

Essay # 03

Higher Education of Pakistan: ills and Remedies

1. Introduction :

Thesis Statement:

Higher education is the third level of education which helps young minds to pursue journey of intellectual discovery. In Pakistan, higher education is facing serious ills which has put it in the doldrum. However, by taking pro-active measures these ills can be countered.

2. Overview of Higher Education in Pakistan

3. Prevailing ills in Higher Education OF Pakistan

a. Higher education in Pakistan is expensive.

b. Difficulty in enrollment and access to higher education

- c. Inadequate teaching faculty
- d. Lack of motivation in members of faculty
- e. Obsolete and outdated curricula.
- f. Lack of innovation and creativity among students
- g. Universities as place for political contests.
- h. Red Tapism and corruption in hiring process of teachers
- I. Allocation of insufficient funds to higher educational institutions.

4. Remedies to eliminate the prevailing ills in the Higher Education of Pakistan

- a. Availability of equal opportunity of education to all citizens.
- b. Fostering a culture of Research and Innovation
- c. Annual revision and update of curriculum
- d. Public private partnership to improve the quality of higher education
- e. Use of technology to improve the examination standard education

- f. Ban on politics in institutions
- g. To Root out corruption in institutions

5. Conclusion

In the latest QS World University Rankings 2024, only two Pakistani institutions made it to the top 500 and merely eight to the top 1000. Such is the poor and appalling condition of higher education in Pakistan. The ills prevailing in higher education in Pakistan is responsible for the poor performances of universities. These ills include high expenses, difficulty in enrollment and access to higher education and inadequate teaching faculty who lacks motivation. The curricula of higher education is out-dated and obsolete which results in lack of innovation and creativity among students. Besides, universities as a place for political contest, red tapism and corruption in hiring process of teaching and allocation of insufficient funds are the prevailing ills in higher education of Pakistan. However, these ills can be eliminated by taking measures such as availability

of equal opportunities of education to all citizens, fostering a culture of research and innovation, and annual revision and update of curriculum. Besides, public-private partnership to improve the quality of education, use of technology to improve education standard, ban on politics and elimination of corruption are some other measures. Higher education is the third level of education which helps young minds to pursue journeys of intellectual discovery. In Pakistan, higher education is facing serious ills which has put it in the doldrum. However, by taking pro-active measures these ills can be countered.

Higher education serves as a cornerstone of national development, shaping the destiny of nations through the classrooms that mold the minds of young leaders and innovators. In case of Pakistan, attaining higher education is both a pursuit of hunger and an aspiration for change. Pakistan has established various institutions

which imparts higher education. These institutions either public or private offers different degree programmes in various disciplines. According to the Pakistan Economic Survey 2023-2024, the total number of universities in Pakistan stands at 247. It includes 147 public and 100 private institutions, with up to two million students enrolled in various programmes.

Higher education system in Pakistan poses several ills. Expensiveness of higher education is one of the prevailing ills in higher education system of Pakistan. It costs a lot of money to get higher education in Pakistan. Tuition fees of private universities and some public universities are too high for many families. On average, the tuition fees for private universities ranges from PKR 50,000 to PKR 200,000 per year or more, while public universities charge around PKR 10,000 to

PKR 50,000 annually. Furthermore, the cost of accommodation and study related materials are unbearable for poor and middle class families. Students face extra costs for books, materials and living expenses, making higher education a significant financial burden for many families. In a nutshell, the expensiveness of higher education creates barriers for many potential students.

Difficulty in enrollment and access to higher education is another prevailing ill in higher education system of Pakistan. Different factors create significant barrier to accessing higher education in Pakistan. Economic barrier strains student from getting enrolled in higher education. Many families struggle to afford the tuition fee and other related expenses with higher education. Moreover, lack of institutions, particularly in rural areas, restricts access for many students. Those who want to pursue higher education often have to travel long distances or relocate,

which is not feasible for many lower-income families. Resultantly, these factors create significant barriers to accessing higher education in Pakistan.

Furthermore, Inadequate teaching faculty is another serious problem in higher education in Pakistan. This results in lack of critical and analytical skills in students as they didn't receive quality education. Lack of qualified and experienced instructors lead to lack of proper guidance for students. When faculty members are not well-trained or knowledgeable in their subject areas, it directly affects the quality of education that students receive. Besides, teaching methods employed by some faculty members are not effective or engaging. Traditional lecture based approaches fail to promote critical thinking and interactive learning. In short, inadequate teaching faculty affects effectiveness of higher education in Pakistan.

Moreover, the lack of motivation in faculty members significantly undermines the quality of higher education in Pakistan. Due to the lack of motivation, the faculty members ~~do~~ not fully engage with their teaching responsibilities or invest time in research and professional development. Lack of motivation among the faculty members negatively impacts students' learning experiences. The engagement of teachers with students decreases which leads to less effective teaching and a lack of motivation in the classroom. Besides, unmotivated faculty does not participate in curriculum development. This stagnation results in students who are not prepared for current industry demand. In a nutshell, lack of motivated faculty is a significant issue in the higher education sector of Pakistan.

Besides, obsolete and outdated curricula pose a significant threat to the higher education system in Pakistan. The education programs of

the higher education in Pakistan does not meet the modern standards of education in Pakistan. The obsolete and outdated curricula in higher education institutions lead students toward an insecure future.

Lack of necessary skills required in job market leads to high unemployment rates among graduates.

Additionally, outdated curricula stifle critical thinking and creativity in students. This limits their ability to adapt to new situations and innovate in their respective fields. To boils down, outdated and obsolete curricula significantly undermines the quality of higher education in Pakistan.

Additionally, lack of innovation and creativity among students is a significant issue in higher education sector of Pakistan. When students are not encouraged to think creatively or explore new ideas, it leads to a rigid educational environment that stifles intellectual growth. Lack of creativity results

in graduates who are less equipped to handle real-world challenges. The students struggle to develop unique solutions or adapt to changing circumstances in their fields. Furthermore, an educational system that does not prioritize innovation hinders the overall progress of society. Creative thinkers are essential for driving advancements in technology, business, and social development. Resultantly, lack of innovation and creativity among students is a serious problem faced by students in higher education in Pakistan.

Furthermore, Universities in Pakistan serve as a place for political contest which is regarded as a significant issue within the higher education system of Pakistan. Political activities in educational institution leads to several challenges. It leads to poor educational performance of students. Political activities distract students from educational pursuit, as political agendas often take precedence over educational goals. Moreover, the political

D
-zation of universities lead to violence and unrest on campus, disrupting the learning environment. Political affiliation of students with different political parties lead to clashes among student groups, creating a sense of insecurity and also affects their academic performance. To add up, the politicization of universities lead to different problems for both the student and institution.

- Red Tapism and corruption in hiring process of teachers is another serious issue in the higher education system of Pakistan. These issues create barriers that prevent qualified candidates from securing positions based on merit. Prevalence of red tapism and corruption in hiring process of teachers undermines the quality of education. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has highlighted that around 40% of universities in Pakistan struggle with inadequate faculty, which directly affects the quality of education. Furthermore, red tapism and corruption in hiring process of teachers undermine

meritocracy which affects institutional reputation. Surveys indicate that nearly 30% of academic staff believe that nepotism plays a major role in hiring decisions, which undermines meritocracy.

Resultantly, nepotism and corruption in hiring process of teachers negatively affect the higher education system in Pakistan.

Last but not the least, allocation of insufficient funds to universities is another serious problem in the higher education system of Pakistan.

Many universities struggle to operate effectively due to budget constraints.

Insufficient funding affects various aspects, including infrastructure development, research opportunities, and faculty salaries. According to Higher Education Commission (HEC), lack of funding leads to a budget shortfall that affects over 60% of universities, limiting their ability to enhance facilities and academic programs. Additionally, low salaries lead to difficulties in attracting

and retaining qualified faculty, further compromising the quality of education. A Report from the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDIE) indicates that over 70% of universities face several financial constraints, which hampers their ability to attract qualified faculty. To sum up, the lack of sufficient funding is regarded as the serious ill in higher education of Pakistan due to its negative impacts.

However, these ills can be eliminated from higher education system by taking certain pro-active measures which are discussed below. Availability of equal opportunity to education to all citizens is a remedy to overcome the issues in higher education of Pakistan. Availability of equal opportunity of education ~~is~~ not only benefit the students but also ~~will~~ benefit the society and nation as a whole. Equal access to education ~~is~~ promotes inclusive society. When all individuals, regar-

-less of their background, have the chance to pursue higher education, it fosters a more inclusive society.

Additionally, providing equal opportunities reduce the prevalence of corruption and favoritism in the higher education system. When admission and resources are allocated on merit rather than connections or wealth, it encourages a culture of fairness and accountability. To boil down, equal access to education helps to eliminate the ills in the higher education system of Pakistan.

Fostering a culture of research and innovation is crucial for addressing the issues plaguing the higher education system in Pakistan. Effectiveness ofiveness of education system in Pakistan can be achieved by fostering a culture of research and innovation. Encouraging research can help to enhance the quality of education. When universities prioritize research, they create an environment where students and faculty engage in critical thinking and

creativity. Moreover, a strong emphasis on research and innovation can lead to the development of new technologies and solutions that are relevant to Pakistan's unique socio-economic context. This alignment between academic research and societal needs ensures that the education system not only produces graduates who are not only knowledgeable but also equipped to drive change in their environment. Resultantly, by fostering a culture of research and innovation, the higher education system becomes more dynamics.

Moreover, annual revision and update of the curriculum in Pakistan's higher education system can play a vital role in eliminating various issues. It can ensure that higher education remains relevant, effective, and responsive. Annual revision and upgradation of curriculum can helps to equip students with skills relevant to the industry needs. This in turn results in reduction in unemployment and underdevelopment. Furthermore,

a dynamic curriculum promotes critical thinking and innovation. This prepares students to think independently and innovate, which is essential for personal and national development. To sum up, this proactive approach can help eliminate many of the systemic issues faced by the higher education in Pakistan.

Private

Furthermore, public-private partnership can improve the quality of higher education in Pakistan. This collaboration can lead to a more effective and responsive education system. The involvement of private entities can introduce competitive practices and quality assurance mechanisms in public institutions. This can drive improvements in teaching quality, student satisfaction, and overall institutional effectiveness. Additionally, through public-private partnership access to higher education can expand. Private entities can establish satellite campuses, online programs, or vocational training centers, making education more accessible to a broader population. In short, the higher

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education system in Pakistan can become more effective and efficient through public-private partnership.

Besides, use of technology in the higher education system of Pakistan can improve the education standards and can eliminate the ills in higher education. Integrating technology into higher education in Pakistan can address many of the systemic issues. Technology enables the creation of online learning platforms that can provide access to quality education beyond geographical borders. Students in remote areas can benefit from online courses offered by the institutions. Furthermore, technology can incorporate interactive learning tools. The interactive learning tools such as virtual classroom, educational apps, and multimedia resources can enhance student engagements and understanding. To sum up, through the use of technology, institutions can create a more effective and responsive education system.

Moreover, ban on politics in

educational institutions can play a significant role in eliminating various ills in the higher education system of Pakistan. Banning politics can significantly contribute to creating a more stable, focused, and equitable higher education system in Pakistan. Violence and unrest can be reduced in educational institutions by banning politics. This can result in a safer learning environment, allowing students to focus on their studies. Besides, the elimination of political influence can promote meritocracy over favoritism in the higher education system of Pakistan. This encourages fairness and equal opportunities for all students. To add up, banning politics in educational institutions can significantly eliminate various ills in the higher education of Pakistan.

Last but not the least, rooting out corruption in higher education can significantly help eliminate various ills in Pakistan's educational system.

This can lead to fairness, accountability, and trust, ultimately creating a more

effective educational system in Pakistan. Elimination of corruption can lead to improved quality of education. Funds and resources can be directed towards improving educational quality. Moreover a corruption-free environment fosters accountability among faculty and administration. When institutions operate transparently, it becomes easier to monitor performance, leading to better governance in higher education. In short, rooting out corruption is an effective remedy to eliminate the ills in the higher education of Pakistan.

In a nutshell, higher education system of Pakistan is an effective mean to develop nation and to shape its destiny. Unfortunately, in Pakistan higher education is facing serious ills which hinder it from its effective functioning.

The most pressing issue in the higher education is its expensiveness due to which limited students get access to higher education.

Inadequate teaching faculty,

obsolete and outdated curriculum and lack of innovation and creativity, red tapism and corruption, and allocation of insufficient funds are some other issues in the higher education system of Pakistan. However, these ills can be eliminated by taking certain pro-active measures such as providing equal opportunity of education to all citizens, fostering a culture of research and innovation, annual revision and update of curricula, use of technology, ban on politics and rooting out of corruption.