

Education System in Pakistan: A Leveller or Source of all Inequalities?

Outline

1. Introduction

Thesis statement: The apartheid education system of Pakistan perpetuates socio-economic and political disparities in society. Thus, transforming the existing polarized education system into a greatest leveller would require across-the-board measures.

2. A brief Overview of education system of Pakistan

- Three tiers education set up

3. How Pakistan's education system is source of all inequalities?

I - Apartheid education system brings unequal job opportunities for masses
Reference: Carrier Pakistan Report (2023)

II - It keeps the poor poorer and rich richer

Case in point: Report published by Planning Commission of Pakistan (2021)

III - Prevailing digital-divide is by-product of existing education system

Reference: Digital Rights Foundation of Pakistan's report (2023)

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IV - It consolidates elites capture on power corridors of country. Case in point: "22 Families Thesis" by Mehboob-ul-Haq

V - Uneven access to higher education and international scholarships is offshoot of segmented education system. Case study: HEL's annual report on doctates.

VI - The disproportionate access to health facilities is also because of divided education system. Reference: World Health Organization Report (2024)

VII - It also exacerbates gender disparities in all spheres of life. Case in point: Gender Gap Index of Pakistan (2024)

VIII - It fosters marginalization of youth in host of fields. Case study: Hiering of people in sports

4- How Pakistan's education system is a leveller: A counter perspective

- Poor people on higher posts
- Scholarships on merit base
- Equal criteria for jobs

(Book: Education and Social Order)

5. What are the causes of polarized education system of Pakistan?

I - Presence of conservatism in madrasah education about scientific knowledge fosters inequalities

Case study: Madrasah's students are incompetent to get jobs

II - Absence of uniform education system across the country is the main factor behind segmented education system

Reference: Concerns of Ministry of Education on DEPS (2020)

III - Presence of outdated courses and unskilled teachers in educational institutions is the main cause of divided-education system

Books: Education and Social Order

IV - Lack of investment in public educational institutions is the key factor behind polarized education system

Case in point: 1.9 percent of GDP for education

6. What are the measures to address the issues of Pakistan's education system for making it greatest source of leveler?

I - Effective implementation of single national curriculum can reduce disparities from Pakistan's education system

Reference: Finland's Education Model

II. Increasing government investment in public educational institutions can improve quality of education
Case in point: India invests 5.9% of its GDP in education

III. Ensuring teaching of modern education is also essential in this regard
Case study: Malaysian Model of Education

IV. Ensuring teaching of updated courses can eliminate apartheid from education system
Reference: STEAM Programme

V. Guaranteeing recruitment of skilled teachers in public educational institutions is indispensable in this context
Case in point: Canadian recruitment model

7. Conclusion

Polarized education system fosters all inequalities in every sphere of life. Maleeha Lodhi has rightly said in her books: 'Pakistan Beyond the Crisis State' that "All tiers of education system in Pakistan are broadly stratified along three dimensions: socio-economic, qualitative and ideological. The end result is perpetuation of disparities across all dimensions of life". It vividly indicates that existing education system of Pakistan is the source of all prevailing inequalities in the society. Apartheid education system brings unequal job opportunities for citizens. Moreover, poor are becoming poorer and rich becoming richer due to existing divided education system in the country. Prevailing digital-gap, elite capture in power corridors and uneven access to international scholarships are the off-shoots of divided education system. Exacerbating gender-gap, coupled with increasing marginalization of the youth is also one of the negative results of Pakistan's existing education system. However, it has also proved itself as a leveler in some areas.

There are multiple causes of segmented education system of Pakistan, such as, presence of conservatism in madrassah's education system. Absence of uniform education system along with existence of outdated

Courses is an other factor behind polarized education system in the country. Some concrete measures are necessary to address the issues of Pakistan's education system. Effective implementation of single national curriculum, increasing investment in public institutions and ensuring teaching of modern courses are key steps in this regard. Recruitment of skilled teachers can eliminate disparities from the education system. The apartheid education system of Pakistan perpetuates socio-economic and political disparities in society. Thus, transforming the existing education system into a greatest leveller would require across-the-board measures.

Education system of Pakistan is stratified on socio-economic, quality and ideological basis. There are three tiers of education system including private, public and religious education. Unfortunately, all tiers have their own type of education. The end result of such a education setup is presence of disparities in all dimensions of life. Any country's education system is linked with its ideology and ensures national cohesion. However, Pakistan's case is exceptional as it bears the brunt of segmented education system. Unity, cohesion, growth and equality cannot be guaranteed.

in existing education setup in Pakistan. Thus, Pakistan's education system is source of all inequalities in the country.

Apartheid education system brings unequal job opportunities for masses. Students of private educational institutions secure more jobs as compared to that of public school students. It is the cause, elite schools teach modern and updated courses. Moreover, Madrasah's students rarely get jobs in the market. According to Career Pakistan report (2003), "90 percent jobs in professional fields are secured by private schools students as they are abreast of updated knowledge and skills". On the other hand, public schools have failed to provide modern knowledge to the students. As a result, students from public schools are unable to compete in job market. Same is the case of Madrasah's education. Thus, education system of Pakistan fosters inequalities in the society.

In the same manner, existing Pakistan's education system makes poor poorer and rich richer. Rich class children get education from elite schools. They acquire modern knowledge and skills. On the other hand, middle class children are admitted

in public schools. Resultantly, they cannot get quality education. Therefore, poor are becoming poorer and rich are becoming richer. Recently, Planning Commission of Pakistan has reported that gap between rich and poor classes is increasing and major factor behind this divide is presence of non-uniformed education system in the country. Thus, three tier education system is driver of disparities in the society.

Similarly, prevailing digital-divide is by-product of polarized education system of Pakistan. There is inter-gender and intra-gender digital gap due to multiple standards of education across the country. For instance, madressahs students are unaware about the digitalization. Even students of public schools hardly operate simple digital gadgets due to lack of skills and relative knowledge about the digital tools. In 2023, digital rights foundation of Pakistan reported that "students studying in private schools feel conducive to use technological platforms for learning new skills. However, public schools students are at the bottom of digitalization. Hence, it is true to contend that education system of Pakistan is the key cause of prevailing inequalities in the society."

In the same vein, divided education system helps elite capture on power corridors. Most of the higher posts in all sectors are occupied by super-rich people. High quality education and modern skills are pre-requisites for securing place in power corridors. Therefore, students of elite schools can easily sought such positions as they are more capable than that of public schools. Mehboob-ul-Haq writes in his book "22 Families Thesis" that "all the top positions of power corridors are consolidated by 22 families across the country. It is a far-dream for students of public schools to qualify for such positions. Hence, segmented education system of Pakistan brings disproportional opportunities for masses.

On the same pattern, uneven access to higher education and international scholarships is negative offshoot of divided education system. Pakistan is no exception to it. Elite school candidates have more access to higher education as compare to that of public schools. This difference is due to non-uniformed standard of education in schools. However, madrasah students are even excluded from the count of those obtaining international scholarships.

It is an established fact that candidates of private schools are capable enough to seek foreign scholarships for graduation or masters programme. According to recently published report of Higher Education Commission of Pakistan on doctorates, "More than 70 percent students of doctorate studying abroad belongs to private educational institutions". Hence, existing Pakistan's education system is the source of all disparities in the society.

In addition to above, disproportionate access to health facilities is also due to polarized education set up. In private schools, there is conducive and hospitable environment. As a result, students remain healthy and are more productive. Contrarily, there are unhygienic conditions of classrooms in government schools. There fore, candidates remain unhealthy and are less productive. Similarly, environment of classes in madrassahs is also not upto the mark. Recently, World Health Organization enjoined government of Pakistan to guaranteed good conditions of classrooms in public institutions. It is because, they claimed that unhygienic conditions in public schools is the key cause of ill-physical as well as ill-mental

health of children. Thus, it can safely be said that Pakistan's education system fosters inequalities in the society.

In the same way, polarized education system exacerbates gender disparities in society. Girls have relatively less access to school as compared to males. Similarly, ratio of boys is more in both private and public schools than girls. As a result, many inequalities ensue between males and females. Even courses taught in schools are not gender-inclusive as most of the content in books shows dominant position of men over women especially in decision making and earnings. Gender Gap Index is based on multiple factors and literacy is one of them. According to Gender Gap Index of 2024, Pakistan ranks at 146 out of 148 countries. Pakistan is just two steps up from the bottom. Verily, segmented education is the main cause of disparities in the society.

Furthermore, divided system of education perpetuates marginalization of youth in all dimensions of life. Uneducated or less educated people are undermined in society, while well

educated elite moral students madressahs privileges people robust speaks On the having used elite in education of

are school and of are in from having private language or english the other studied not sharp speakers of Therefore, elite school are mostly recruited in sports. All and above, education is the major driver of all inequalities in society.

Contrarily, education system of Pakistan is also a leveller as it helps middle class or poor class people to shift their living standards. Educated people of lower class are capable enough to seek better jobs in the market. Similarly, middle class masses have also secured good jobs particularly in private sector. Bertrand Russell wrote in his book: 'Education and Social Order' that "education, no matter what the quality is, helps poor strata to shift itself to middle or rich class. Similarly, most of the poor class students studied from public schools, are getting international

scholarships on merit. Thus, education system of country is also a better.

There are various causes of Pakistan's polarized education system and presence of conservatism in madrasah education about the scientific knowledge is one of them. Religious misinterpretation about the modern education resist madrasah's students from seeking scientific knowledge and skills. As a result, the candidates remain unable to get better jobs in the market. No doubt, the rigid and fixed thoughts of religious clerks divide education system in various lines. For example, less than 1 percent students from seminaries are in job market. Verily, conservative thinking of religious clerks causes divisions in education system of the country.

Additionally, absence of uniform education system across the country is also a key factor behind polarized system of education in Pakistan. There are three tiers of education in the country such as private, public and religious. All the types of education are stratified in quality, ideology and socio-economic level. Elite schools provide high quality education, while public schools' education is below par.

Religious education is totally different from remaining two tiers education. Ministry of Education has also expressed concerns on the recently published report of District Education Provincial Index. According to the index, Islamabad's position is top. However, there are differences in education access and quality among districts as well as within districts. Thus, absence of consensus based uniform education is the main component of apartheid education set up of the country.

In the same vein, presence of outdated courses and unskilled teachers also leads to divided education system in Pakistan. Almost all of the government schools are teaching same traditional courses since decades. Moreover, recruitment of unskilled teachers is also shifting the situation of public education from bad to worse. Bertrand Russell has rightly said in his books: "Education and social order" that "Quality education is directly linked to updated courses. All in vain, if there is presence of outdated teachers and mentors". Verily, existence of outdated curriculum and unskilled teachers hinders uniformity in education system of the country.

On the similar pattern, lack of investment in public schools also causes apartheid in Pakistan's education system. There is poor infrastructural conditions in public institutions. Absence of hygienic environment affects mental and physical health which, in turn, results in low quality candidates. For instance, Pakistan invests 1.9 percent of its GDP on education, while India invests 5.9 percent of her GDP on education. Resultantly, there is uniform education system in Delhi, but Islamabad is having segmented system of education. Hence, lack of investment in public schools is the major cause of divided education in the state.

Some prudent measures are necessary to address the issues of Pakistan's education system for making it greatest levelled. First and foremost measure in this context is implementation of single national curriculum across the country. Segmentation can be eliminated from the education system through guaranteeing uniform education system in public, private and madrassah schools. As a result, all the masses would be able to compete in the job market. For example, there is uniform system of education in Finland. Government of has designed

same courses for both public and private schools. It is due to this that the country is more developed, prosperous and integrated. Thus, implementation of consensus based single national curriculum can guarantee equal opportunities for all citizens.

Secondly, increasing government investment in public education can also uproot polarization from Pakistan's education system. Financial support can improve infrastructure of the public schools. Similarly, modern courses could be launched with financial support. Therefore, public schools will compete with elite schools at all levels. For instance, government schools are competing with private schools in quality education and infrastructural standards. It is due to government's 5.8 percent of her GDP's investment in public education. Verily, increasing investment in public education can transform role of education from source of inequalities to a greatest leveller.

Thirdly, guaranteeing teaching of modern scientific courses in madrasahs is also essential to foster uniform education system in Pakistan. Teaching of modern knowledge in madrasahs can bring multiple job opportunities

For them. For instance, Malaysian seminaries are teaching both religious courses and scientific courses. Resultantly, madrasah's students play their role in research and innovation. Hence, teaching of modern courses in religious schools can transform the education system of Pakistan from driver of disparities to greatest source of equality.

Fourthly, ensuring teaching of modern and updated courses especially in public schools is need of the hour in this regard. Launching updated course in government schools can instill market required skills in students. Moreover, environment of research and development would be set via modern knowledge. Therefore, knowledge gap between public and private schools will also be decreased. For example, the government has initiated STEAM - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics programme for furnishing or installing modern skills in educated market. Thus, ascertaining teaching of updated courses can resolve the issue of apartheid in education system of the country.

Last but not least, recruitment of skilled teachers in public educational institutions is also a major measure to address divided system of education in Pakistan. It is an undeniable fact that unskilled and un-professional teachers are the major factors behind polarized education. Hiring of skilled mentors in merit basis of meritocracy can ensure uniform education system. Moreover, public schools will compete with private schools in terms of quality education. Canadian recruitment model is case in this regard. Teachers in Canada are recruited through a uniform testing model in both public and private schools. Hence, hiring of skilled teaching staff can ensure uniform system of education.

To conclude, polarized education system of Pakistan justers all inequalities in the society. It brings unequal job opportunities along with keeping status quo of haves and have-nots. Prevailing digital gap is also by product of the apartheid education set up. Consolidating elite capture in power corridors, uneven access to international scholarships, disproportionate access to health facilities and increasing gender gap are all the negative

Consequences of existing Pakistan's education system. However, in new areas, it has proved itself a leveller. There are multiple causes of polarized system of education, such as, prevailing conservatism in religious seminaries regarding modern scientific knowledge, absence of uniform education setup, lack of investment in public schools and so on. Some concrete measures including implementation of consensus based single national curriculum and increasing GDP ratio of education can address the menace of unskilled in education. Ensuring recruitment of skilled teachers along with teaching updated courses is equally important measure in this context. Hence, transforming segmented education system to uniform education system is essential otherwise the country will bear the brunt of inequalities in all dimensions of life.

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