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Topic: Education in Pakistan: Hurdles and Solutions

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The Essay

'Better unborn than untaught.' This proverb highlights the utmost importance of education. In Pakistan, its importance is often overlooked. Since the creation of Pakistan, the same framework of education is being followed which was given by Lord Macaulay in subcontinent during colonial era. This framework does not promote skill-based learning; instead it encourages dependency and rote memorization, suppressing critical thinking among students. So there is a dire need to update this framework. According to Economic Survey of Pakistan 2024-25, the literacy rate in Pakistan is around **60.6%** which is a serious concern. The major challenges to education in Pakistan are low literacy rate in rural area, lack of resources in villages, high cost of higher education, harassment of female students and untrained teachers. These barriers give rise to unemployment and extremist groups in society. So

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there is a great need to improve education in Pakistan and it can be done through development of educational institutes in undeveloped regions, effective training of teachers, affordability of education, accountability of harassment cases and awareness to parents about importance of education. The discussion below not only demonstrates hurdles to education in Pakistan but also its effects and practicable steps to achieve the goals of better education in Pakistan.

Flaws in the structure of Pakistan's education system is one of the major hurdles affecting educational progress in Pakistan. Our education system is based on Lord Macaulay's educational plan which not only hinders creativity but also skillful learning. The plan is only meant to make students dependent and subservient. This system fosters culture of cramming and develops colonial mindset which impedes the overall development

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of country. Practical life demands skills but our youth lack it. The outdated framework of education system is the biggest obstacle in the path of education.

Another challenge to education in Pakistan is low literacy rate in Balochistan and rural Sindh. According to Economic Survey of Pakistan 2024-25, Balochistan's literacy rate is 42%, which is the lowest among all provinces, while rural Sindh's rate is around 51-52%. The reasons for the low literacy rate in both provinces are lack of resources and Government's negligence. The budget allocated to provinces under NFC award is not being utilized for the benefit of local people. The mismanagement of budget and self interest of Government representatives are the big challenge for development of education. One more reason of low literacy rate is that children in rural areas do not have proper facilities and educational institutes. Therefore, it becomes difficult for

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for parents to send their children especially daughters to far off areas. Parents also lack resources to bear the expense of transportation. Poverty in these provinces is also a big reason of low literacy rate. People face difficulties even in full fulfilment of their basic needs so how they can afford to send their children to school. Also lack of awareness in parent about importance of education hampers literacy rate. Hence, Balochistan's and Sindh's low literacy rate is one of the most obvious obstructions to education in Pakistan.

Moreover, many students in Pakistan discontinue their studies due to high cost of higher education. Universities fees are unaffordable for poor lower and middle class people. Furthermore, some students come from rural or far off areas to avail the facilities of higher education which they do not have in their areas. So, they also have to bear the expense

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of hostels as well as transportation. Government does not offer enough scholarships to meet students' need. Hence, unaffordability of higher education hinders educational development in Pakistan.

One more reason of undevelopment of education is harassment of female students. Harassment cases in educational institutes are increasing day by day. This raises serious concern among parents and they fear to send their daughters to educational institutes. According to an article, 'Impact of sexual harassment on female students', published in Wah Academia Journal of Social Science (volume 4, June 2025), out of **300 respondents**, **72%** reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment during their time in higher education. So, harassment has become major trouble for education in Pakistan.

Lastly, untrained teachers are also serious ~~concern~~^{challenge}.

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to education in Pakistan. Once Robert Frost said, 'I am not a teacher, but awakener.' This quotation highlights that teachers should impact students' lives but unfortunately, due to lack of proper teachers training, Pakistan's education system fails to produce skilled youth for society.

The above given discussion has highlighted some critical hurdles to education in Pakistan. However, the discussion below is going to elaborate the effects of these obstacles as well as some suggestions to overcome them.

Unemployment and poverty are the major consequences of poor education. According to World Bank Report 2023-24, Pakistan's poverty rate has increased after years of decline and currently stands at around 25.3%. When people lack qualification and skills, they are unable to get well-paid jobs. So,

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they compel to work as laborers and earn minimum. Therefore, poverty persists which also raise severe crimes in society. Hence, hurdles in education disturb overall balance of society and induce joblessness and poverty.

Also, poor education standards and low literacy rate instigate extremism in people. When people are illiterate, leaders of extremist groups like **BLA** and **BLF** brain wash them and incite them against Government. They use them for their own interests. There is an Arabian Proverb that illustrates the condition of extremism in Pakistan, 'Better a thousand enemies outside the house than one inside'. So, awareness of right and wrong through education is very necessary for peace in Pakistan. Hence, obstacles in education increase extremism in Pakistan.

There are several measures to overcome the hurdles in education.

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Firstly, the outdated framework of education system which was formulated during colonial era, should be reformed. Academic structure should be based on critical thinking. Similarly, examination system ^{should} also encourage logical reasoning not cramming. So, it is obvious that modernizing education system is the way to improve education in Pakistan.

Secondly, development of educational institutes in Balochistan and rural Sindh is an important solution to the troubles in education. This can be achieved through strengthening of local governments. When power devolves to local governments, they can address the grievances of locals by establishing new educational institutes in undeveloped regions. Parents also get encouraged to send their children to schools or colleges when they are not very distant. Moreover, there should be qualified

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faculty and free education in every^{most} educational institutes. Through education, the problem of extremism in provinces can also be reduced. Therefore, more development in the education sector leads to more prosperity in Pakistan.

Thirdly, high cost of higher education should be reduced and the Government should offer more scholarships to students. Less developed areas should have universities and better facilities of education, so that students do not have to travel to distant cities and bear the additional expenses of transport and hostel. Affordability of education is very essential for development of education because it is one major factor of discontinuity of studies of many students in Pakistan.

Fourthly, proper accountability of harassment cases is a key

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to enhancing the literacy rate ~~is~~ of education. Many parents show reluctance to send their daughters to universities in distant areas due to the lack of accountability and punishment of assailants. Even some professors are involved in such incidents. As long as, there is no strict answerability ~~for~~ ^{of} offenders, harassment will persist and consequently, it will obstruct the educational development of Pakistan.

Fifthly, effective training of teachers is very necessary for the progress of education in Pakistan. There should be proper trainers and platforms for teachers to increase their skills according to modern era. Use of digital tools and modern sources in class should also be taught and encouraged. Moreover, teachers should be aware of students' psychology. It is said that,

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'Every good scholar is not a good school master'. So putting it briefly, there should be professional training of teachers every year to meet the modern standards of Education.

Furthermore, creating awareness among parents about the significance of education is a crucial step in improving the education in Pakistan. Effective seminars on importance of education should be conducted in almost all regions, particularly, in rural areas. Community teams should motivate and encourage parents to send their children to schools and colleges. This would certainly bring positive results. Hence, awareness is a mandatory step.

In a nutshell, according to Economic Survey 2024-2025, Pakistan's literacy rate is only 60.6% which is not favourable for the development of Pakistan. There are many reasons

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for the low literacy rate including high cost of education, untrained teachers and faulty framework of education etc. This adversely affects society and raises extremism and unemployment.

These problems can be overcome through updating the education system, strengthening of local Governments, affordability of education and ~~aware~~ awareness to parents about education's

importance. As Malcolm once said, "Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today."

This quotation highlights the path to national prosperity which can be achieved through the development of education in Pakistan.

