

## Factors Affecting the Secondary Education in Pakistan

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### **Abstract:**

*Since the establishment, number of problems and challenges are always there to surround the smooth functioning of every sector in Pakistan. Education is one of the sector where immense planning has been done throughout but numerous factors have affected the planning itself and then its implementation so far. This research study is to find out the extent to which various factors affect the secondary education in particular. Secondary education is vital for a strong character and personality building of the teenagers who enter the adulthood. These individuals not only become the input of higher education rather many have to join the work force and participate in the economy of the country. Therefore this educational stage is considered to be very crucial. The data of this study has been collected from the heads and teachers present at the secondary education level.*

**Key words:** Education, Secondary Education, Factors, Pakistan

### **Introduction**

Education transforms the social animal into civilized human being. According to the concept of Education for All, education is a basic human right. It is a significant factor in the development of children, communities and the nations. This is an era of globalization and technological revolution, therefore

education is considered as a first step for every human activity. For the purpose of the development of human capital, education is essential. It is linked with an individual's opportunities for better living and well-being (Battle & Lewis 2002). The importance of every level of formal education that is primary, secondary, higher cannot be neglected but this is also true that amongst all secondary education is of crucial importance. According to the UNESCO World education report (2000) 'the right to education' it has been clearly shown that there has been a great increase in primary education in many developing countries therefore now there is a need to focus on the gross enrolment in secondary education. But because of the scarce resources and inefficient systems the quality at secondary level is not up to the mark. It has been agreed by the majorities that there is a fundamental need for re-thinking the role of secondary education. Furthermore efforts are required to consider the place of secondary education as a part of the re-engineering of education systems (Maclean 2001).

A number of concerns and key issues are emerging in regard to the secondary education's diversification and renewal. These concerns are pertaining to secondary education for all, expanding access, reducing drop-out and repeater rates, equity, quality assurance, relevance and content of secondary education (ibid 2001)

As is in the case of many other developing countries, the situation of the education sector is not very encouraging in Pakistan. There are so many problems present in the education sector such as the low enrolment rates at the primary level, poor infrastructure of schools, huge disparities between regions and gender, lack of appropriate teaching material and trained teachers. Besides these there are problems of relevance with the needs of society, quality of students, staff, library and laboratories, research facilities, general education rather than professional education, financial crisis, weak examination system and ineffective governance. Abundant challenges are being faced by education system of Pakistan and to be at par

with other developing countries in the region it needs to develop (Memon 2007). At present the education system in Pakistan is really having a bad configuration. It is a fact that education acts as the backbone in the development of nations. All the great nations according to the history have safely reached the zenith of prestige and power with the support of education. In case of Pakistan the allocations for education are too meager. Furthermore whatever the allocation, the amount is not spent for what it was meant for. This is due to the corruption found in all the tiers of education. The education delivered by the government institutions is much below the aspired and desired levels whereas the private education in Pakistan is out of the reach of the poor. (Rashid & Mukhtar 2012).

Most of the expenditures in education sector have been incurred on increasing the number of schools and construction of new school buildings. This all is done to raise the enrolments. Due to the conditions of rapid enrolment growth and quantitative expansion a large number of teachers have been recruited who have poor qualification and trainings. This has compromised the quality of education severely (Hussain 2011). On the contrary, marginal attention has been given to the qualitative dimension of teacher education programs where mass production of teachers having shallow comprehension of both the content knowledge and methodology of education have been produced (Mahmood, 1999). Another main concern of all the stakeholders is the standard of education, as the quality of teaching and learning processes in the classrooms is linked with the quality of education (Odaga & Henevald 1995).

Secondary education in Pakistan comprises of two years of schooling that is grades 9 and 10. It covers 13-15 years cohort of children. There is an examination known as Secondary Schools Certificate (SSC) examination taken at the end of the class IX and X or class X according to the provincial plan. These exams are conducted by Matriculation Boards and Secondary Education throughout the country. The students opt for a group of their choice such as Science, Humanities, and Technical.

There are 0.88 million secondary institutions in the country with enrolment of more than two million and 0.36 million teachers (UNESCO report 2008). According to UNESCO figures (Dawn, 23 Feb 2004, editorial) the secondary school enrolment ratio is discouraging with 32 per cent for females and 46 per cent for males.

A number of factors internal and external affect the secondary education, its planning, implementation and functioning in the country. These factors may include student factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder 2004). Generally there are factors such as age, gender, geographical belongingness, marital status, ethnicity, socioeconomic status language, income, parents' education level, parental profession, language and religious affiliations (Ballatine 1993). For the purpose of this research study the factors are categorized in broad categories.

The categories include the following:

- i. Political
- ii. Social
- iii. Economical
- iv. Technological
- v. Low involvement of government towards education
- vi. Lack of awareness
- vii. Misuse of funds
- viii. Lack of good governance
- ix. Poor monitoring and supervision
- x. Resistance to change

These factors may affect the quality and standard of secondary education in the country.

**Political factors:** The instability of government, weak political culture and inefficiency of political parties create the scenario for a politically instable state. Many developed and developing countries are facing political instability and it has become a serious problem. Pakistan is a politically unstable country since beginning. It had been under the leadership of

both autocratic and democratic leaders who have been involved in the policy making. Political factors have always been affecting the planning and implementation at every step. (Memon 2007)

**Social factors:** There are many pressures from the various groups present in the society. These groups may include the ethnic, religious, class and various other pressure groups. The values, traditions and culture are also the social factors.

**Economical factors:** Income groups, economic conditions prevailing in the country and inflation, all are the part of the economical factors.

**Technological factors:** the technological advancement is too rapid nowadays. It becomes difficult for the systems especially the ones in developing countries to cope up with these advancements. The invasion of ICT, lack of trained personnel and equipment, lack of laboratories and other physical resources, energy shortfall are all the parts of economical factors.

### **Research Methodology:**

This research study is a part and one of the objectives of a larger study. For the purpose of data gathering a survey type research was conducted taking 65 heads and 180 school teachers from the secondary level of education as a sample. The respondents were given questionnaires containing closed ended questions based on Likert scale. 100% response was received.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **Analysis of the Items for the Heads and Teachers of Secondary Schools**

Factors	Agreed	Uncertain	Disagree	Mean
	%	%	%	Score
Political	96	2	2	4.4
Social	92	6	2	4.2
Economical	94	4	2	4.2

Technological	84	12	4	4.0
Low involvement of govt.	84	4	12	4.0
Lack of awareness	86	7	7	4.1
Misuse of funds	78	3	19	3.8
Lack of good governance	84	11	5	4.0
Poor monitoring	79	12	9	3.9
Resistance to change	79	14	7	3.9

**Table 1.1 Percentages and Means of all Responses of Heads and Teachers of Secondary Schools**

## Discussion and Conclusion

The findings in the Table 1.1 show that all the factors taken in the study affect the secondary education in Pakistan immensely. It could be depicted by the responses received that political factors have the major effect on the secondary education system in Pakistan. The social, economical and technological factors are also powerful and all this is because of lack of involvement of the government.

## Recommendations

It is recommended in the study that all the authorities responsible at the Federal, Provincial and Local level may play an effective role and can assist in reducing the effect of these factors so as to improve the quality and standards of education at the secondary level. It is required that unnecessary involvement and pressure at political and social level must be discouraged. For this purpose it is necessary to create awareness among the people so that they can understand the pros and cons of these factors. Resistance to change can also be reduced by creating awareness regarding the changes to be brought and giving sufficient knowledge to the people in regard to these changes. Stability in regard to economy is also required and in order to cope up with the technological factors proper training and equipment is required. Better monitoring is essential avoiding the misuse of funds. Thus to deal with all

these factors the government and the responsible authorities must show their involvement more and more. Getting all these factors under control will no doubt enhance the quality, participation and retention rates at the secondary education level.

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