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Education Policy Provisions and Objectives. A Review of Pakistani Education Policies

Muhammad Iqbal Majoka * and *Muhammad Ilyas Khan* **

Abstract: This paper is based on a review of the educational policy provisions and objectives in Pakistan since its creation in 1947. The paper focuses on policy measures and objectives regarding four major areas of education in the country: Higher Education, Secondary Education, Primary Education, and Technical and Vocational Education. The paper describes the chronological development in education policy making and implementation and presents a short history of policy measures proposed during different regimes. The paper also presents an analysis of the foci and elaborates on the various measures taken for improving education in the country over a period. Besides, the paper identifies major problems in the way of policy making and implementation at the different levels and streams of education in Pakistan.

Keywords: education policy, Pakistan, higher education, secondary and elementary education

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Introduction

The education system of a country plays a vital role in its social, cultural, political, and economic advancement. Most countries around the world focus on laying a strong base for their educational set up through perceptive policies and realistic plans. A policy is a summarised set of principles (Ball, 1990) that has been authorized to establish broader parameters of actions (Tahir 2007). According to Trowler (2003), an education policy is the description of actions which should be followed achieving desired goals. An educational policy is vital for setting a sustainable system of education for a country (Faizi, Shakil & Akhtar, 2012; Heck, 2004).

Pakistan came in to being in August 1947 as a result of the partition of the subcontinent that had been under the British rule for about a hundred years (Hameed-ur-Rehman & Sewani, 2013). During this century of the British rule, the indigenous education system of subcontinent went through drastic changes to comply with the colonial governance. A series of changes were introduced in the indigenous education system of the subcontinent through a series of educational policies known as terms of 1813-1835, 1835-1854, 1854-1884, 1882-1904, 1904-1919, 1919-1929 and the term of 1929-1947 (Pandey, 2005). Under these policies, the contemporary Persian was phased out as the official and court language and English was introduced as the official language. In 1844, it was announced that English educated Indians would be preferred in induction in the Civil Services of the country. During 1857, modern universities were established in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. A number of schools, colleges, and some technical and professional institutions were also established. Many of these education reforms were considered by the segments of the Indian people a threat to the local values and interests and a way to strengthen the colonial rule in India. This led to inception of many independence movements against the British rule. A number of local and international factors led to the end of the British rule in India in 1947. The subcontinent got its freedom from the British but could not maintain its centuries' old geographical and political unity and was divided in to two sovereign states, India and Pakistan.

Pakistan as a new state inherited a weak educational infrastructure. The country on the eve of its independence had 9073 primary schools, 2070 secondary schools, 11 professional colleges, 42 non-professional colleges, and two universities (Aziz, 1986). The newly established state organized a conference 'The Pakistan Educational Conference' that was held between

27th November and 1st December 1947. This conference is considered as the foundation stone for the educational system of Pakistan. The proceedings of this conference set a direction for the future education policies of the state. This conference was followed by a series of conferences, commissions and reforms including Report of the Commission on National Education, 1959; the New Education Policy, 1970; the Education Policy, 1972-80; National Education Policy and Implementation Programme, 1979; National Education Policies 1972, 1998-2010, and 2009.

At the end of preliminary sessions of the Pakistan Education conference, 1947, six different subcommittees were formed. These included: Scientific research and technical education committee, Adult Education Committee, University Education Committee, Primary and Secondary Education Committee, Committee for Scheduled castes and backward classes Education, and Cultural Relation Committee. For communal consensus on the recommendations by committees three joint committees i.e. Joint committee for University Education, and Primary and Secondary Education, the joint meeting of the committees on University Education, Scientific Research and Technical Education and Cultural Contacts, and joint meeting of the Committees Education, Women Education, and Primary and Secondary Education were arranged. These committees and joint meetings on committees made various recommendations in the light of the prevailing situation. These recommendations were discussed in specific sessions of the conference and finally the recommendations were passed as resolutions. These resolutions and recommendations framed a foundation bedrock for educational policies and reforms for the future. The following sections describe the policy provisions and recommendations.

Policy Measures for University Education and Higher Education

Under the Pakistan Education conference 1947 the University Education Committee recommended the establishment of inter-University Board of Pakistan responsible for taking up the administrative issues and maintaining academic quality. It was recommended that the education system in Pakistan should be inspired by Islamic Ideology and religious instructions should be compulsory for Muslim students in schools and colleges. Similar facilities regarding religious education may be provided for students belonging to other religious groups. Besides, compulsory physical training was

recommended for all stages of the education system. Compulsory military training was also recommended in colleges and universities (Government of Pakistan, 1947). The implementation process of these recommendations was followed through a six years plan (1951-57) and a first five years plan (1955-1960) (Aziz, 1986). A second education conference was held in 1951 to discuss the six year education development plan (Ali, 2013). The newly created state, however, faced multifarious problems and many recommendations and policy goals could not be fully accomplished but a significant progress was made in higher education. The policy measures suggested in Pakistan Education conference 1947 mainly dealt with the ideological foundations of the state education which understandably led to the increasing Islamisation of the education system in years following this conference. The other key focus was literacy rate. The literacy rate in the newly created state was only 13% and in quantitative terms more focus was laid on adult literacy in this initiative (Bengali, 1999). Partition of the subcontinent led to a large migration of different religious groups from one part of the subcontinent to the other. Before partition, a majority of literate population was Hindu who served as teachers in the educational intuitions. During the partition turmoil many educational institutions were closed, libraries and laboratories were destroyed, and classrooms, hostels and playgrounds were converted into camps for migrants (Khalid & Khan, 2006). Under such circumstances, holding a conference on education and outlining educational system for the state were bold steps on the part of government (Saigol, 2007).

The next milestone was the recommendations by the National Educational Commission, 1959. It was recommended that Higher education should be recognized as a distinct stage by transferring intermediate classes from the jurisdiction of universities to Boards of Secondary Education. It was also recommended that the duration of the Bachelor degree be extended from two years to three years. Universities should offer two courses i.e. Honours degree of three years and pass degree with two years at this level. Duration for Master degree was suggested two years. Recommendations for the revision of curricula were made adding new subjects like sociology, home economics, public and business administration, and journalism as fields of specialisation. Establishment of an institute of modern languages to meet the needs of trade, industry, and civil and defence services was recommended. To practice more autonomy for resolving various academic issues and maintaining coordination, the commission suggested to set-up

various interuniversities and intrauniversities bodies and committees for advanced studies. Recommendations about the service structure, leisure, and responsibilities of university teachers were also made. Establishment of University Grants Commission was also recommended in order to develop coordination among higher education institutions of the state (Government of Pakistan, 1959; Aziz, 1986). The implementation of the recommendations made by this commission was supported by the second (1960-65) and third (1965-70) National Development Plans (Aziz, 1986; Ali, 2013). The recommendations of this commission were very realistic, and balanced in qualitative and quantitative terms. These recommendations were quite comprehensive, timely and concordant with contemporary educational problems (Bhatiacharia, 2009). The report of this commission became the basis of educational system of Pakistan and is regarded as the Magna Carta of Pakistan's educational system (Saigol, 2007).

The first formal education policy was formulated in 1970 (Ali, 2013) which laid a stronger emphasis on improving the education system of the country. According to Aziz (1986), a special focus was placed on the improvement of the deteriorating quality of higher education in this policy. Recommendations were made for the establishment of Centres of Excellence in selected disciplines by universities. It was also emphasized to start postgraduate teaching and research programs in different departments of the universities; postgraduate classes in the selected colleges; and grant autonomy to the colleges having established long traditions of quality. Besides, it was recommended to improve service structures and pay scales for university faculty and to review rules regarding university teachers' efficiency and discipline. It was recommended not to open new colleges in public or private college for the next few years, and instead to expand and strengthen the existing colleges by providing more facilities, infrastructure, labs, equipment, and staff trainings. It was also proposed that the affairs of colleges should be controlled by directorates of college Education (Government of Pakistan, 1970; Aziz, 1986).

In the education of policy 1970, steps were recommended to streamline the managerial and financial matters of the universities through legislation. Rules and regulations for the affiliation of colleges were also devised and it was proposed that colleges with excellence in teaching should be entrusted with autonomy to devise their own courses and conduct examinations for attainment of degrees from affiliating universities. It was proposed that new universities be established in different areas in the light of population

distribution in order to reduce the burden of affiliations and examinations on the universities. It was also proposed to establish purely affiliating universities so as to allocate some already existing universities to teaching and research only (Government of Pakistan, 1970). These policy recommendations were consistent with the recommendations of National Education Commission 1959 and seem to be a progressive addition in educational development. This policy could not be implemented due to the war with India along with civil war in East Pakistan that resulted in the separation of the east wing of the country and the formation of the independent country of Bangladesh (Bengali, 1999).

The National Education Policy, 1972 contained a number of recommendations regarding higher education in Pakistan. The recommendations specific to higher education were: Establishment of new universities at Saidu Sharif, Multan, and Sukkur; bestowing a full-fledged university status on Jamia Islamia Bahawalpur ; addition of undergraduate faculties in the University of Islamabad; establishment of collaboration between universities; development of Area Study Centres in universities; establishment of the University Grants Commission; cutting down the enrolment in arts to 5% per annum, and raising enrolment in sciences at 10% per annum (Aziz, 1986; Government of Pakistan, 1972). The most radical recommendation with far reaching consequences was the nationalization of all privately managed higher education institutions in the country. These policy measures through apparently seemed very progressive resulted in an annual decline in the growth of enrolment in colleges and universities from 13 per cent to less than 5 per cent during 1972-1977 (Hassan, 1998).

The military led government presented an education policy in 1979. One of the highlights of this education policy was the radical Islamisation of the education system in Pakistan. The recommendations made regarding higher education in this policy included: Establishment of no new university except women's universities for the next five years; strengthening of the existing setup of centres of excellence, laboratories, libraries, and students' hostels; transforming well accomplished departments of the universities in to centers of advanced studies; allowing the mobility of qualified staff among universities, government departments, and research organizations; making arrangements for inservice trainings of university teachers under the National Academy of Higher Education; and amendment in the university act (Government of Pakistan, 1979). Furthermore, recommendations for improving college education included: inclusion of Classes XIII – XVI in

Degree Colleges; provision of facilities of science subjects in degree colleges; starting postgraduate classes in the selected colleges; and setting up a minimum criteria for a degree college (Government of Pakistan, 1979). This education policy was a continuation of the policies formulated in 1950's and 60's.

In March 1998, another education policy known as Education Policy 1998-2010 was promulgated. This policy, like the previous ones, emphasised the importance of higher education and highlighted a wide range of deficiencies at this level. A number of structural as well functional changes were identified in order to achieve the policy objectives. The policy recommendations regarding higher education were: allocation of non-lapsable funds to universities; exemption of import of educational equipment from tax; raising of funding of education from 2.2% to 4% of GNP; expansion of access to higher education to the 5% of the relevant age group; introduction of 3 years bachelors degree with due preference in university admission and priority in government recruitments; strengthening of the laboratories and libraries in universities; provision of special funds for research; and strengthening of universities to generate their own funds (Government of Pakistan, 1998). Other recommendations included: modernisation of curricula at the university level; revision of the universities act; establishment of a National Testing Service (NTS); upgrading of the departments with good performance into centers of excellence; taking measures for faculty development and incentives to teachers; introduction of tenure track system for appointment of university teachers; establishing linkages with institutions in foreign countries, and linkages with industry; introducing internal and external academic audits of universities; and increasing scholarships for faculty and students for higher education (Government of Pakistan, 1998).

These policy recommendations regarding higher education were consistent and aligned with the national needs. These, were followed during the coming years and resulted in substantial qualitative and quantitative expansion of the higher education sector. There have been some critics of the expansion of the higher education sector who argue this could severely impact the higher education in terms of quality and academic standards (Hoodbhoy, 1998).

In 1999 the democratic government of the state was overthrown by the military and the new regime initiated a major reform programme in higher education of the country introducing Education Sector Reforms 2001-2004.

It was emphasised that a vibrant higher education sector was essential for the technological advancement and socio-economic development of the country. Therefore, the main focus of these reforms was on the improvement of accessibility and quality of higher education besides the increased enrolment and more emphasis on science and technology at this level. The policy recommended in respect of private and public sectors was very liberal in order to enhance access to higher education, and consequently there have been a threefold increase in the number of universities and degree awarding institutions in the country. The main recommendations coming out of these reforms included a replacement of the general bachelor degree programmes by a four years Honours programmes; a rise in the funding for higher education from the then 0.39% of GNP to 2% of GNP by the year 2010; creation of endowment funds for research in universities; establishment of an academy for university teachers; revision of the service structure for university teachers; strengthening of libraries and laboratories in the higher education institutions; and development of linkages of higher education with industry and the society in general outside the academia (Government of Pakistan, 2001).

The military led regime proved quite helpful in the development of higher education. Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan was established in 2002. The HEC introduced five year plans for higher education in order to address the challenges of access, quality and relevance with national needs and consequently, the number of universities has increased from 42 (in 1980 to 175 (99 in public sector and 76 in private sector) in 2016 (Mahmood, 2016), which can be regarded as a leap in terms of quantitative development. The newly established universities, however, still face problems in terms of developing infrastructure, enhancing quality and becoming independent in financial terms.

In 2007, the democratic Government of Pakistan People Party replaced the military government and in 2009 the new government forwarded a policy for education in the state with a view that the previous policy had failed in achieving its targets (Government of Pakistan, 2009). The Ministry of Education (MoE) launched a review of the policy of 1998-2010. The reasons put forward were mainly two: one, the education policy 1998-2010 remained deficient in different aspects like quality, access, and equity of educational opportunities; and two, the international challenges triggered by globalisation, international commitments such as Dakar Framework of Education for All (EFA) Goals, and Millennium Development Goals

(Ahmed & Hussain, 2014). Ali (2013) argues that the National Education Policy 2009 has been presented in a radically different manner as compared to the policies formulated before 2009. All the education policies of Pakistan until 1998 have been written following the sectoral approach where policy measures for different educational levels and streams (e.g. primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, and technical education) have been highlighted in classified form, while thematic approach has been adopted in the 2009 education policy. It covers the areas of access, quality, and governance.

The policy recommendations included: an emphasis on research that my contribute in the economic development of the state; focus on measures to raise the enrolment from 4.7% to 10% by 2015 and 15% by 2020; increase in the budget for higher education up to 20% of the educational budget; promotion of research and development in universities by focusing on basic research, development of stronger university-industry partnerships, development of science parks and programmes nurturing knowledge application; provision of competitive research grants; institutionalisation of tenure track system for the appointment of faculty in the universities; designing of a programme for the continuous development of college and university teachers; award of doctoral and postdoctoral scholarships to the students with creditable performance for higher studies in Pakistan as well as abroad; and encouragement of universities to develop split degree programs in collaboration with reputed foreign universities (Government of Pakistan, 2009).

The recommendations aimed at better access to higher education included: integration of ICTs effectively in teaching, learning and research and providing expanded access by using ICT in distance education; provision of access to technical and scholarly information resources for supporting academic communication between teachers and researchers; dedication of additional television time to the delivery of high-quality distance education programs; introduction of need based scholarships to enhance equitable access to higher education; establishment of university campuses to facilitate access to higher education in capital towns where universities have not been established (Government of Pakistan, 2009).

The overview above of these policies indicates replication of recommendations in the series of educational policies. It is perhaps due to unaccomplished targets in most of these policies. According to Lindblom (1968), policies are always affected by previous policies. Usually new

policies are more or less a continuation of the previous ones; sometimes a new policy seems to be an extension of the previous one or consolidation of the previous policies. However, in the case of Pakistan, political instability (Hoodbhoy, 1998), poor management, supervision and corruption have been some of the reasons behind poor policy implementation.

Despite deficiencies in policy implementation Pakistan has made some progress in higher education. In 1947, there were only two Universities for a population of about 30 million (Aziz, 1986) and currently there are 153 Universities for a population of about 200 million (Mahmood, 2016). According to Mahmood (2016), after the establishment of the HEC, there has been rapid expansion in higher education sector. There has been 78 percent increase in the number of universities/ Degree Awarding Institutions (DAI) between 2010 and 2015, in both public and private sectors. In these five years, there has been a 174 percent increase in student enrolment, with a large increase in women participation. Besides this growth, standardized and updated curricula have been introduced in order to meet skills-based needs of the developing country; and a regular system has been developed for the quality assurance of the higher education in Pakistan.

Policy Measures for Secondary Education in Pakistan

The secondary school education begins at 11 years of age in many countries in the world (Taneja, 1989). The education at secondary level occupies an important status in the education system as it works as a feeder to higher education (Government of Pakistan, 1998) as well as a terminal point for many of the youth in developing countries (Ahmad, Rehman, Ali, Iqbal, Ali, & Badshah, 2013). At the time of partition, this stage of education was not well defined. The Primary and Secondary Education Committee of the Pakistan Education Conference 1947 defined various stages for school courses as: Pre-Primary 3 to 6 years; primary 6 to 11 years; and secondary 14 to 17 years (Bhatti, 1987). Primary and Secondary Education Committee of the Pakistan Education Conference 1947 made some recommendations for secondary education. These recommendations included: education in Pakistan should be based on the Islamic conception of universal brotherhood, democracy and social justice. It was recommended that Urdu should be the second compulsory language as a common language of the state, and English should be sustained as compulsory language at school level. But each

province should decide about its medium of instruction. Physical education should be compulsory at the school level, and it must include activities like scouting, rifle club, mountaineering etc. These recommendations were enough to chalk out guidelines and lay down the system of secondary education for the state. But the newly born state faced multifarious problems including shortage of literate manpower to run the schools, settlement of millions of migrants, disputes with India, weak administrative setup in the country, political instability after the death of the founding father Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and lack of physical and financial resources (Wynbrandt, 2009). Therefore, five year plans following these policy measures failed to achieve the set targets.

The Commission on National Education, 1959 regarded secondary education as a distinct stage as it had been universally recognised. It was recommended to have separate academic and administrative units, and control and regulation of secondary education should be given to Boards of Secondary Education with jurisdiction parallel to that of universities working in the state. Regarding the curriculum at secondary level, the commission recommended to offer different elective subjects to the students with varying importance according to their aptitude so as to prepare them for higher education as well as for different vocations and employment in social services. The commission took serious notice of the secondary schools providing low quality education with untrained teachers, scarce facilities, and inadequate infrastructure, and recommended that educational authorities should enforce rules and regulations for the recognition of secondary schools.

The commission highlighted the financial problems faced by the government in financial support of the increasing number of schools with increased enrolment. To overcome this problem, the commission recommended running schools qualifying required criteria, government should bear 20% expenditures as grant, while 60% expenditures should be fulfilled from tuition fees on the part of students, and school management be held responsible for the rest of 20% expenditures. The commission also suggested conditions for the registration of commercially operated schools and suggested not to allow working of unregistered schools. The commission highlighted the need for reconstruction and rehabilitation of secondary education. Policy recommendations of this Commission were significant and reflected needs of the society but could not be implemented in a true sense due to the lack resources. According to Hassan (1998), the curriculum at

secondary level was revised in the first five year plan and then financial allocations were cut down due the war 1965 with India. Resultantly, the set targets could not be achieved but this policy had significant impact the overall education system of the state.

The Education Policy, 1970 had more focus on the decentralization of the Education administration, and structural changes (Shami, 2005). It was recommended that school education should comprise class I to X with the organisational structure of elementary schools (class I-VIII) and high schools (Class IX-X). Each school was recommended to have its own governing body with 3-5 members with two members from the school staff. Establishment of district school authority was recommended in order to handle developmental plans for school education, to decide about grants and recognition of privately managed schools, appointment of head masters, administration and supervision of district education fund. To assist the District Education authority, a standing advisory body with members from senior officer of the district, parents, teachers and other respectable citizen was proposed. At the provincial level, establishment of directorates of schools was recommended in order to help and facilitate district school authorities (Government of Pakistan, 1970). This policy was the continuation the previous Commission on National Education but it remained unimplemented due to political turmoil in the country (Shami, 2005).

In the National Education Policy 1972-1980, provision of free education up to class IX and X from October 1974 was recommended. The more radical change was the nationalisation of privately managed educational institutions. To enable students to accept social responsibility after matriculation, it was suggested to add vocational and occupational subjects in general education at this stage. Although the recommendations of this policy were apparently progressive but it resulted in an increase of educational expenditures from RS. 0.8 billion in 1971-72 to RS. 2.8 billion during 1976-77 (Hassan, 1998). Therefore, it was impossible for the coming governments to sustain this policy and for the time being the educational quality of institutions previously managed by private owners went down.

The National Education Policy 1979 recommendations included : replacement of 4-tier system (Primary, Secondary, college and university education) by a 3-tier (elementary, secondary, and university) system of education; addition of classes IX and X to the intermediate colleges and classes XI and XII to the high schools; introduction of mathematics as a compulsory subject both for Science and Arts students; introduction of Agro-

tech as a subject in all secondary schools; and beginning second shifts (evening classes) in high schools where needed to achieve the targets of education for all and adult literacy (Government of Pakistan, 1979). This policy did not offer any radical change except the addition of Islamic aspect in the school curriculum and allowing private sector to play its role in the provision of education.

The National Education Policy, 1992-2002 mainly focused on the improvement of quality at all levels of school education (Shami, 2005). Recommendations were made to reassess the role of teachers in teaching and learning; to modernize curricula and textbooks; to improve the physical facilities in schools; to introduce activity-based courses in sciences in the schools; and using educational technologies and mass media for providing better quality education to the learners (Government of Pakistan, 1992; Shami, 2005). Due to the abrupt political changes in the country, this policy could not be implemented fully (Shami, 2005). The National Education Policy, 1998-2010 laid a focus on secondary education. Considering as an important subsector of the entire educational system, secondary education was specially focused to prepare students for the world of work as well as for further learning in different professions and specialised fields in higher education.

Policy provisions included: setting up of initially one model secondary school in each district; revision of curricula in order to inspire problem-solving and independent thinking; introducing a definite career or profession; introducing multiple textbooks; and establishment of guidance centers for secondary school students in collaboration with universities. Besides, it was recommended to provide Education Cards to the needy students. For improving the quality of teacher and teaching learning, initiation of project methods of teaching; establishment of Education Service Commission for the recruitment of teachers; introduction of a code of ethics for teachers; enhancement of the role of the already established National Education Testing Services (NETS); initiation of B.S. Ed and B.A. Ed. to prepare teachers of high quality for teaching science subjects and Arts subjects were recommended. The physical targets under this policy were to raise the participation rate at secondary level from 31% to 48%, to increase the participation rate from 11% to 13% at the higher secondary level, to raise the number of secondary schools from 11000 to 18000, and to increase the number of secondary school teachers from 160500 to 216000 till 2002-03.

In order to peruse the national education policy 1998-2010, education

sector reforms 2001-2004 were introduced. The main focus of these reforms was the vocationalisation of general secondary education. This was with an aim to make this level of education more meaningful and work oriented; to revise the existing scheme of studies in order to accommodate a new technical stream besides the streams of Science and Humanities; to introduce 34 different trades subject to different criteria; to develop teaching-learning resources and materials; and raise the enrolment at secondary level from 7% to 50%. Furthermore, it was recommended to improve science education through provision of well equipped science labs, development of video textbooks, establishment of mathematics resource room, revision of curricula from I-XII, and provision of well trained teachers to impart quality education (Government of Pakistan, 2001; Shami, 2005). As the Education Sector Reforms 2001-2004 proved the follow-up of the national education policy 1998-2010, the national education policy got more consistency and focus for implementation. In accordance with the policy elites' belief regarding the necessity of masses education for development, there has more investment in education sector in the policy 1998-2010 (Shaikh, 2006). Despite all this focus and consistent follow-up, the set targets have not been achieved both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

The National Education Policy 2009 was presented with a different angle. The recommendations made for the improvement of quality and access included: enhancing the access for secondary education in the rural areas, the localities having secondary schools in low ratio, and specifically schools for girls; increase in student support in order to prevent dropout caused by financial reasons; provision of counselling facilities to students from the elementary level onwards in order to enable students to overcome socio-psychological problems; provision of career counselling to the students at higher secondary level in to help them for the best choices of courses for their further studies; organisation of sports at secondary and higher secondary schools; development of community service programs in secondary schools in order to make schooling more attractive place for students; and promotion of skills-based education in the secondary schools. This new policy does not have over ambitious qualitative or quantitative targets like previous policies. Furthermore, the new government is committed to introduce new educational reforms in changing scenario of the world of work.

The overall achievements in secondary education in the previous 69 years are not encouraging. Secondary education is a crucial stage in the educational

system as the terminal point for majority of students who enter the world of work at the end of this stage of their education. For the other students who continue their education, this stage serves as linkage with other stages of education. Thus the students must be equipped with life skills and the skills needed for the world of work and at the same time they should have abilities and skills that are prerequisite for higher education.

Policy Measures for Primary/Elementary Education

The education provided by primary schools or elementary schools is called primary education (Taneja, 1989). Primary education casts the widest possible net for the economically deprived section of society (Sheikh, 1987, p.9). Being the utmost need of human beings, primary education was declared as basic human right for all people in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Consequently, all the countries and nations in the world have taken the provision of access to basic education as a priority. At the time of its creation, the education system of Pakistan about 80% population was illiterate, and only 3.7 % among the literate persons had completed their secondary level (Sheikh, 1987, p. 9).

The Primary and Secondary Education Committee of All Pakistan Educational Conference 1947 recommended that: the state should introduce five to six years' compulsory and free education at the primary level; education in Pakistan should be based on the Islamic conception of universal brotherhood of man, social democracy and social justice. Under this provision, the students must learn the fundamental principles of their religion; spiritual, social and vocational elements must be integrated in education. Furthermore, the committee declared 6-11 years as age group for the primary education (Government of Pakistan, 1947; Aziz, 1986).

The next endeavour for education reform was the National Commission for Education 1959. The commission emphasised the importance of universal basic primary education for economic, political and social progress of the nation. Therefore, it recommended initially five years and then eight-year compulsory education. It was considered impossible for the state to meet the entire expenditures required for providing compulsory education. Therefore, the commission recommended that community must share these expenditures. For this purpose, there should be a special tax on district level in order to collect 50% of the required funds while 50% funds would be

provided from general revenues of the provincial government. In order to manage and supervise universal compulsory education program, it was recommended to form a Central Coordinating Committee under President of Pakistan. Under this central committee, it was recommended to form Provincial Committees governed by the respective governors, having a chairman and five to six members from relevant fields in order to control the funding process. The commission also recommended to establish a district level administration consisting of the Deputy Commissioner or his nominee as chairman, and four other members including District Education Officers. Each district would be divided into units of 10-15 thousand population managed by a committee of three nominees by the Deputy Commissioner (Government of Pakistan, 1959; Aziz, 1986). The recommendations of this commission were followed by the second five year plan 1960-65 and third five years plan 1965-70.

In the Education Policy of 1970, the recommendations regarding primary/elementary education included: integration of primary and middle schools into elementary schools; increase in the literacy rate among masses, and prioritising elementary education in educational policy and establishing an authority for promoting adult literacy supported by the national literacy corporation. Islamic Studies was made compulsory up to class V (Government of Pakistan, 1970; Aziz, 1986). This policy was followed by the fourth five year plan 1970-75, but it remained unimplemented due to political unrest in the country.

In the National Education Policy 1972-82 recommendations were made for universal education but with more stress on providing free education. It was recommended to make education free and universal up to class X for all students in the country in different phases. It was also recommended to make education free up to class VIII by October 1, 1972 (Government of Pakistan, 1970; Aziz, 1986). This policy followed a non-plan period because no five years developmental was chalked out.

The New Education Policy 1979 was put forward by the military led government. Regarding primary education, this policy was a continuation of the previous policies in terms of improving primary school enrolment and facilities. According to the policy document (Government of Pakistan, 1979), a special focus was given to improvement of internal efficiency by mobilisation of community and efficient utilisation of educational resources that were exciting in the country at that time. Furthermore, focus was laid on reducing the dropout rate at primary level that was about 50% at that time.

The policy further recommended to increase development funds for primary education from 13.2 percent to 32 percent annually. Another innovative step in this policy was the establishment of about 5000 mosque schools in the next five years. This step was taken with the rationale that a mosque was a living intuition existing in all villages throughout the country. Usually a mosque was considered to have enough space and facilities required for a village primary school. There is usually no activity in a mosque in between the morning and afternoon prayers, and it was considered convenient to utilise it for running a primary school. The organisation of mosque schools was suggested as a unit of 20-30 students' run by the provincial governments with the same curriculum as for other primary schools.

In addition to mosque schools, this policy had recommendations for the establishment of 5000 Mohalla (locality) schools and 1000 village workshop schools. The organization of a Mohalla school was assumed to be based on a unit of 20-30 students with an expectation to give literacy skills in addition to teaching of the Holy Quran/Islamic studies and selected home management skills. It was also expected that a Mohalla school might also develop into centre of functional education and skill training for grown up ladies. A remuneration of Rs.150 per month was recommended for lady in charge of the Mohalla School.

The National Education Policy 1998-2010 regarded elementary education as the foundation stone for the entire education system and described its legal obligation on the state in the light of Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as convention on the rights of Child. As more than 5.5 million children of primary level (age 5-9) were out of school and dropout rate at this level was approximately 45% along with one-fourth of the primary teachers having no training. It was recommended to increase participation rate at this level from 71% to 90% by the year 2002-3 and 105% by 2010. In order to accelerate follow-up of National Education Policy 1998-2010, Education Sector Reforms 2002-04 were introduced by the military led Government. These reforms laid a special emphasis on universal primary education. Recommendations suggested for primary education were: to ensure universal primary education of good quality by increasing access and participation rate by 100%; improve existing infrastructure of the primary schools; establish new primary school as required; establish Community Basic schools; to provide free textbooks for the children; and to provide free braille books for visually impaired children at primary level. Under these reforms, compulsory education ordinance was also promulgated for the

achievement of targets for universal primary education (Government of Pakistan, 2001; Shami, 2005).

In 2009, the civilian government of the Pakistan People's Party presented the Education Policy 2009. The set targets for primary education were: to enrol all the children, boys and girls by the year 2015; to make efforts to provide the necessary financial resources for the achievement of EFA goals; to invite International Development Partners for expanding school facilities through a well-developed plan; to take measures for making the school an attractive place for students; and to take steps like food-based incentives and financial support for increasing enrolment and reducing dropout. It was further recommended: to set 6 to 10 years as official age for primary education; to facilitate poor students for getting quality education by establishing at least one school in each province and to upgrade primary schools to middle level. Quality education, however, has still been regarded as a wild dream as a majority of students at primary school level possess weak life skills (Government of Pakistan, 1999; Pervez, 1995; Samo, 2009).

Policy Measures Regarding Technical and Vocational Education

Scientific Research and technical Education Committee for Educational Conference 1947 made some very significant recommendations for building a sound and viable foundation for the technical and vocational education in Pakistan. The committee suggested a comprehensive survey to prepare first hand data about existing higher institutions of technology and colleges imparting education in different fields of scientific education. The committee unanimously recommended the establishment of a council of technical education for Pakistan along with the structure of its administrative body and the objectives of the council according to their suggestions, the council would be responsible to advise the Government of Pakistan on the matters related to the promotion and advancement of technical education at all stages, conducting a need assessment survey for Technical Education, preparing a comprehensive scheme for reorganization of technical education, and drawing a comprehensive scheme for the training of scholars within the country and outside the country in technical subjects. The committee addressed the question of the continuance of the overseas scholarship scheme for the year 1948-49 which was facing various problems and obstacles after the partition of India. The Committee also recommended a new scheme for

foreign scholarship with new criteria for the selection and award (Government of Pakistan, 1947).

Realizing the importance of research, the Committee made recommendations for fundamental as well as scientific and industrial research in Pakistan, research grants fellowship and scholarships, appointment of Eminent Scientist if needed from foreign, and providing every required facility for research. The Committee also proposed establishment of a council for scientific and industrial research. The Committee proposed that this council should establish National Laboratories, and Technical Institutions in Pakistan (Aziz, 1986; Shami, 2005; Government of Pakistan, 1947).

National Education Commission 1959 laid a special focus on technical and vocational education. The commission stressed on strengthening of technical and vocational education in the country in order to boost the economy of the state. It was suggested to make technical and vocational education as integral part of the education system of the state, and in this connection, the commission recommended to include practical courses of technical subjects, agriculture, and home economics in the school curriculum. Similarly, it was recommended to include social studies and humanities as a part of curriculum in technical vocational education. In order to prepare personnel of supervisory cadre in different areas, the commission recommended establishing polytechnic and technical institutions in various technologies. The existing programs in polytechnic and technical institutions be strengthened by providing more facilities, and new technologies should be introduced in these institutions. Besides, it was recommended that these institutions should offer evening and part-time courses in order to accommodate more students in this stream (Government of Pakistan, 1959). The Education Policy 1970 focused on a significant shift towards vocational and technical education at secondary education. To attract students towards vocational and technical education it was suggested that central and provincial governments should offer 75% scholarships on the enrolment in this stream.

In the education policy 1972-80, the major decision with regard to technical and vocational education has been that it is made compulsory for all students of classes VI-VIII. The 1972 Education policy envisaged a major shift to a more purposeful agrotechnical education in the system. Further, it attempted to freeze enrolments in arts/humanities and expand enrolments in the science and technical subjects both at college and university level. It was

the integration of general and technical education would equip secondary and college students for gainful employment, including self-employment, in industry, agriculture, business, home economics and education to providing them a program of general education. The National Educational Policy 1998-2010 advocated the importance of technical and vocational education. The policy highlighted the concept of vocational education for imparting the kind of skill and education that students for responding to the call of practical life, if one chooses to work after secondary education (Shami, 2005).

Like the previous policies the Education Policy 2009 has also emphasised technical and vocational education. The recommendations made for this stream in Education Policy 2009 are: to develop standards and curriculum for ensuring standardized technical and vocational education at National Level; to extend technical and vocational education according to the needs of the area i.e. Tehsil, District and Division; to offer skills-based vocational training courses, relevant to local labour market; to define level wise prerequisites for entry as a teacher in technical and vocational education (Government of Pakistan, 2009).

Conclusion

The above review indicates no substantial discrepancy in assessing the educational needs and outlining policy measures at the different levels and aspects of the education system. There, however, seems to have been consistent issues in the process of policy implementation. Intermittent political instability and lack of will on the part of the political leadership and the government could be put forward as the main obstacles in the way of policy implementation. This has been previously indicated by policy critics such as Khwaja (1985), Shakoor, Azeem, Dogar and Khatoon (2011) and Ahmad, Rehman, Ali, Khan and Khan (2014) who argue that lack of political will, highly ambitious policies, corruption, political instability, and lack of requisite funds have been the main hurdles in efficient policy implementation in the country.

Khalid and Khan (2006) argue that some of the other factors leading to lack of policy implementation include lack of a clear vision regarding means and goals, controversy around issues such as medium of instruction, problems in science and research, women education and the role of gender, and political interference in the field of education. Bhattacharya (2009) argue

that lack of commitment on the part of ruling class, a divide between poor and elite feudal class regarding socio-economic priorities are other factors leading to this situation. Reasons behind the lack of commitment and reform initiative on the part of the ruling class and the well-to-do also seems to include their own exclusion from the public education system. Because of a lack of vision and lack of stakes in the public education system, the system has always been of the least priorities in terms of fund allocation and expenditure. Low allocation of funds for the public education system has thus been one of the main factors leading to the failure of policies in terms of implementation in Pakistan.

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