

# Higher Education in Pakistan: ills and remedies

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## Outlines:

### A. Introduction

Thesis Statement

### B. Overview of Current Situation of Higher Education in Pakistan

### C. ILLS for higher Education in Pakistan.

- a) Expensive Education
- b) Gender Disparity in education
- c) Low allocation of budget
- d) Co-education at undergraduate and post-graduate level
- e) Inaccessibility to educational institutions
- f) Lack of proper counselling
- g) Outdated curriculum

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### D. Remedies for Higher Education in Pakistan:

- a) Increase scholarships and financial aids for student
- b) Enhanced career counselling and guidance
- c) Industry-academia partnerships
- d) Merit based admission and hiring
- e) Increase budget for higher studies
- f) Curriculum Up-gradation

### E. Conclusion

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Education is the cornerstone of a nation's progress, empowering individuals, fostering innovation and driving socio-economic development. Can Pakistan's higher education system overcome its entrenched flaws to produce the visionary leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs required to propel the nation towards prosperity and global relevance?

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However, the situation of higher education in Pakistan is not satisfactory as it is facing many challenges. To begin with, the cost of education is not affordable at all levels. Similarly, large number of people that are living in tribal areas and villages not allow their daughters to go for higher studies, because they consider it against their societal norms. The co-education in most of the institutions also strengthen their opinion. Moreover, due to low allocation of budget from the government for higher education creates many

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obstructions for student because they lack the basic necessary facilities in ~~some~~ colleges and universities. Also, many students are unable to join well reputed institutes to pursue their higher studies due to inaccessibility to educational institutes. ~~Likewise, lack of proper counselling and outdated curriculum are root causes~~ for higher education crisis in country still, in the context of solutions for higher education in Pakistan there are some important factors. First, there is a dire need to increase budget for higher education, and provide scholarships to needy students. Similarly, there should be proper counselling for students at all levels of their study and industry-academia partnerships. The higher education in Pakistan is facing many problems but can be cured by taking immediate remedial measures. Higher education is

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of utmost importance in the socio-economic advancement of a country, as it significantly influences the formation of future leaders, researchers and professionals. In the Pakistani context, the higher education system has recently experienced substantial growth and expansion. Pakistan's comprehensive higher education system is characterized by a wide array of universities, encompassing both public and private institutions. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) serves as a principal governing entity. So, the primary objective of the essay is to discuss the various ills and remedies encountered by higher education sector in Pakistan.

To begin with, the expensive education is a pernicious ill afflicting Pakistan's higher education sector. The high tuition fees restrict access to quality education for marginalized communities. Similarly, the students from low family income

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abandon their education. Also, the talented students seek affordable education abroad on fully or partially funded scholarships, and deprived Pakistan of future doctor, innovators and leaders. For instance, tuition fees ranges from PKR 50,000 to 50,000 per semester with an annual increment of 10-20% making higher education unaffordable. Therefore, cost of education stops many student to continue their higher study.

Similarly, gender disparity in higher education is a pervasive ill in Pakistan. Women in Pakistan face significant barriers to accessing their education at higher level as compared to their male counterpart. Moreover, patriarchal attitudes and expectations of society restrict women's educational choices and opportunities. Also, the women from low-income background are restricted to perform domestic roles instead

of higher education. For example the report of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2020 shows that the female literacy rate is 46.5% compared to 69.5% for males. Gender disparity is a contributing factor for the crisis of higher education in Pakistan.

Likewise, low allocation of budget for higher education is a significant ill in Pakistan. The allocation of budget for higher education is 1.5% of GDP, which is far below global standard. In addition, low allocation of budget hampers infrastructural development and hindering quality education. Furthermore, low budget limits faculty recruitment and training as well. As per the report of MEC, 2020, 70% of universities in Pakistan are facing financial constraints. Therefore, allocation of budget is critical ill affecting the sector of higher education.

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In the same way, co-education at undergraduate and post-graduate level is considered a ill for higher education. To start with, co-education challenges Islamic teachings and traditional Pakistani values. To add to it, co-education increases the risk of harassment and sexual exploitation for female student. Moreover, mixed gender environments can distract the concentration and focus of student and hindering academic performance. For instance, "Co-education linked to increased the drop out rates among female students" - Research study 2019. Therefore, co-education is a ill that stop many students to complete their Higher education.

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Also, Inaccessibility to the educational institutions is a pervasive ill affecting higher education in Pakistan. To begin with, many people in Pakistan are living in

remote and rural areas, therefore they have limited access to educational institutions. This further ~~cause~~ <sup>Causes</sup> the limited awareness about the institutions, programmes, and admission process in people living away from institutions. For example, 40% Pakistani live in rural areas with limited institution access. - PBS 2020. So, inaccessibility to educational institutions is a critical ill affecting higher education in Pakistan.

In the same manner lack of proper counseling is critical ill for higher education in Pakistan. To begin with, the inadequate career guidance leading to poor career choices for students. Additionally, many ~~students are unaware~~ about programmes and institutions that they desired. This further leads to high drop out rates because they have lack of interest in the field of study in which they are enrolled. For



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instance according to WHO report Pakistan has a counselor for every 1000 students (1:1000). Therefore, due to lack of proper counseling Pakistan's higher education suffers alot.

Lastly, outdated curriculum is another ill for higher study in Pakistan. To begin with, due to irrelevant courses and curriculum flaws higher education fails to address emerging industries. To add to it, the curriculum is not aligned with global standards which restricts the students of higher study to perform well at national and international levels. For example, according to the Survey of 2022 more than 60% of graduates in Pakistan lack necessary skills. Therefore, outdated curriculum is a ill for higher education in Pakistan.

In the aforementioned points, there were some points that are showing the

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As for higher education in Pakistan, in the following paragraphs, there are some remedial measures regarding the issues of higher education in Pakistan.

To start with, increasing scholarships and financial aids is an important remedy for higher education in Pakistan.

Similarly, increasing the number of students and families. Likewise, it encourages the marginalised group of students to pursue higher studies. This will prevent the brain drain by retaining the top talented students in the country. The survey of 2018 shows that the 50% of students in Pakistan drop their study due to financial constraints. Therefore, increasing number of scholarships and financial assistance is important factor for higher education.

Similarly, proper career counseling is significant remedial measure for higher

and success. Therefore, career  
counseling is an important  
remedial measure in context  
of higher education in

India. The government  
and partnership between  
industry and educational  
institutions should be  
relevant and aligned with  
real world needs. Collaborative  
projects and internships  
should be in between market  
and educational institutions. This  
industry-academia partnership  
will ensure the skilled

workforce supply. For instance, the industry-academia partnerships increase graduate employability. To conclude, industry and all the academic institutions should align.

In the same way, merit based admission and hiring is a crucial remedy for higher education in Pakistan. To start with, by ensuring the equal opportunities for all, regardless of social status, connections or financial means. Moreover, the merit based admission enhance the academic excellence and attracts the top talent. For instance, as per the Global Talent Competitiveness Index, 2022 Pakistan ranks 50th. Therefore, merit based admission and hiring is essential for Pakistan higher education.

Lastly, the curriculum upgradation is a vital remedy for higher education in Pakistan. As with the help of relevant knowledge, the industry need, global trends and emerging technologies

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all will align. Moreover, this will focuses on critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity in students. Also, curriculum upgradation increases graduate employability (Research study, 2019). Therefore, curriculum upgradation is crucial for Pakistan's higher education.

In conclusion, Pakistan's higher education system faces numerous challenges, including accessibility, barriers, outdated curriculum, inadequate funding and lack of industry-academic linkages. However, by addressing these ills through targeted remedies such as increasing financial aids, curriculum upgradation, industry-academic partnerships, merit-based admissions and career course offerings we can revitalize the sector. Implementing these solutions requires collaborative efforts from policy makers, educators, and industry leaders. By prioritizing higher education reforms, Pakistan can unlock its youth potential and propel economic growth. A

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transformed higher education system will not only enhance individual prospects but also foster a knowledge based economy; equipping Pakistan to compete globally and secure a brighter future.