

## **Reasons and Effects of Diversity of Education System in Pakistan at Elementary Level**

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### **Abstract**

Now a days Pakistan has several types of pedagogic systems. The origin of this matter can be pursued in copious factors; from foreign interferences to political flux. Education, which functions as the spinal cord for a nation's survival, has underwent in Pakistan at the hands of political and socio-economic organizations. The fact that the multiple systems of education are sucking the blood out of this undeveloped nation is discouraging. It serves as a blow for the country to achieve collective objectives. Currently, this problem can be said to be stimulating other issues that are evolving in our society. This diversity is leading the nation into a nasty cycle of social discrepancy and political craving. However, today it has become essential to ensure uniformity in educational sector. The government needs to devise plans to deal with this state of educational emergency and take rational actions to reduce the invalid existing among these educational systems.

**Key words:** Diversity, pedagogy, education system, Pakistan.

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## Introduction

The history of the Indian subcontinent can be drawn back to thousands of years. However, for purposes of education we begin with the pre-sultanate era. This era saw education being based upon religious concepts, knowledge and moral values. Later, the mughals brought with them a combination of central Asian and mid-eastern perceptions. In this period arts and crafts had flourished. Education, therefore, had quite a different meaning than it has today.

However, British access and colonization changed the complete system, although gradually. A network of missionaries was formed throughout the region and foreign curriculum was introduced. This was followed by a chain of event which was to later shape the very structure of our society. Initially it leads to the 'elite' of the society following British based educational system while the less privileged had to do with religious madrassas that were in decaying circumstances with little or no control. That was the very point which stands to be accused for the void that still exists in our society among the secular and religious divisions. The direct outcome of the foreign syllabus was clearly the increasing use of English as a language in politics, business and other occupations. This enforcement of an unfamiliar language was met with severe conflict from the masses who took this as an assault on their individuality. However, due to the increased importance of the language, the locals had to capitulate to its recognition, although much halfheartedly. Thus, the British managed to fill a vague educational system; on one hand it made it easier to get jobs within the British organizations in the subcontinent, while on the other hand it lead the region away form the possibility of unvarying, curriculum.

After Pakistan became independent in 1947 it had an opportunity to overcome the loopholes left by the British administration in educational sector. The opportunity was lost to an undefined educational policy as the infant nation struggled for its survival. Initially the administration seemed satisfied with the system that was inherited, although it was exposed to internal efforts. Nonetheless, our nation was passed on the bequest of political and social collapse where distancing among the populations grew at prodigious rates.

A befitting remark by an educationist: *“Having sown the seeds of divergent objectives among them, we nursed hatred among them by infusing complexes of superiority in one case and deprivation in another”*

It was only after 13 years of independence that the first body for evaluating educational performance of the country was developed, namely *“Education Commission”*. The homegrown progress during 1950s promoted nationwide demand for

original educational system that was tailored according to the requirements of the natives. During the 1960s, Pakistan experienced an influx of foreign endowments and credits which generated progress. This was the time when vocational training centers like polytechnics were formed broadly. However, these gushes of industrialization also led to buildup of wealth among a small fraction of the population. For poor the divide of secular and religious educational systems was created.

The traditional religious schools were founded on very old concepts. Instead of instructing awareness of religion, the system that we inherited was crafted to different objectives; one was to train civil servants for the aged Muslim monarchs. As a result, the system became dismissed to the point that its alumni could not make a living out of managing masjids.

As opposed to the teachings of Islam, these madrassas served to snub the children that were sent to them. These were the very children that grow up into social outcasts with little or no knowledge of social manners, trends and even languages. Thus it is not shocking that having little opportunity of finding a means of earnings; they chose to represent their respective groups.

Another reason for the magnetism of foreign-based curriculum is the appeal of migration. Since the 1970s, a large number of professionals have emigrated to the Middle East and North America.

The birth rate in developed countries is very low when compared to developing countries', thus creating a pull factor for highly trained human power with USA, Canada and Australia. This builds pressure within Pakistan for foreign-based education so that the chances of going overseas can be utilized.

The modern educational system in Pakistan was one of the heirlooms of the colonial era. It was clearly framed according to the idea of the British administration and thus seemed to dissatisfy the masses from knowledge of religion. The system came through rather aimlessly; some planned to impart international standard education, others to benefit from the increasing commercialization of this sector. Even though it tried to follow international curriculum, it resulted in frayed ends; being divided into many forms. These include: Public sector schools, Private sector English medium schools, Schools organized by Christian missionaries and Schools established by particular communities.

In early 1950's, the government had introduced policies through which the eligible candidates were sent overseas for advanced education. This increased the demand for foreign based curriculum in the country. As the standard of the government-funded schools declined, this further promoted the private English medium schools.

**Positive Effects of External Syllabi**

- a. Better learning environment and techniques introduced to judge students' performance.
- b. Quality of education has become better as private institutions keep up with international standards.
- c. Updated curricula.

**Negative Effects of External Syllabi**

- a) Foreign returned students face operational values
- b) Distancing from our own culture and morals.
- c) Expenditure of money when students go overseas saps the country's foreign exchange account.
- d) Deviation of funds; the opportunity cost.

**Effects of Diversity**

- a) Fragmentation of the nation:  
Uneven and irreconcilable systems lead to disunion of societies into religious and secular groups.
- b) Increasing commercialization of education.
- c) Discrimination on language bases.
- d) Spiritual and temporal divide: increasing gap between the two makes it impossible to raise the edifice of education and awareness
- e) Discrimination on the bases of social standing.

**Reasons of Diversity in Pakistan**

The deviations seen in education have their roots in the colonial British system. Even after sixty-five years of independence we are unsuccessful to bring a progressive change to the heirloom left behind by our foreign sovereigns.

Pakistan is similar with the other developing countries of the world that were mostly occupied by the Western controls and got their independence around the second half of the twentieth Century. These colonial rulers left behind an heirloom of poverty, ill-literacy, un-employment. Furthermore, local clashes added to their gloom after

independence. In Pakistan, unfortunately, we did not have a firm political government that could change the education policy keeping in consideration the masses in general. We have a strong feudal system and there has also emerged a strong industrial community.

It is a misfortune that the different governments paid little or no attention to the vital education sector. Government spending on this sector is pathetic, only 2.1% of the GDP in 2001. It spends a massive 4.6% of the GDP (in 2001) on defense. No doubt it is important to have a strong Army because of a constant threat from our neighbor but is also important to make the people of this country educated. The education system that the British gave to Sub-continent was mainly to produce clerks and civil servants. When they left, their place was taken by the strong feudal landlords who had served their masters well. They did not want to educate the common people especially in the rural areas as it could pose a risk to their impact and tyranny. Only ordinary government schools still operate in most of the rural areas given that basically primary to middle school education for the poor people. Women are discouraged from going to schools. The upper classes send their children to expensive private English schools and the poor to government schools. The rich are prepared to rule and the poor to serve. The government should give the highest importance to education.

Compound education systems is present because of the social clutter in our society. We have the private English schools, Urdu schools and Madrassas. In the private schools there is minor awareness of religion. They do however instruct good language and mathematical education. The students from the Urdu medium schools are mostly proposed to work in office and lower level positions so the well-to-do class avoids them. The Madrassas are producing a class that is fundamentalist, with little or no training in modern disciplines. This class is relatively ill-equipped to intermingle with a higher society. There are around 45000 Madrasas operating in different parts of the country producing a huge number of students often been misused for political motives. Although living in the same country the students from these different education systems have little or no similarity.

Fast population growth and expansion have greatly altered the distribution and location of low income households since 1981. Because of the non-linearity in income and fees. At very low income level the possibility of being out of school is 90 percent. As income raises the possibility of the "no school" option falls to nil. A further rise in income can increase enrollment in private English schools. Also lowering private school fees and familiarity can raise private school enrollment.

Higher population growth and inadequate resources lead to poverty and ill-literacy. Those private schools that accommodate the poor often exploit low income

families who are often ill-literate parents who are not capable of judging if their children are learning or not. There is a mushroom of such institutions, especially in the big cities. They are not registered with the government and take full advantage of diversity. Poverty bounds poor parents to send children to school, high fees and location often limits middle class families to send children to government schools. The strong demand for private schools is in response to better quality and learning opportunities offered by these schools. However, additional entry of private schools into poor neighborhoods cannot be accomplished without government subsidy. However, the lower cost and higher achievement tests for private schools suggest that public subsidy of private schools are a viable option for increased delivery of schooling services to poor household.

Compound education systems exist because of the increasing gap between social classes. Education provided by the Government is the only choice for the poor class. The Madrasas focus on religious education only with the learners having little awareness of the world around them. The private schools only provide for the richer classes.

### **Results and Recommendations**

The main effect on the society as a magnitude of diversity is social imbalance. Students coming out of English medium schools have little awareness of religious and cultural values. They are well equipped with knowledge of modern disciplines to survive in this highly competitive system.

Urdu Medium Schools were formed to promote the national language of Pakistan and to create a nationwide predilection for Urdu. But with the passage of time due to negligence of the ruling classes the system became out-of-date. Students coming out of Urdu medium schools represent the middle class of Pakistan society. They are destined to work hard to make both ends meet. And regardless of the hard work they are mere laymen.

Madrasas Formulate another class that only believes in their own views and show little respect to others' beliefs. These types of students are not trained in modern disciplines and lack the knowledge necessary to progress to high regard positions in society. These students have usually some prejudice and extremism fenced them by mullahs. The politicians in Pakistan often use these students to entertain their political goals. Despite the fact that Madrasas apparently preach sectarianism in the society, this system in Pakistan is unique. Thousands of children whose parents do not have resources to send them to any good institution are provided free boarding and lodging facilities and in some cases free education as well.

This diversity hinders the chances of many capable students to get into good educational institutions for further studies. Students from well known institutions are

preferred over those from Urdu Medium Schools and Madrassas while giving them admissions.

One major effect that this diversity has is the undue preference that some students receive in the job market only due to the medium that they have come through. Students from good English medium schools almost not face any problem in getting good jobs with attractive salary package, while students from other mediums are usually intended to work in clerical and low level jobs with no job security. This job preference ultimately leads to some unemployment. When some eligible learners do not get job that they deserve due to some unjustified importance given to some other folks, they revert to discriminating means to get their fair portion of incomes from the society. So to get good jobs in Pakistan, other than being capable enough, the thing necessary is to have a stamp of some good institution.

The government together with the private sector should convert the vastly spread Urdu medium schools into semi government institutions with support both from the public as well as the private sector. A national consensus should be adopted on the curriculum and mode of instruction which should cover sufficient religious education. School fees should be in conformity with the income of an average household. Education should be encouraged in the rural areas and the military should be involved to check this system. Diversity should be put to an end to achieve National harmony as well as economic and financial uplift of the suffering masses of this country.

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