

Higher education in Pakistan: ills and remedies

Outline

- 1) Introduction
- 2) An Overview of higher education system of Pakistan
- 3) Importance of higher education for any country (Principle for Dealing with the changing world order by Ray Dalio)
 - a) Lack of analytical and research based approach (comparison with other countries in terms of spending on research and publication of scientific papers)
 - b) Absence of proper academia - industry linkage (Data from PIDE)
 - c) Inadequate access to universities
 - d) Lack of use of technology in universities
 - e) Lack of focus of innovation and idea generation (Global innovation index 2023)

- b) international incompetence (Times Higher education world university ranking 2023)
- g) lack of focus on technical education and skill enhancement (world talent Ranking)
- h) presence of persistent language barrier.

Remedies measure for eradicating ^{the} ill from the higher education system of Pakistan

- a) Training teachers
- b) Improving access to universities
- c) Allocating more resources to higher education for research and development
- d) Promoting research-oriented culture
- e) Ensuring academia-industry linkage
- f) Modernising universities with technology
- g) introducing public-private partnership in higher education
- h) ensuring crossborder collaboration among higher education universities
- i) Disseminating research findings

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- J) overcoming the language barrier.
 - K) learning from scandinavian countries.

6 conclusion

Since the independence, Pakistan has been a number of issues. weak economy, poor governance, energy crises, poor international status and presence of extractive institution — all these quagmire still loom large. Not so difficult task would it have been, if Pakistan had had an effective higher education system. Pakistan could have weathered all these storm long ago if successive government in Pakistan had actually given attention to higher education, rather than making a tall and lofty claims and promises. There is no blinking at the fact that the higher education system in Pakistan is full of ills. Dearth of research-oriented approach, absence of research-academic-industry linkage; lack of focus on technical education and skill development and international incompetence are just some of prevailing

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ills in higher education system in pakistan. It is high time the government of pakistan took some skillfully-devised, thoroughly integrated and highly effective measure to eradicate these ills from higher education system of pakistan.

Before analyzing the ills prevailing in the higher education system of pakistan, it is imperative to have an understanding of it.

At the time of inception, pakistan had only one functional university: the university of punjab. At present, according to the Economic Survey 2023, there are 224 universities. The same survey also reveals that 7.9 million students are currently getting education in universities of pakistan and number of teachers is 60,000. It is higher secondary education that ultimately culminate into university education. Higher education commission should look after the higher education system in pakistan. It is basically a regulator.

Before analyzing the ill prevailing in higher education system of pakistan,

It is also immensely important to have an overview of the importance of higher education for any country. In a few words, it would not be wrong to say that position of a country in relation to others and in its own self is determined by the standard of higher education. In these his book "principles of Dealing with the changing world order", Ray Dalio has given eight metrics to measure any country power: education, inventiveness and technological development, competitiveness in global markets, economic output, share of global trade, military strength, power of financial strength and strength of currency. A little careful thought of one can enable one to understand that all these metrics are themselves dependent upon the standard of higher education. The better the standard of higher education the more will be inventive and technological advanced country, and if it is technological advanced, its economic out, global share trade, power of currency, power of financial center, and competitiveness in global market - all shows positive statistics.

Having realised the importance of higher education, it is pertinent to overview the detailed prevailing ills in higher education of Pakistan. To start with, there is a lack of analytical and research based approach. Here stress is not laid upon research and developing critical skills. Here stress is laid upon completing syllabus. Data from Scopus clearly shows this, The data show that while China produced 744000, USA 625000, India 191590 scientific research publications, while Pakistan only 28525 scientific publications.

Similarly, there is a absence of proper academia-industry linkage. If one think about higher education after research, the second most important thing that would probably occur to one's mind would be academia-industry linkage. This is defining feature of higher education. However, this collaborative linkage is absent in Pakistan. That is the reason, the person did not get job because of ^{not} adequately skilled.

Data showed from the Pakistan Institute of development economics shows that 31% of Pakistani youth is unemployed, with many

of them holding professional degree. This really is a pity.

To continue with, Pakistani university did not use technology to facilitate learning. This is the time of digital revolution, wherein only those countries are ahead which are better skilled on using technology. One need to just look at Nanyang university of Singapore. Its rank is 11th in the world and first in Asia. There are no lectures. Things recorded and provide to students. There is a learn based learning approach, where teachers are just facilitators. However in Pakistan, there is old board and marker based method is used in place.

The other factor that intensifies these precarious situation is the lack of access to universities in Pakistan. Firstly, there are not enough universities for student to get themselves enrolled in. Only big city have university; small town hardly have one. Therefore more student cannot afford staying outside their hometowns, secondly the fees of private universities are high, unaffordable to the poor of Pakistan. Therefore, the access to

is very low.

Secondly, focus is not laid upon innovation and idea generation. Students are just fed upon an idea; they are not enabled to think of new ones. The Global Innovation Index of 2023 brings this to light very clearly. The index that is released by the World Intellectual Property Organization ranks Pakistan 87, where China stands at eleven and India at forty, Switzerland top the rank. This indicator includes mobile application creation, investment in environment-friendly technologies, spending on education and funding for scientific and technological publications. Why is Pakistan so backward in relation to its neighbour? The answer is obvious: because focus is not directed toward innovation and idea generation in universities.

Another ill in the higher education system in Pakistan is international incompetence. This is quite obvious to this discussion so far, only one university of Pakistan could get a rank under 500 in the Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2023. Universities are

are ranked on the basis of teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. Oxford, Harvard and Cambridge ranks first, second and third respectively. It is shame that Pakistan even after ten decade of inception has been able to produce one university of international standard.

It is also lamentable that Pakistan technical educational and skilled advancement are solely focused on. It cannot be doubted in any way that land of pure is blessed with unlimited talent. There is no doubt in that but where is Pakistan talent ranking is in the world, ^{talent} ranking released by international institute for management development? Switzerland is on top but Pakistan could not found good place here too. Definitely, it is not Pakistan lack talents but the talent is not cultivated in a proper manner by focusing on technical higher education and skill development.

Lastly, there exist a persistent language barrier in higher education system in Pakistan. English is a headache for many in Pakistan. At lower level of

of education, English is not taught properly not learnt is a proper way. There is hardly any issue at this levels of education. However, in universities where lecture are deliver in English, students found themselves in very uncomfortable situation. Resultantly, students are unable to understand what they are taught and our higher education system lags behind many internationally.

There is no denying that the illscue very deeply rooted in the higher education system of Pakistan. However, carefully crafted measure can go a long way in eliminating these illformed Pakistan. The first thing that need to be done is training the teachers, unless the teacher well trained, one cannot expect much from this system. Short term training programs, hiring teacher from abroad and institualizing tenure track system can be some steps to having a well trained staff teachers.

It is immensely important to increase access to universities. Government federal and provincial, must direct their attention toward this goal. New public institution should be opened. private institution should

asked to lower the fees they take. Besides, virtual learning should be improved as well. combined with those measure, students and parents should be encouraged to cooperate. The government does not have enough money so the natural resources must be utilized. Military spending should be lower down and money should be invested in high education.

Moreover, more and more resources should be given to higher education institution for research and development. Data from OECD shows that us spend 3.1% of its GDP to research and development, Japan does 3.2%, china 2.2% and india 1.3%. However, the investment by pakistan is just 0.3%. why^{is} it so low in pakistan? This fact need to be changed. pakistan should raise that number atleast 0.8% in short term. pakistan should target 3%.

It is also imperative ^{that} pakistan promote research-oriented culture. Although higher education commission has launched some initiatives, such as national research program for universities, problem based Applied interdisciplinary Research program (PBAIRP), startup Research

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Grant program, outstanding research award.
and many others, they are inadequate and
sometime ineffective. More work need to be done.

Ensuring academia-industry
linkage also important for pakistan. The relationship
is such that, universities do research and
provide information to industries, which
employ findings in capital generation. in this
way student have technical knowledge about
industries too. This is how the system work.

This link unfortunately missing in pakistan. Almost
every developed and developing countries
clearly have that links. Therefore, pakistan
must be develop that links.

in addition, universities should
be modernised with technology. it would be
pertinent to say that universities should
be revolutionized with digitalization. The
model followed by the Nanyang technological
university singapore. A team should be
formed of student. ipade should be
provided to teams. They should be
given subject and topic to do research,
and competition among group should be

promoted. Teacher play a role of mere facilitator. classroom contain visual screen, so when teacher is teaching so he can easily get his contact to student. More appropriate intervention can also be used.

To conclude, it can be said that the higher system of pakistan is replete with myriad of ills. it is indispensable for Pakistan to take some coherent remedial measure to eliminate these ills. Training the teachers, promoting research, ensuring academia-industry linkage and digitalization higher education institution can be some ways to successfully do the required task. The things that need to be understand is that there is no other way to ^{words} peace, prosperity and progress than effective higher education. Pakistan cannot overcome the quagmire that it confront currently unless it strengthen higher education. If Pakistani politician develop in themselves the will to revolutionize the higher education, no more and nothing one can

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Prevent them from doing so. Lamenting the
past will yield nothing. Action is requirement
and prosperity is the future.