behind unfinished project of Kala bagh dam. According to 1991 water Accord, 48% water goes to Punjab, 42% to Sindh, 7% to KPK and 3% to Balochistan (PIDE report: Analysis of water crisis). Punjab is an upper riparian province whereas ~~Baloch~~ Sindh is a lower riparian province, and usually the two remain at dagger ends over water management issue. Instead, a provincial harmony is required for efficient management of resources.

Pakistan's economy is heavily dependent on non-renewable energy resources such as coal and oil. These resources are depletable and hence overutilization of these resources would result in scarcity. Pakistan is located in sub-tropical region and ~~is exposed~~ summers are prolonged here.

Hence, solar energy is a viable option for the production of electricity instead of coal. In addition to this wind energy can also be substituted with non-renewable energy resources to preserve them from depletion. Therefore, renewable energy resources are potential substitute of fossil fuels for meeting the energy crisis of Pakistan.

Pakistan has a huge youth bulge also, which is a potential resource. But, this resource is also not benefiting the country as it should benefit because of unskilled youth. According to a report "National Human Development Survey" by UNDP, Pakistan's 64% of population is below 30 year age while 29% is below between 15 to 20 years. This youth can be the significant asset of country leading to development if managed properly. Unskilled young people would serve as a ticking bomb. So, being blessed with large number of young population require efficient management and skill developmental projects.

Apart from this, country largely lacks behind when it comes to technical innovation and expertise. New technologies enhance the efficiency and increase production capacity. Agriculture is the largest sector of Pakistan and accounts for 23% of GDP. (Pakistan Bureau of statistics). Despite agriculture being the largest sector, it is dependent of traditional methods of irrigation. New technologies and methods such as drip irrigation can not only save the water but also would result in increased productivity rates. Technological advancement can lead to better exploitation of resources.

Infrastructure is of great importance when it comes to the distribution of resources. Because of infrastructural impediments resources are not managed properly. For instance, Pakistan's energy production electricity production capacity is sufficient but because of the losses in transmission lines and reduced transmission capacity electricity demands can not be fully filled. Furthermore, infrastructure such as roads and railways, hotels and ~~internet~~ poor internet connections in northern areas are a cause of less revenue generation of tourism sector. The country has beautiful natural landscapes but due to lack of infrastructural development it is unable to get maximum benefit out of it. It means it is not the scarcity of resource but poor infrastructural development which is a problem.

The hurdles in the utilization of resources result in various consequences which affect the economic development and create problems to ~~use~~ of societal disharmony and environmental degradation.

Pakistan faces energy and food shortage crisis every now and then, because of inefficient management of resources. In summers, energy crisis electricity shortage where as in winters gas shortage crisis emerge every other year. These two resources electricity and gas are vital to run the industries and daily lives of common people. Because of improper management the issue of energy crisis

is persistent and requires urgent attention of government. Food crisis is yet another issue which emerges every year despite large arable land. Wheat crisis emerged in May 2024 when government refused to procure the wheat. Flour crisis emerged in September 2023 because the country faced the shortage of flour. For an agrarian country, which even exports wheat, such a crisis is a result of poor management of agricultural resources.

The trade deficit of Pakistan is 17.7% for the financial year (2023-2024). (Economic Survey of Pakistan). The trade deficit shows that Pakistan relies heavily on imports to fulfill its needs. This is a direct impact of inefficient utilization of resources. Pakistan's rich resources would have been sufficient to fulfill the needs if they were utilized properly. Despite having both renewable and non-renewable energy resources for energy production, the country imports oil and gas.

Another significant impact of poor management of resources is that the project of national cohesion remains unfinished. Grievances exist between provinces over the utilization of resources. Balochistan provides gas, minerals and the Gwadar port, all of which are of utmost importance for the development and progress of the country. Despite having abundant resources, the province remains backward in many ways. This unequal distribution of resources

is the major cause of ethnic disputes and separatist movements in the country.

One of prevailing issue of Pakistan is that of unemployment. Unemployment the resultant of poor management of human resource. Pakistan's education sector is not focusing on the skill development of students. 40% of 24% of educated youth of Pakistan is unemployed. This is because of the reason that they lack the expertise which are required in the job market and also opportunities are less in Pakistan. If the ~~resources~~ human resource has to be preserved and utilized efficiently along with addressing then the issue of unemployment can be addressed.

Poverty is also a by product of ill treatment ill-treatment of resources. Unequal distribution of resources results in the accumulation of wealth in few hands. Pakistani society is divided clearly into poor rural and comparatively better developed urban centers. The poverty in rural areas is not because of low resources, but because of structural problem. Unbalanced development of rural and urban areas is the cause of backwardness of rural areas. Therefore, to alleviate poverty proper management of resources is crucial.

Environmental degradation is a challenge of urgent concern. Environmental degradation is a phenomenon which emerged as a

consequence of overreliance on non-renewable energy resources. Carbon emission because of burning of fossil fuels is degrading the environment by causing pollution. Pakistan is one of those countries which is facing severe impacts of climate change despite contributing very ~~min~~ base minimum in carbon emission. Despite this fact, overreliance on non-renewable energy resources is visible in Pakistan. This needs to ^{be} cut down to protect the environment.

To address the issue of improper utilization of resources various reforms are required. These include governmental policies to prevent the issue of improper utilization.

The first and foremost thing is to develop a political will and government should revisit the policies. This includes the policies of distribution of resources and reforms in every sector to capitalize its full potential. For example, equitable distribution of water between urban and rural areas must be focused. Properly planned cities should be focused ~~but~~ because it would an expansive project. Consensus among provinces and political parties is the first step towards the management of resources.

Sustainable management of resources is required for the efficient management of resources. Ground water is a non-renewable resource. Forests, ~~minerals~~ fossil fuels all of these resources

can only be preserved if managed properly. Shifting towards green energy such as biofuel, solar, wind and hydro is required. Sustainable management is important because it ensures the long-term availability of resources by taking into account a holistic view of management and consideration of ~~inter~~ interconnectedness of economic, social and environmental systems.

To capitalize on youth, universities should update their curriculum and impart skill based and practical knowledge rather than relying on theoretical knowledge. Entrepreneurial skills should be prioritized. Students should be encouraged towards STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) education. Start-up culture needs to be promoted and supported by government to utilize the potential of youth for the economic development of country.

There is a need to bring the gap between academia and industry for the solutions of longstanding issues of various sectors such as agriculture, mining and energy. Partnership between academia, industry and government is an essential step to develop new technologies and solutions. Pakistan need to learn from Netherlands how integration between academia and industry leads to mitigation of issues. Netherlands is a low-lying country. Approximately 26% of country is below

sea-level and faces constant threat of floating. But Netherlands has effectively dealt with issue by employing advanced engineering technologies techniques and building storm surge barriers etc.

To sum up the argument, richness of resources is only utilized when managed properly. ~~There exist~~ The issues of ~~p~~ lack of political will, poor planning and technical expertise are a reality. And there is a need to revisit the policies to manage the resources. Even though, Pakistan is facing a challenge of resource curse because of inefficient management but considering huge reserves of natural resources, population and young population, it is possible to take country out of the issues. Developmental projects like CPEC and SIFC are an opportunity for Pakistan to use the maximum potential of its resources.