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Prevailing Social Problem of Pakistan: Education

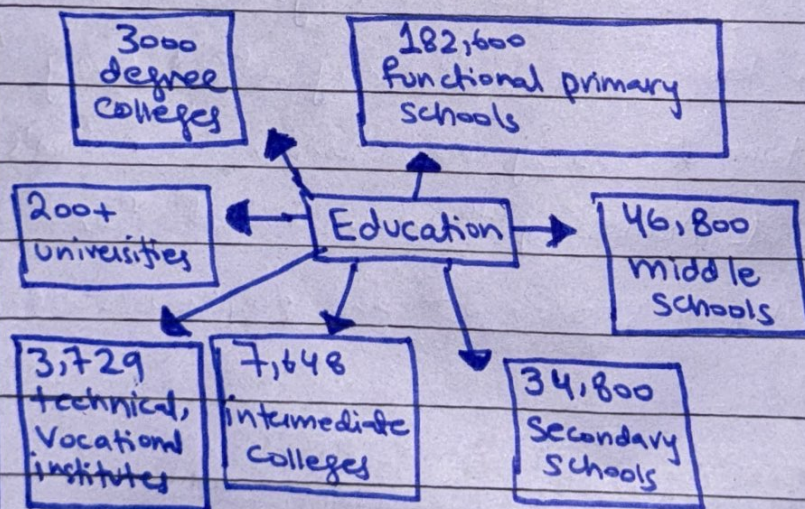
Pakistan, a country of over 255 million population, faces a range of social problems that undermines its progress toward sustainable development and national cohesion.

These problems include poverty, poor governance, inequality and education is also one of them. Education is the cornerstone of national development, social mobility and civic maturity. If it prevails for a long time so, it may affect every stratum of society and hinder the nation's potential. Addressing them is crucial for building a stable, just and prosperous state.

● Education System of Pakistan

Pakistan under the Article 25-A of the Constitution recognizes education as a fundamental right. Pakistan in recent years taken ^{commendable} ~~condemnable~~ steps to promote and expand education. The system includes all institutions that are involved in delivering formal education, their faculties, students, physical infrastructure, resources and rules. In a broader

definition the system also includes the institutions that are directly involved in financing, managing, operating and regulating such as Higher Education Commission (HEC), central testing organizations and textbook boards. According to International Trade Administration "Pakistan Country Commercial Guide" survey, Pakistan education institutes consist of the following figures:



While the country has made tangible progress in expanding its education network, challenges remain in quality, equity and governance which can be effectively addressed through smart and targeted reforms.

• Types of Education in Pakistan

There are five types of education in Pakistan.

- (i) Public sector education
- (ii) Private sector education
- (iii) Religious / Madrasah education
- (iv) International schools (Elite)
- (v) Technical, Vocational and Non-formal education.

• Public sector education is the largest provider of formal education across rural and urban Pakistan. Recent efforts by government into this sector are school upgrades, Single National Curriculum (SNC) and improved monitoring mechanisms.

• Private sector education also plays a significant role in urban education delivery and quality improvement. These institutions encourage competition and innovation especially in English-medium schools.

• Madrasah education provides free education, boarding and food to millions. The government should regulate this system properly and should ensure integrating contemporary subjects to

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modernize religious schooling.

- International schools offer globally recognized curricula (e.g. O/A levels) which prepare students for global opportunities. It includes academic and international excellence also.

- Technical, Vocational and Non-formal education

These institutes are useful for bridging skill gaps in the economy. Government is trying to expand this network through National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTEC) to promote, facilitate and regulate this system which is also aligned with youth employment.

- Achievements and Positive Developments

Over the past years, Pakistan education system has seen many significant changes some of them are:

- (i) Increased enrollment rates

Net enrollment rates in primary education is gradually improving in provinces like KP and Balochistan. According to economic survey of Pakistan (FY 2024-2025), Urban literacy (74.09%) substantially exceeds

rural literacy (51.56%). Provincial literacy rate is the highest in Punjab (66.25%), followed by Sindh (57.54%), KP (51.09%) and Balochistan (42.01%). These figures show that enrollment is increasing gradually in the education sector.

(ii) Policy Reforms

To promote inclusivity and unify standards, the government is working to bring reforms like the Single National Curriculum (SNC) and digital learning platforms like Taleemabad, which is making curriculum at the primary level for all provinces.

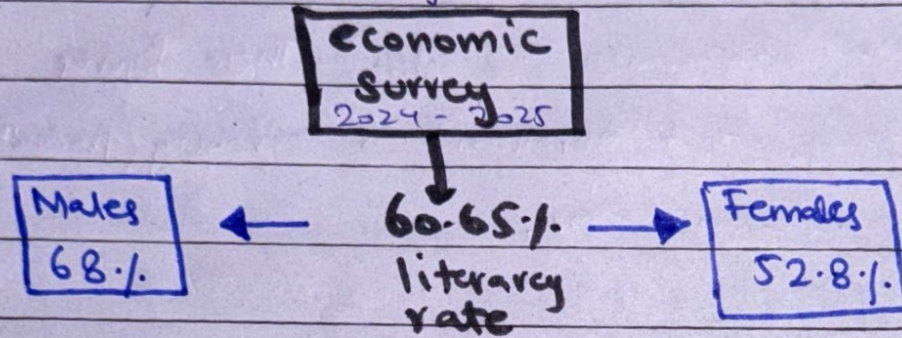
(iii) Growth of Public-private Partnerships

Initiatives like the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) focused on improving education, particularly for economically disadvantaged students, through public-private partnerships.

(iv) Increased awareness for girls' education

The government also introduces conditional stipend programs in order to increase the educational attainment of girls in districts. Due to the safe environment of schools and colleges, Pakistan's

literacy rate is 60.65%. People nowadays are focusing on girls education too which can also be cross checked through recent economic survey.



• Challenges in education

Significant progress has been made over the years in education sector but several areas need more constructive attention in it -

(i) Limited Public Spending

Total expenditure of government's GDP on education is 0.8% of GDP which is far more lower than regional standards. Increasing its allocation upto 4% of GDP would unlock infrastructure and human resource improvements.

(ii) Quality and Pedagogy gaps

Rote learning still dominates classrooms. Government should focus on promoting creativity level of learning of a child

and focus more on student-centred approach - So, that a student learn critical thinking, creativity and practical learning. Moreover, teachers should be trained in parallel with recent advancement and in technology so to move from old methods of teaching to the modern ones.

(iii) Infrastructure shortages

Apart from big cities, mostly all rural areas public schools lack boundary wall, toilets, electricity and hygienic food facilities. Government should focus more on rural development now and this gap can be filled through CPEC social sector investment and local government capacity.

(iv) Brain drain and out-of-school childrens

Lack of employment opportunities in Pakistan and less wages are forcing people to move abroad for betterment of their future which is causing brain drain in Pakistan and is a biggest challenge in education sector as our students lack

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practical skills and are unable to exercise them. ~~existing~~ Additionally, Pakistan Education Statistics 2022-2023 report out-of-school children at 38% overall (Male: 35%, Female: 42%) which also hinders a nation's progress in relevant fields of societies.

out-of-school Children:

- Punjab — 32%.
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa — 30%.
- Sindh — 47%.
- Balochistan — 69%.

Government should take initiatives like flexible schooling options to cover marginalized groups.

● Critical Analysis: ~~Page~~ Way Forward

Pakistan's government should increase education budget to 4% of GDP and it should prioritize school development, staff training and digital infrastructure. It should also launch nationwide teacher training programs to promote inclusive education all over the provinces. To boost

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girls education, government should focus on security, transportation and scholarship programs to enhance retention. Policy makers should do indepth study to implement quality of education all over the schools which can meet student needs in this contemporary era. Education is what brought America out from its dark ages to the Age of Enlightenment and make it a developed country. Their education quality brings them to the Moon and other planets in space. According to Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Pakistan should encourage creativity in its students so that they may reach to their full potential.

Conclusion:

Pakistan has laid the foundation for education reform through bold policy moves and partnerships but a more integrated and sustained effort with investment, innovation and inclusion can transform Pakistan's educational landscape into a driver of progress, equality and national strength.