



## Educational Management in Pakistan: Key Issues, Problems, and Solutions

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### Abstract

**Background:** Educational development plays a critical role in fostering human capital, particularly in underdeveloped regions. In Pakistan, disparities in access and quality of education persist, especially in rural and marginalised areas. Human asset development involves enhancing individuals' skills and capabilities to contribute effectively to society. **Objective:** This study aims to investigate the educational development of underdeveloped areas in Pakistan through the lens of technical expertise and institutional development. It specifically explores the role of education in fostering human capital in both industrialised and less- developed Asian countries. **Methods:** This qualitative study is grounded in extensive literature reviews of Pakistan's higher secondary educational system and Madrassah education system. The research also contextualises findings with respect to national education initiatives, particularly the Public Training Strategy (1998–2010) introduced by the Government of Pakistan. **Results:** The study highlights that relevant and high-quality education and training are crucial for empowering economically and socially disadvantaged populations. It underscores the importance of rudimentary education as a fundamental investment in national development. The findings also suggest that improving education requires a comprehensive approach that integrates physical and mental well-being into human development strategies. **Conclusion:** Educational development in underdeveloped Pakistani regions must be prioritised through targeted institutional improvements and technical capacity-building. A holistic educational strategy—incorporating quality, accessibility, and health—can serve as a catalyst for sustainable human asset development and societal progress.

**Keywords:** Educational Development; Human Capital; Institutional Capacity-Building; Underdeveloped Regions in Pakistan

### Introduction

The target to shove sustainable economic growth through heightened workforce productivity is profoundly diluted by the underlying inadequacies of educational systems in many evolving economies. In countries

such as Pakistan, the education sector is emblematic of systemic dysfunction, pigeonholed by persistently low primary school enrolment, rooted gender and regional differences, an acute scarcity of qualified educators, and the continued reliance on outdated pedagogical models and inadequate infrastructural support (Kumah-Abiwu, 2023). These deficiencies not only inhibit the civilising of a competent, practised class but also pose sizable controls on human capital progress—thereby hindering national efforts to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic progress.

Japan's educational system has significantly impacted several East Asian countries. By 1870, all Japanese children were required to have completed elementary education by the Meiji period. After universal primary education was ensured, the attention switched to universal secondary education. After World War II, higher education became a major concern. To preserve the survival of their nation, the Japanese were among the first to grasp the significance of adopting Western knowledge in mathematics, science, and technology. It was essential to ensure Japan's survival in this manner.

During the eighteenth century, most South Asian nations did not make any organised effort to improve their educational institutions. Due to the dominance of contemporary education in these subjects, it was disliked that the educated elite in these countries, particularly on the subcontinent, had a more thorough grounding in Christian theology, history, literature, and culture than in science and technology. This wrath was directed at the Western education systems introduced to these nations. Nevertheless, Brass (2024), South Asian nations failed to build a system that would have allowed them to preserve their traditions while being globally competitive. Since colonial times, these nations' educational systems and organisational structures have remained mostly unchanged. Despite being independent for nearly half a century, just a few countries in the region have provided primary education to their whole population.

**Despite 57 years of independence, the educational system needs to be more organised and efficiently deploy its meagre resources.**

***Discussion on Educational Management in Pakistan:***

***High Literacy Rate, Especially Females in Pakistan:***

The continual educational crisis in Pakistan accentuates deep-rooted organisational and organisational failures that continue to hinder progress toward equitable literacy. The lopsided rate of illiteracy predominantly among females—reflects a broader pattern of general neglect. While initial enrolment rates in early education are moderately encouraging, with 73% of children entering playschool through fifth grade, the barren drop to a mere 24% accomplishment rate by duodecimal grade divulges alarming retention and headway deficits. These trends are exacerbated by the dominance of so-called "ghost" schools, marked by dysfunctional learning environments and recurring teacher malingering. Furthermore, unproductive educational governance and weak direction compound these challenges, frustrating meaningful reform and funding due to the cyclical torpor of human capital development.

Throughout Pakistan, educational advancement has only sometimes received the attention and priority it deserves. With a global literacy rate of only 53% (65% for males and 40% for females in 2004), the issue of low literacy must be given proper attention. The net primary enrolment ratio was 46% in 1990–1991, and it is anticipated to increase to 58% in 2005–2006.

Education is largely credited as the single most operative way to accelerate economic growth. It noticeably affects the expansion of human capital and hastens economic growth by furthering the extension of more marketable skills and a higher level of expert competence. The improvements of schooling extend beyond the individualistic to the communal as a whole. Education plays a noteworthy role in lightening poverty and pointing to economic and social fields in enhancing nations like Pakistan.

***Past Initiatives for Pakistan Education System:***

Pakistan's educational system has made significant strides in the past, such as:

Since 1947, the Pakistani government has substantially improved the literacy rate and basic and secondary education. Throughout the 1990s, a programming technique was prioritised in response to mediocre results. The Social Action Program (SAP) officially offered a comprehensive strategy for delivering social sector services focusing on basic education. Through Literacy Commissions, attempts were made to enhance adult literacy and provide non-formal education to individuals not enrolled in formal schooling. The two initiatives occurred simultaneously.

The government has invested a substantial amount of money in the Social Action Program because it is the primary program striving to improve people's lives, grow their human resources, and eliminate poverty.

The government of Sri Lanka spent 127.4 billion rupees on primary education, basic health, population welfare, and rural water supply and sanitation from 1992-1993 to 1995-1996 (Kumar *et al.*, 2023). During this period, a total of 106.5 billion rupees were spent on the initiative. The second phase of SAP was initiated with an estimated starting expenditure of 498.8 billion rupees. Between 1996–1997 and 1999–2000, a total of 195.9 billion rupees were spent, with 136.6 billion going to non-development and 59.3 billion going to development. According to Rana (2024), SAP is the most expensive application and has the highest use rate. Despite SAP's effectiveness in increasing various social indices, the program's creators say they have not achieved the desired improvement. However, the pace of SAP and other investment projects in ancillary industries is significantly slower than the improvement in social sector service delivery. Almost half of the school-aged children in Pakistan are not currently enrolled in formal education. Those who can afford it are increasingly resorting to the private sector in pursuit of services of higher quality. This investigation showed SAP's following challenges:

#### ***Elementary Education System:***

In Pakistan, kindergarten through fifth-grade education is the responsibility of the different provinces. However, it is the federal administration's responsibility to organise such activities. Kindergarten through eighth-grade primary education is the responsibility of the education departments of the different provinces. The management configurations in each province are unique. Due to the federalisation of power, literacy and primary education are currently the responsibility of district presidencies. District Education Officers are the district's highest-ranking administrators. In the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, basic education and literacy offices have been divided at the district level, though they remain merged in NWFP and Baluchistan. The new compact asks for literacy departments at the district level to oversee literacy programmes.

The Federal Ministry of Education would be responsible for the program's overall coordination.

Following the transfer of responsibility, the province's Planning and Development departments will be in charge of the sector's investment budgets and plans. In contrast, the province's Finance departments will be responsible for providing operating funding. The District Accounts Officer is responsible for keeping track of district-level incoming funds. The District Education Office is responsible for managing all budgetary and staff issues.

In the second phase of current research, this study shares some information regarding equality concerns that arise when the private sector delivers education.

#### ***Critical Review of the Management of Pakistan's Education System***

Population education is the foundation of any nation. It is essential to a nation's development and prosperity, and the educational system is the foundation for its political and economic infrastructure. A robust education system is necessary for a nation to fulfil its full potential. In its most fundamental sense, education is the mechanism by which a nation advances. Several challenges, such as a shortage of educated and inspired teachers, inadequate physical infrastructure and facilities, and issues with the curriculum's quality and relevance, have hindered the development of Pakistan's educational system. Underinvestment in excellent education directly contributes to the dearth of educational opportunities. Since Pakistan's educational system is in such a state of disrepair, it impedes its overall development.

Due to Pakistan's status as a developing nation, its education system has faced many significant obstacles from its inception. Pakistan's current difficulties, which include poverty, corruption, violence, social unrest, a struggling economy, and more, are largely attributable to the country's increasing illiteracy rate. In addition to imparting facts and figures, education instils a feeling of personal responsibility and enhances social graces. In addition to teaching people proper behaviour, the laws of society, and the difference between good and evil, education helps them feel more secure in their position as global citizens by broadening their understanding of the world outside their boundaries. Therefore, upgrading the educational system is crucial for the nation's development and prosperity. Important difficulties include the absence of established criteria for the distribution of funds at the school level, the presence of many reporting lines, and the inability to relate resource mobilization and use to desired outcomes.

**Congenial School Environment Issues:**

The school provided the adolescents with all they could desire, but they did not choose to spend their time there. The most crucial constituent in pupils' ability to recollect information, particularly in elementary school, is the extent to which they learnt it in a manner they enjoy. A course of action could involve implementing practical training techniques and collaborating deliberately with the sports department to organise numerous sporting activities in schools. In addition to the interior, the school's exterior may be substantial in determining its quality as an educational institution.

**Old Curriculum:**

In Pakistan, all schools share the same academic framework. The course load has not been altered or increased. The education provided in a country should be up to date, given its current state. It should cover everything necessary and essential to know in light of current events and challenges. In Pakistan, however, the curriculum currently in use has remained largely unchanged for decades. It is inefficient and represents a significant regression. Innovation is essential for maintaining social standing and peer approval; therefore, this outdated curriculum fails to meet the minimum standards for effective training.

**Physical Environmental Issues:**

Several schools in the Punjab region were discovered to have dangerous neighbourhoods. Problems such as trash dumping, loud traffic, commercial activity, stagnant water, inadequate sanitation, and exposed drainage are prevalent around schools. According to the Foulkes *et al.* (2024) these variables hurt the children's health and make attending school difficult. In addition, these occurrences impair students' ability to concentrate on their homework.

**Examination System:**

A rigorous examination of Pakistan's educational stagnation must look into the system's underlying, seriously faulty assessment infrastructure in addition to the larger inefficiencies in education. A mechanistic approach to evaluation is reflected in the country's outdated monolithic examination methodology, which values rote memorisation over critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and creative application. Because teachers are encouraged to prioritise exam-focused education over holistic learning, this one-dimensional framework severely limits pedagogical innovation. Further undermining the legitimacy and integrity of the educational process is the deeply ingrained culture of academic dishonesty, which is demonstrated through unapproved help and systematic corruption during exams.

A more significant structural issue, specifically a long-term underinvestment in academic infrastructure brought on by broader governmental indifference rather than particular budgetary constraints, is indicated by Pakistan's educational institutions' persistent lack of resources. Ayoko, Peter, and Jegede (2023) contend that the absence of functional science labs and well-stocked libraries is not merely a practical problem but rather an indication of institutional and governmental disregard for educational advancement.

While bare libraries limit options for critical engagement, interdisciplinary synthesis, and intellectual discovery, a lack of scientific equipment often denies students access to empirical approaches of inquiry. These long-standing material deficiencies—maintained by a lack of strategic vision and fiscal inertia—indicate a concerning disrespect for the contribution of education to the growth of the nation and essentially condemn entire student populations to inadequate learning settings. To make the goal of a knowledge-based society more than just a catchphrase, such circumstances necessitate a quick re-examination of governance objectives.

**Corruption:**

Systemic and pervasive corruption is Pakistan's greatest problem. This trend has since expanded beyond the education sector and into all other economic sectors. However, the most damage is done in the classroom, which is a serious problem since it threatens the future of Pakistan. There are both internal and external means by which students can cheat on tests. Consequently, those who exert the

most effort receive lower grades than they deserve, while others who do not study receive excellent marks through cheating.

### ***Methodology use by Pakistan Education System:***

The term "educational methodology" refers to a certain technique of executing, Cabrera-Montalbán, González-Barea and Rodríguez-Entrena (2024). the tasks and actions required to achieve educational goals.

Pakistan's educational system can be loosely divided into three types:

### ***The Cambridge Education System***

The British educational model: In the United Kingdom, those who did not belong to the upper class could not afford to send their children to school (Appah *et al.*, 2024). Those who have obtained a childhood education comparable to Cambridge universities frequently prefer to study abroad. Companies assign a higher value to applicants who have completed the Cambridge education system than those who have completed other types of education, adding to a widening salary inequality.

### ***Pakistan's Secondary School Curriculum:***

The linguistic and economic divisions in Pakistan's educational system restrict social mobility and strengthen structural inequality. In addition to being educational institutions, schools—whether privately owned or managed by the government—also act as instruments to maintain class-based inequality.

According to Pervaz (2023), schools that provide bilingual education in Urdu and English frequently reflect the goals of the middle class, allowing pupils to enrol in esteemed colleges based on their academic standing and financial situations. On the other hand, kids from low-income families are usually sent to schools that speak Urdu, which significantly limits their exposure to English, which is now the worldwide language of education and career progression.

This language restriction perpetuates a cycle of disadvantage by continuously restricting the upward mobility of low-income pupils and maintaining a hierarchical educational system that places a premium on wealth over aptitude. These elements demonstrate the pressing need for a reform of the language strategy and resource allocation in Pakistan's educational system.

### ***The Madrassah Education System:***

Is one method of educating children and adolescents in Islam? Children's basic education is based on religious teachings, and they are not exposed to or taught about the outside world.

More than half of Pakistan's school-aged children and more than sixty per cent of the country's total population reside in Punjab, where the study examined the difficulties connected with basic education in rural areas. This study identified non-numerical hurdles to educating pupils on their fundamental rights.

This study employed primarily qualitative methods for data collection, with some quantitative analysis for good measure. Observation, in-depth interviews with parents, educators, and business owners, and questionnaires filled out by the pupils were the primary data collection methods.

According to Kauffman and Hornby (2025), parental involvement in their children's schools reduces when parents view their primary obligation as getting their children to school daily. However, when parents in this study felt intellectually incapable of assisting their children, they were less likely to be involved in their children's education. In addition, when parents cannot afford private tutoring for their at-risk children, they have little alternative but to rely completely on the school's curriculum and instruction. They desire that schools make greater efforts to improve student academic success. In schools in underdeveloped nations, charging pupils for one-on-one instruction is a prevalent practice. To maintain a low dropout rate, it has been discovered that "certain institutions purposefully pushed at-risk pupils to apply as private candidates rather than take the board exams."

According to the findings, "certain institutions encouraged pupils to apply as private candidates rather than take the board exams" (Wu, Xu & Philbin, 2023) Eight fathers interviewed for this study voiced concern about the region's increasing demand for private tuition. They stated that some local science and math teachers offered after-school tutoring in their homes for a fee. Some teachers, in their opinion, intentionally prevented students from learning in a classroom setting and instead encouraged pupils to hire them for private sessions. They went on to explain that wealthy families recruited them to teach individual lessons to their children for a fee. Government support for Education for All (EFA) in 1990, reaffirmation of this commitment through acceptance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2001, and the recent declaration of education from the ages of 5 to 16 as a fundamental and inalienable human right in 2010 all indicate that quality education remains a significant objective.

## **Literature Review**

One can only comprehend the media's significance in the rural development context by taking a broad view. One of the most important things to keep in mind when discussing rural development in the context of knowledge sharing is that one of its primary goals is to improve the living standards of rural residents.

Global data demonstrates that radio's capacity to convey information can contribute to rural development. Radio is a tool assistance workers in developing nations can use to facilitate their work. There are numerous ways in which the various kinds of electronic communication could contribute to the expansion of educational opportunities. Numerous nations use radio and television programming to supplement classroom education.

Deeper structural flaws in educational supply, especially in under-resourced and geographically marginalised areas, are reflected in the use of educational broadcasting as a stand-in for formal instruction. Programs designed for those with low literacy or formal education levels may seem to democratise access to information, but they are often compensatory measures for long-standing institutional shortcomings rather than pedagogical innovations. Mohanty and Subhrajyoti (2023) present educational broadcasting as an essential teaching tool in both traditional and alternative educational modalities. However, this framing may mask the root issue, which is the disdain for comprehensive, in-person educational frameworks for vulnerable populations.

The situation in Pakistan makes this problem even more pressing. The vast majority of people reside in rural areas with woefully inadequate educational facilities, claim Khurshid, Khurshid, and Shaheen (2024). Despite being logistically effective, using radio transmissions to bridge this gap promotes a naive perspective on educational delivery that prioritises accessibility over engagement and exposure over mastery. To paint a picture of the current scenario in Pakistan, Khurshid, Khurshid and Shaheen (2024), "the majority of the country's population lives in rural areas, where educational facilities are incredibly limited and poor." Radio has a particular advantage over other kinds of communication since it can reach individuals in remote locations, and its message can be comprehended by anybody, regardless of education or experience.

## **Discussion**

Due to the invention of the radio, millions in previously inaccessible rural regions now have access to information. The use of radio and television in education is prevalent in both developed and developing nations, particularly in informal and distance learning contexts. Even as other communication methods became available, the radio remained indispensable, particularly in remote locations. It has the same significance today as it did forty years ago. Gerbner and Schramm (1990) highlighted the widespread reach of radio in the late 1970s. No one could even conceive of the national, economic, or social advancements associated with such progress in the modern world if mass media and other similarly potent and rapid information sources did not exist.

According to the findings of Easterly, Hayaloğlu and Tümay's (2023) study, the poor quality of Pakistan's human resources is the primary cause of the country's poor economic performance. Farmers in Pakistan who had completed at least four years of formal education saw an increase in agricultural output of approximately 8 per cent. The greatest impact of a ten per cent increase in male literacy in Pakistan would be on agricultural output. The overall rate of expansion is 2.7%. UNICEF contends that education is an effective weapon in the fight against child labour (UNICEF, 1999). This section's citations are insufficient. The significance of the topic in the fight against poverty is generally acknowledged.

Vaiknoras and Larochelle (2023) argue that the availability of cutting-edge new technology and various market options is of the utmost importance.

The vast majority of Pakistan's educational plans and policies have failed to contribute significantly to the country's rising literacy rates. The principal donor-funded program, the Social Action Program (SAP), aimed to promote access to education in rural areas, particularly for females, but was unsuccessful due to a lack of disbursement and execution records (Khalid and Mahmood 2024). This is why, out of a total population of around 20 million individuals aged 5–9 years old, 6 million do not attend school.

In the province of Punjab, 50 per cent of children in the same age range are not enrolled in school, with the rate being greater for girls than for boys. Similarly, out of the 20 million children between the ages of 10 and 14, which comprise the middle and high school levels, 120 million do not attend school. In rural parts of Pakistan, the percentage of individuals who attend school is substantially lower than in urban ones. In rural areas, there is a decline of 23 percentage points in the net enrolment rate at the primary level and 22 percentage points at the secondary level.

Alabsy *et al.* (2024) research has been conducted on the factors influencing whether or not children in developing nations acquire an education. Multiple studies of rural areas in Pakistan reached the same conclusions. On the supply side, major problems include a lack of public schools and teachers, a lack of accessibility, a prevalence of "ghost schools," a dearth of qualified educators, a lack of resources, a bias against girls' education, a lack of parity between urban and rural school districts, a lack of diversity among students, and a lack of private school options. The demand for private education institutions exceeds their supply. Rural youth in Pakistan have fewer resources than city-dwelling youth (Zeng *et al.*, 2024). These issues are exacerbated by low national budgets and the inefficient use of public education expenditures. In rural Pakistan, 27% of the schools are more than a kilometre from the students' residences.

More than sixty percent of Pakistan's population lives in rural areas, and the country has faced numerous obstacles since its founding in 1947. Military governments; wars with India and Pakistan; the separation of East Pakistan into Bangladesh; political upheavals; corruption; and international sanctions have all contributed to a new low in the state's capacity to meet national development challenges. Access to education has been a significant barrier, particularly in culturally traditional rural communities and other areas where urban centres have historically received more funding and attention. This is a problem in many nations. Recently, significant efforts have been made to provide education, particularly in rural areas. The country is a signatory to several international agreements on the right to education, yet more than half of schools still lack basic amenities. However, even in schools that provide at least the bare minimum in terms of facilities, the level of education and the overall education system fall far short of what is necessary to achieve the "whole child development" objectives.

## **Framework**

### ***National qualification Framework of Pakistan:***

The complex relationship between socio-political expediency and educational accessibility is exemplified by Pakistan's increasing reliance on religiously oriented non-formal educational systems, such as the Non-Formal Basic Education System (NFBES) run by the National Commission for Human Development. According to the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, by 2016, the NFBES had given roughly five million children access to basic education through faith-based instructional frameworks (Ali, 2024). This paradigm raises significant concerns over curricular standardisation, pedagogical rigour, and its wider implications for inclusive, secular educational systems, even though it is purported to close the gaps in formal education.

The expansion of madrassas, which, according to the most recent data from the National Education Management Association's Information System, are estimated to number 13,240 establishments across several states, further supports the institutionalisation of religious education as a parallel, and in some areas, primary educational system. Although these institutions support community-based education, their prevalence in Pakistan's educational system necessitates a critical examination of state policy priorities, oversight practices, and adherence to international human rights obligations concerning the right to a top-notch education. The present pattern is suggestive of a fragmented and ideologically split educational system that may inadvertently bolster sectarianism and obstruct the development of a cohesive, knowledge-based society.

According to the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, five million children in Pakistan are taught spiritual and religious subjects through the National Family-Based Education System (NFES) (Dassi & Ruby, 2023). According to the information system, there are currently a total

of madrassas operating throughout the nation that are supervised by at least five distinct organisations, including but not limited to WAFAQS, according to data from National Education Management.

This study examines the conceptual foundations of educational philosophies. All stages of education present students with difficulties requiring their participation and critical thought. Education is, therefore, a constant process. Various educational philosophies have been developed to help the adaptation process. The major objective of these ideologies has been to maximise the learning outcomes of the instructed students.

Even if the subject matter is pertinent, students will fully comprehend its importance once they apply what they have learnt in a real-life setting. Flexibility will permit the incorporation of both challenging problem-solving activities (which build students' cognitive skills) and entertaining, mind-stimulating activities (which provide a welcome break from studying). This process is the result of adopting a flexible educational strategy. Incorporating both parts will be possible with some degree of adaptability.

### ***The National Qualifications Framework of the Government of Pakistan***

The Higher Education Commission approved the National Qualifications Framework of Pakistan at its 31st meeting on January 11, 2016. The HEC website will soon contain the paper; readers have until June 30, 2016, to provide comments.

Learning outcomes are referred to as skills, competencies, and knowledge. The Pakistan Qualification Framework is a mechanism thought to be used to classify qualifications based on these factors. The outcomes are prioritized, and standardization of procedures is used. The QPF, or Pakistan Qualification Framework, is a comprehensive inventory of all quality-approved credentials in Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan recognises multiple approved higher qualifications, and the Pakistan Qualification Framework gathers statistics on the qualifications and educational institutions that grant them.

A team representing the Oslo Coalition attended a seminar on religious freedom in Pakistan (Okoroafor & Leirvik, 2024). Naeem Shakir, a Pakistani human rights advocate and attorney, was asked to speak at the Oslo Coalition's annual conference on Religion by the World Council of Religions. Ali *et al.*'s (2024) talk was entitled "Education for the Growth of a Pluralistic Society in Pakistan" (Mangj, Hussan, & Shakir, 2023). In this article, he focuses significantly on the political context of Pakistan's educational system (Brandvik *et al.*, 2023). According to his judgement, hundreds of academics, intellectuals, and university and college instructors were harassed and ultimately compelled to retire during General Zia's military administration. Formerly powerful reactionaries seized control of the educational system and were given explicit instructions to train students in religious fanaticism while retaining a mediaeval worldview. Schools became hubs for the propagation of religious intolerance and ignorance. As a result of the increasing militarisation of society, people have lost their capacity to tolerate ideological and religious differences.

Since General Zia's rule, Pakistan's public schools have been criticised for teaching materials that promote religious indoctrination, citizenship definitions that are based solely on Religion, the exclusion of religious minorities from Pakistan, negative views of India (and bias against Hindus), and so on (Leirvik, 2008). The nationwide spread of Islamic ideology is a problem that requires attention on both the political and educational fronts.

### ***Obstacles of Poverty, Financial Status, and Female Education***

Particularly after the brief decline observed in the 1970s and 1980s, poverty in Pakistan has periodically returned, underscoring the entrenchment of structural socioeconomic weaknesses that conventional development approaches cannot resolve. The actual data from the Asian Development Bank (2002) shows a worrying trend: between 1991 and 1993, poverty rates rose from 22% to 26%, and between 1999 and 2000, they went from 32% to 35% (Islam *et al.*, 2024). Women are disproportionately affected by economic marginalisation, and gendered differences are exacerbating the situation. Currently, almost 40 million people live below the poverty line.

The underlying cause of this ongoing poverty is the educational system's incapacity to serve as a transformative equaliser. The persistence of low-income circumstances across generations is directly impacted by long-standing disparities in educational relevance, quality, and access. A frequent demographic trend in Pakistan is the growth in household size, which increases the risk of living in poverty (Islam *et al.*, 2024). Research studies (Roy *et al.*, 2024) have confirmed that longer school years are negatively associated with poverty rates, as Chaudhry (2024) found a strong correlation between educational attainment and poverty reduction as early as 2009.



Despite being hopeful, national policy frameworks continue to ignore these findings mostly. Until there is a systemic reform that addresses educational gaps and fosters inclusive learning environments, Pakistan's poverty trap is likely to remain a structural inevitability rather than a controllable developmental challenge.

If provided the opportunity to complete their education, girls are less likely to live in poverty (Rahman *et al.*, 2024). Women are less likely than men to work, and when they do, their earnings are typically lower. The inadequate financing for schooling is a major obstacle. However, this is only a small portion of the problem. A lack of enthusiasm in education, poor management, corruption, and political instability are not the only problems.

### ***Education's Role in Addressing Gender Inequality***

The relationship between slow economic growth and gender inequality is strong. There is a growing consensus among economists that investing in women's education and allowing them to make their own economic decisions are crucial for establishing economic stability and eradicating poverty. Regardless of the gender of their children, mothers who cannot read and write are less likely to be able to finance an education for them. Numerous studies have concluded that improving Pakistan's political and economic stability depends on increasing women's educational opportunities.

People find it difficult to justify investing in a woman's education due to the widespread belief that she will spend most of her working life caring for children and performing other housework. In the 1990s, the government realised that more women needed to enrol in college.

Recently, there has been a greater emphasis on girls' education, but both boys' and girls' education are essential to developing a healthy society. Female education is a collection of programs designed to instil in young women a strong sense of self-worth and confidence. (Kirkwood *et al.*, 2024), argues that investing in girls' education is essential for the development of any nation (Emon & Nipa, 2024). They argued similarly, emphasising the significance of women in the formation of nations, the growth of states, and the expansion of economies as a whole. Like educated men benefit a nation's economy, educated women benefit the nation's youth. Both fields benefit from educated women's participation. Patrinos (2024) claims that a woman's return on investment in terms of social benefits and pay is substantially larger than a man's.

### ***How Religious Beliefs Affect Teaching Methods***

Religion is a major factor influencing the educational system in Pakistan. Children in Muslim families have been mandated to participate in religious education programs since the 1950s. During this time, the country was largely secular. When asked what Religion he belonged to, Mohammed Ali Jinnah told the 1947 constituent assembly, "...you belong to any faith or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the work of the State" (Leirvik, 2023). Meanwhile, Article 22(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan states, "No person attending any educational institution shall be required to receive religious instruction, participate in any religious ceremony, or attend religious worship if such instruction, ceremony, or worship relates to a religion other than his own." Thanks to this provision, students are shielded from being coerced into studying world religions (Fatima *et al.*, 2025). On the other side, fundamentalist religious movements have increased since the 1970s. Bhutto, Zia-ul-Haq, Sharif, and Musharraf remained committed to an educational system based on Islam, the country's primary religious tradition, from 1971 until 2008. The National Education Policy that was in place from 1998 to 2010 has as one of it aims the incorporation of Islamic studies and the study of the code of life into all curriculums (Hussain *et al.*, 2024). Present-day, non-Muslims face pervasive discrimination.

American anthropologist Clifford Geertz says that a nation's geopolitical realities substantially impact the brand of Islam practiced there (Susen, 2024). This is the situation in Pakistan, where fundamentalist interpretations of Islam have become increasingly dominant in the country's schools since the 1970s (Owtram, 2023). The spread of a nationalist and conservative interpretation of Islam in today's classrooms is alarming to religious minorities and secularists alike for how it promotes bigotry and xenophobia.

From 1977 to 1988, General Zia-ul-Haq reformed the educational system to fit what he called the "Ideology of Pakistan," an interpretation of Islamic orthodoxy. It was stated in General Zia's 1979 education policy that "the highest priority would be given to the revision of the curricula to reorganise the entire content around Islamic thought and give education an ideological orientation so that Islamic ideology permeates the thinking of the younger generation and helps them with the necessary conviction and ability to refashion society according to Islamic tenets."

Restructuring all subject matter according to Islamic philosophy, through curriculum revision, is identified as the top priority (Moslimany, Otaibi & Shaikh, 2024).

The Sharia Act of 1991, which established a committee to monitor the "Islamisation" of education, furthered the spread of Islam.

### **Structure of Education as Indoctrination:**

Before the ideological changes of the 1970s, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's creation of a liberal democratic ethos—best represented by his landmark 1947 speech to Pakistan's Constituent Assembly—projected a secular vision for the young nation. This groundbreaking speech advocated for religious diversity and the separation of religion and politics. But as James (2023) points out, this trend has since given way to a more widespread regional phenomenon noted by Clifford Geertz, in which Islam is reframed as a "comprehensive way of life" that permeates law, culture, and identity, rather than just as a religion.

Pakistan's educational paradigms have been significantly impacted by this paradigm change. Instead of encouraging critical engagement with universal human rights and civic values, educational institutions now place a greater emphasis on moral instruction that is mostly drawn from Islamic philosophy. Thus, civics and religious education are no longer viewed as separate epistemological fields but rather as pedagogically intertwined, supporting a normative framework where the development of democratic consciousness is subordinated to the cultivation of piety. As a result, the development of pious Muslims is given more weight in the educational system than that of knowledgeable and engaged citizens.

Despite the merging of state-sanctioned religious and educational curricula, current governmental initiatives have demonstrated an awareness of the risks of sectarian indoctrination. Hedges (2023) describes current government measures to modify textbook content and pedagogical practices to prevent the development of religious prejudice. However, the deeply ingrained Islamic ideology in Pakistan's educational system poses a significant barrier to the institutionalisation of civic literacy and the mainstreaming of human rights education.

### **Suggestions for Improving the Management of the Educational System in Pakistan**

The administration of Pakistan's educational system is currently facing many challenges that require potential solutions. Almost none of these alternatives are:

The initial and most critical phase of development is the establishment of robust leadership in the educational system's management. The government is a significant factor in the overall development of a nation. It is imperative that the government allocates sufficient funding to schools and prioritises education to ensure that all children have access to a high-quality education. Schools are able to provide superior service to students by managing resources more effectively as a result of increased funding. The second most critical government objective in the context of the educational system's administration should be to increase the funding for educational institutions. The subsequent phase involves the implementation of suitable educational policies and management strategies to guarantee that all educational institutions can effectively implement these policies. If corruption and unjustified favouritism in the administration of the educational system are to be eradicated, they must be met with severe punishment, as they are the single most significant factor in the national decline. By addressing these issues, the administration of the educational system in Pakistan could be significantly improved, thereby making a substantial contribution to resolving the country's current educational challenges.

### **Limitation**

The development of empirically based educational policy in Pakistan and other Asian countries is still hampered by systemic shortcomings in data infrastructure and institutional coordination. Complex, multivariate assessments of educational outcomes across a variety of demographic groups are very challenging due to the dearth of longitudinal and disaggregated datasets. Additionally, it is more challenging to extrapolate and generalise study results due to the diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts within and between countries in the region, which jeopardises the external validity of policy recommendations.

Compounding these challenges is the chronic underinvestment in educational research, which prevents the development of comprehensive, interdisciplinary studies that are capable of capturing the complexity of educational inequity and systemic inefficiencies. The lack of effective communication channels between academic research and the apparatuses that make policy exacerbates the delay between the generation of evidence and its operationalisation in strategic actions. Additionally, the quick speed at which technology is developing carries a latent risk: even with excellent methodology,

research findings could become obsolete if they are not quickly incorporated into policy. Together, these systemic barriers prevent the development of an evidence-based, flexible educational system that can adjust to the changing needs of a knowledge-based global economy.

### **Future Scope**

Conduct long-term studies to track the impacts of educational policies and programs on the development of human capital. Study the educational strategies of industrialised and less developed nations to identify transferrable lessons and contextual adaptations. Explore strategies to enhance educational access and quality for economically and socially disadvantaged populations. Examine how AI, machine learning, and other advanced technologies can revolutionise education and training. Investigate how climate change impacts education systems and propose sustainable, climate-resilient educational practices. Develop dynamic frameworks for designing, implementing, and evaluating education policies to align with global sustainable development goals (SDGs).

### **Conclusion**

It seems improbable that Pakistan would achieve Universal Primary Education (UPE) anytime soon given its existing financial constraints, historical gender and regional disparities, low literacy rates, and a burdened educational system. Pakistan's educational system remains in a condition of structural stagnation despite the world entering a new era marked by rapid technical innovation and the expansion of information economies. A society must, at minimum, have a baseline literacy level—typically at least 50%—and equitable access to high-quality educational opportunities to bring about meaningful socioeconomic change. However, the nation's structural problems and the continued lack of substantial public investment impede such progress.

Addressing the deficiencies in the primary, secondary, and university education systems requires Pakistan to demonstrate institutional consistency and political determination. Implementing evidence-based reforms has been hampered by the inertia shown in national government institutions, despite a wealth of empirical research favouring decentralised educational alternatives. These strategies emphasise family connection, community involvement, and localised institutional accountability as critical success factors in education.

However, such bottom-up initiatives cannot be successful without top-down political stability and creative leadership. Infrastructure augmentation alone is insufficient, even if it is necessary. It is essential to take a comprehensive approach that incorporates curriculum modernisation, increased enrolment and retention rates, better instructional quality, and systemic school expansion. Without an integrated policy response that strikes a balance between local agency and national authority, the aim of universal primary education will continue to be an unachievable dream.

The dads believed that their children's elementary schools were overpriced, poorly run, situated in troublesome rural locations, and did not support or offer resources for homeschooling. Children's ability to raise their grades was hampered by their inability to obtain extra study assistance at school. Given this, there has been a push for the government to improve the quality of education at remote hamlets' elementary public schools. Furthermore, the government ought to set aside a certain amount of money to offer extra classes to secondary school pupils from low-income families. As an alternative, the government ought to think about offering tuition vouchers to secondary school pupils who are having academic difficulties.

Following their chosen teacher to give them individualised instruction. There are several crucial factors to consider when attempting to reduce Pakistan's high secondary school dropout rate, particularly in rural regions like Punjab. In Pakistan, structural and systemic problems like poverty, unemployment, and a lack of adequate resources cause significant hardship for many families, particularly those with children. The situation can occasionally be far worse for families in remote locations. Because these issues affect so many households, it is difficult to estimate the number of children in Pakistan affected.

It is common knowledge that education is the most important factor in laying the groundwork for a nation's future prosperity and development. Education improves a person's social, moral, intellectual, political, and financial standings. It is a special force that assists each nation in attaining its overarching national goals. Unsurprisingly, countries with substantial educational expenditures also have stable administrations. Numerous nations can play crucial roles in the international community due to their successful educational systems. In terms of assisting Pakistan's prosperity, the country's educational system has fallen short of expectations. This is one of the causes of the growing tide of discontent in Pakistani society. Because Pakistan's youth was not raised with a solid foundation in

economic, social, political, and moral values, Pakistan's education system is fundamentally flawed. As a result, many young people in Pakistan lack clear life goals. The current educational system, lacking clear direction, is producing a workforce with degrees but deficient in higher-order skills such as reflection, critical thinking, analysis, investigation, and creativity. Instead, the system has emphasized the dissemination of outdated information and knowledge, which have become increasingly irrelevant amid rapid social changes. The modernisation of Pakistan's educational system should be the top priority of this study because it is essential to attaining many of the country's national goals. Modernising Pakistan's educational system is essential if the country wants to achieve its various goals and tackle its many issues.

### Recommendation

Research adaptive and context-sensitive educational approaches, such as e-learning and blended learning, to increase accessibility and impact.

Investigate the integration of education with health, economics, and technology to design holistic strategies for human development. Create robust indicators to measure the effectiveness of educational programs for human capital development across diverse settings. Study the successes and shortcomings of Pakistan's Public Training Strategy (1998–2010) to provide insights for future educational reforms in similar contexts. Conduct gender-focused studies to understand and address disparities in education access and outcomes. Foster partnerships with academic institutions, government agencies, and international organisations to share knowledge and resources.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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