

Topic :- "Literacy without learning: The Crisis of Quality Education in Pakistan"

Outline :-

A. Introduction

- a. Hook.
- b. Importance of quality education for nations.
- c. Thesis statement

b. Current State of Education in Pakistan

c. Maladies in Provision of Quality Education in Pakistan

i- Fragmented educational system of Pakistan.

- a. Elite private, public, and madrasa education.

ii- Outdated curriculum.

- a. HEC's limited interest in updating curriculum annually.

iii- Lack of fostering critical thinking

- a. Focus on rote memorization

iv- Limited integration of modern technology into schools and colleges.

- a. Incompetence of graduates in global market

v- Neglect of environmental issues.

- a. Dialogue between an educated and

uneducated person.

vi - Limited education on social issues

a. cultural constraints.

vii - Exam - centred approach rather than innovation oriented learning.

a. Excessive emphasis on memorizing dates and events rather than encouraging new ideas.

viii - Lack of capacity building programs of teachers.

a. No interest in teacher training programs.

ix - Institutional reluctance on involving parents and societies as stakeholders.

a. South Korea's educational model as example.

x - Industry - academia gap.

a. Unemployed youth due to mismatched degrees as an evidence.

xi - Educational institutes as exclusively degrees producing machines, while lacking skill development among graduates.

a. Industry dissatisfaction with the abilities of fresh graduates.

D- Remedies to Overcome Above Mentioned Problems

i - Integration of AI and Robotics to educational system.

a. Chinese successful educational model as example.

ii- Inculcating skill development along with theoretical learning.

a. Germany's dual education model.

E- Conclusion

The Essay

The illiterate of 21st century are not those who can not read and write, but those who can not learn, unlearn and relearn. These wise words by Alvin Toffler perfectly highlight the emerging new trends of education in this rapidly changing world. The primitive models of education can not be beneficial until modified with the rising changing demands in this new era. Education has been important for societies to grow in all ages and its significance will remain as same in the coming future. The only need of understanding is that its modification, and integration with new ideas. Mere education is not beneficial for nations, rather it is the quality education which decides the future of civilizations. During some past ages, superficial knowledge about existing facts

could have been beneficial but in today's world it is not workable. In context of today, quality education refers to the one that inculcates critical thinking among students based on pre-existing knowledge and facts. Quality education is the name of efficient use of available resources like Artificial Intelligence and robotics to open new doors for intellectual excellence. The obsolete methods of just gathering information and calling it education are no more helpful. Hence, it is the need of hour to realise the true essence of quality education and bringing administrative as well as structural reforms in education sector to compete with other nations.

Quality education has been a problem for third world countries. Pakistan is one of them. Education provision in Pakistan has always been the priority of governments, but ironically only on documents. This is perfectly illustrated by humor writer Mushtaq Ahmad Yousufi who once said, "Our literacy rate rises every year - but only on papers." Though, apparently there are public schools, colleges and universities which provide education to students, but they are themselves suffering from maladministration

which resultantly deliver poor quality of education. It means that the focus is only on rote memorisation, which do not fit to this age of global technological advancement. Outdated curriculum and discouragement of critical thinking has always been a concerning problem. Along with that various other issues like poor capacity building of teachers, limited integration of latest technology and inadequate allocation of funds also limit the enabling of quality education. In this essay, various ~~related~~ social, structural and administrative problems faced by educational system of Pakistan which hinder the deliverance of quality education, will be discussed followed by remedies helpful for overcoming such issues.

Beginning with the structural lapses of educational system of Pakistan which has been fragmented since ages. Education is supposed to bring equality to society and to break all the existing societal prejudices. Unfortunately, the education system of Pakistan has failed to perform its duty in this regard. This can be understood by the existing three tiered educational system which include elite private schools,

inefficient public institutes, and madrasa education. Lack of standard education and extremely differentiating education in all three tiers give rise to students with excessive differences in the mindsets of students. This can in turn give rise to hate, prejudice or even advantage to top tier students over others creating further class differences. Hence, the education system of Pakistan, rather than equalizing and harmonizing society, works as a self replicating cycle for hate, animosity and prejudice based on class differences.

Other major crises which affects the provision of quality education is the outdated curricula. For effective and quality education provision, it is imperative that the curricula should be renewed with changing needs of the world, but unfortunately, education sector in Pakistan has always been neglected by authorities, so does the curricula. Decades old curriculum, whose teachings are of no use or of very limited use, are being taught in schools. ~~in curriculum~~ Higher Education Commission's long standing neglect in this regard is evident. Repetitive teaching of outdated topics kills the higher ability

thinking skills of child. Furthermore, child becomes unable to comprehend the topic, because what he experiences is totally something different, because of new trends in society, culture, technology and science etc. Hence, for deliverance of quality education, which ~~is already described~~ is defined by recurring modifications and alterations, it is necessary to renew the curricula timely for providing reliable knowledge.

Pakistani educational system discourages critical thinking, and the focus is only on rote-memorization of already existing facts, statistics and events. Outdated curricula is linked to it. ~~When~~ when the curricula is renewed, it would have added discourses which helped in fostering critical thinking but unluckily, this never happened. Though steps are being taken to promote critical thinking among students but still it is executed on a very small scale. For example, HEC have made policies to design exams in a manner which are based on critical thinking, but in universities the old, pre-existing methods of mere memorising knowledge persists. This incoherent chain of the system

is incapable of being fruitful for students and society as a whole.

Therefore, it is need of hour to thoroughly review the policies and design effective ones and execute them efficiently.

Additionally, as discussed multiple times that it is the era of modern science and technology but unfortunately, Pakistan's educational system has been reluctant in integrating technology into it. Reasons could be multiple from inadequate budget allocations to teacher's lack of interest, but the damage it is causing to students and Pakistan as a whole is not negligible. Pakistan's graduates are unable to compete in the global tech market, resulting in high unemployment rates of youth. Hence, assigning enough budgets to integrate latest technology to the system would help in delivering quality education helping graduates to compete globally.

Other major ill of our education system is that it is unable to address serious issues related to environment. Despite being severely affected by environmental disasters like that of 2022, 2025 floods, measures to take

mitigate environmental degradation remains limited. It's mostly because of a very limited focus of our education system on such issues. For example, ~~if~~ when a climate scientist shouts, "The planet is overheating!" and an uneducated passerby replies, "But it is snowing outside!", the problem is not weather - it is education. Same is with the Pakistani so-called educated people who continuously hear about the climate change and environmental degradation, but are not ready to take any action - because our educational system has never given importance to it. To save Pakistan from future calamities, it is imperative for our educational setups to deliver awareness about environment and take reasonable measures to reduce ~~the~~ ^{such} future events.

The quality of education of Pakistan is also compromised because it does not address various social issues of Pakistan, like poverty, gender inequality, social taboos, early marriages etc. Teachers bear the cultural restrictions which do not allow them to educate about issues like gender inequality, crime rates etc. This in turn leads to normalization of crime rates and

other such ills. If teachers effectively address such issues, with the consultation of authorities, students would get aware and be conscious about right and wrong. Hence, to foster quality education, it is necessary for our educational system to awaken the conscience of students by educating them about societal problems and comprehending their solutions using their critical thinking abilities.

Exam-centred approach of educational setup of Pakistan rather than innovation oriented approach has also constrained the full outcome of abilities of Pakistani students. Gathering information and passive learning of other ideas has always curtailed the innovative capacity of students. This is evident from the teacher's excessive emphasis on memorization of dates and events rather than focus on propagating new ideas by stimulating their critical thinking ability. Passive learning is acting like a slow poison to the minds of new generation ~~students~~, that is gradually killing the innate abilities of minds to create new ideas. Therefore, shift from exam centred approach to creativity

based learning will not only shape the minds, but will be highly beneficial for the prosperity of Pakistan.

In addition to above mentioned issues, teachers' limited or no capacity building is also a major issue. When there is no focus on capacity building of teachers they remain unaware of rising needs of the world, resultantly their ignorance ~~appearing~~ ^{students} ~~severely~~ ^{severely}. ~~also~~ ~~understand~~. Very negligible teacher training programs are inadequate to address the large youth's problems related to education. Teachers being the backbone of educational systems can play their roles effectively if equipped with proper frequent teacher training programs. So, ~~that~~ to enhance the quality of education in Pakistan, it is the need of hour to work on the capacity building of teachers as well.

The most important issue regarding the lack of quality education in Pakistan is teachers' and institutions' reluctance on involving parents and communities as ~~extra~~ stakeholders. This can be due

to a persistent history of teachers-parents conflict. Institutions consider themselves as absolute authority to design policies and curriculum, ignoring parents and communal involvement. Parents and communities knowledge if utilized in policy making, would give results positively but unfortunately, this angle is always neglected by the educational institutions of Pakistan. South Korea who focuses excessively on home-school relationship have experienced excessive positive results from students. Hence, taking lessons from this model and integrating its principles into home institutions could benefit the society as well as whole nation.

Additionally, mismatched education of our educational system related to the requirements in markets have created the industry-academia gap. Both industry and educational institutions work in isolation due to which educational institutes remain ignorant about the job trends, skill requirements of markets. Resultantly, they produce graduates who have degrees

but lack the skills which are needed in market. Severe unemployment of Pakistani youth perfectly illustrates this trend.

To overcome this issue, both industrial and educational sectors need to work in synergy to leverage maximum benefits, by providing quality education and skills and later utilizing those skills for national prosperity.

Moreover, educational institutes may have excessive interest in 'money making', causing them to act like business firms rather than education spreading institutes.

Resultantly, they concern only with awarding degrees to students while ignoring the need of equipping students with real life skills.

This could be illustrated by extreme industrial dissatisfaction by with the abilities of fresh graduates. To harness the full potential of youth, it is necessary to focus on providing quality education to them and properly equipping them with skills that are needed in today's world. Only then true fruits of quality education could

be achieved.

To every ill there is a remedy. No doubt, that Pakistan is suffering from immense crises of quality education, but addressing those issues with strategic planning would reduce such ills. Following are some of the remedies to overcome problems of quality education in Pakistan.

Firstly, integrating AI and robotics to educational system will not only enhance efficiency and effectiveness but also equip students with awareness of rising technology. It enhances the capability of students to compete in global job market. The model of Chinese education system which has immersed AI and robotics to its educational setup could be used as example which has not only revolutionized their economy but has raised a youth which is capable of competing in very tough global jobs markets. Principles of such models could be integrated into the educational setup of Pakistan to harness full potential of Pakistan's large youth.

Secondly, inculcating skill development along with theoretical knowledge is need of hour.

As discussed earlier, just knowledge gathering is not enough, skill development is necessary to compete in the changing global world. Germany's dual education model, where students learn knowledge in schools half of the time and rest of the time they spend in real workplaces to learn relevant skill. This has not only helped their economy grow but have given opportunities and platforms for students where their ideas could be shared and appreciated. Hence, taking lessons from such models would be beneficial in delivering quality education in Pakistan.

To conclude, a quality education is not simply gathering of mere information or knowledge but rather, it is the art of delivering education which would be helpful in real life. This includes giving education based on needs of contemporary global requirements and equipping students

with relevant skills. As it is famously said that "nations who operate on past principles are unable to live in future". So, for prosperity of a nation, quality education is oxygen, without which it ~~can~~ would not sustain. Pakistan needs to take lessons from various educational models to leverage full potential of youth. The problems are everywhere. Every society has to face its monsters, but only wise ~~and~~ society tame them rather than perpetually kill them. Pakistan has to face its monster of ineffective education by fostering critical thinking, skill development, structural reforms and parental and communal involvement. As it is ~~a~~ famously said by a great scientist Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge". As it is famously said that educated nations are easy to ~~drive~~ lead but difficult to drive, easy to govern but impossible to enslave. To protect ourselves from enslavement of foreign powers, it is necessary to gain quality education rather than mere holding degrees and calling oneself literate ~~while~~ when learning is zero.