

## **Perspective and Prospects of Commencing New Education Policy (NEP) of Pakistan: A Review of Conference**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article focuses on four important factors: Assessment, Curriculum and Text Books' Policy, Teachers for quality education and Education and management, as formulated by Education and Literacy Department of Sindh Government. Open poll discussions and views given by educationists and experts were taken. All the views have been summarized for consideration by all concerned. Chief Minister Sindh, Arbab Ghulam Rahim, Javed Hussain, Education Minister, Hamida Khoro and Education Secretary to Government of Sindh, Ghulam Ali Pasha also shared their opinions on the new Education Policy and Government's intention to ensure quality education in Sindh Province. The purpose of this article is to review and summarize the views presented in the Education Conference and reach fruitful conclusions. The implications are also made keeping in mind the targets of New Millennium Development Goals (NMDGs).

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**Keywords:** Assessment, Curriculum and Text Book Policy, Education and Management, Literacy

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Man is the best creation of God. The supreme Talisman empowered by Almighty Allah to conquer the cosmos by deviating the power of nature. The issues of human

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<sup>\*</sup> This conference was held on 18th March, 2006 in Karachi to review the NEP

existence circle around the axis of education. It is the education that brings the East and the West under the authority of man. It is the education that produces wonderful discoveries

Aristotle wisely said: *to reject the education of young ones is to weaken the constitution of the country.*

The purpose of education is to produce ideal person to bear the responsibilities and face the challenges of the future. This aim can be achieved only when the students are sincere and they acquire the real education. In practical life only those students, with real knowledge, come out with best colors.

The aim of education is three fold. Development of human personality: Moral, Mental and Physical. Students of today are the citizens of tomorrow. Mother's lap is the first school of child for teaching and training. Despite the obvious importance of education, sixty years after independence, public spending on education in Pakistan is still negligible.

Pakistan had never been short of successive, comprehensive and exhaustive policies or short and long term educational plans. The Total number of education policies, and major plans, programs and schemes in Pakistan stands at 23. All the policies and plans have persistently failed to achieve their targets.

In 1947 a "National Education Conference" was held to delineate the objectives and targets of education (Proceedings 1947). National Plan of Education Development followed that Conference, in 1951-57. In 1959 a Report of the Commission on National Education was presented to the Government (Report 1959) and again in 1970 Nur Khan's report on New Education Policy was presented.

In 1972 Bhutto government came out with another education policy, which fell victim to mismanagement and corruption resulting in the further deterioration of educational standards.

In 1979, Haq also gave an educational policy. In 1981 the Literacy and Mass Education Commission, presented 10-Point Program. A Nation-wide literacy programme was launched.

In 1992, another National Education Policy was announced followed by Nawaz Sharif's regime policy for 1998-2010. The present regime has also presented Education Sector Reforms Action Plan (ESRAP). All these policies and plans failed to conceive the national objectives.

The electronic based inventions have made this century, a century of light. The world is emerging as a global village. In order to achieve the targets of NMDGs, it was rightly felt to formulate and introduce New Education Policy (NEP) to achieve the targets of NMDGs. Since 1947, when Pakistan emerged on the map of world, many

education policies were announced by various regimes. Nawaz Sharif Government announced the last policy. All the policies can be described as the education policies but without the expected result.

According to the Education Minister, Hamida Khoro<sup>1</sup> all those policies were lacking the implementation planning. The present Government is making efforts to achieve the NMDGs targets through quality education. To review NEP, an Educational conference was arranged by the honorable Secretary Education and Literacy, Government of Sindh in collaboration with Federal Government under the chairmanship of Arbab Ghulam Rahim<sup>2</sup>. Javed Hussain<sup>3</sup> and his team from Islamabad remained with the participants providing guidance to reach the conclusion.

Pakistan has recently adopted an Education Sector Reforms Action Plan (ESRAP) (ESRAP 2003), which proposes to upgrade the level of education system, and along with other Reforms Measures (RMs), intends to decentralize examination system and to seek public-private partnership in the enhancement education system. It is confirmed through available statistics that nearly 27 percent of enrolments in schools are made in private sector institutions. There are about 36000 private schools (B.R 2003).

The aim of this article is to help in formulation of NEP review. The two specific objectives are:

- (i). To achieve the NMDGs targets through NEP.
- (ii). To introduce uniform education system at national level, without discrimination of class, caste, race, region and religion etc.

This article is structured as follows: Section 2 is about Methodology. Section 3 gives details of information collected during the conference. Section 4 gives Summary and Conclusions, and finally section 5 is about Policy implications.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

Being the host of the Education Conference, the Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, invited Educationist, Experts and Senior Teachers to discuss the matters relating to quality education. It was the first step and the Sindh was the first province that took such a step (Javed). The experts and educationists, who participated in the said Educational Conference, were selected from all over Sindh. They were from various Universities and Educational Institutions like: BIZTEK, and Agha Khan University; EDOE, DOE, Professors, and Lecturers, Senior Teachers

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hamida Khoro is Education Minister, Government of Sindh, and an experienced educationist.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Arbab Ghulam Rahim is Chief Minister, Government of Sindh.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Javed Hussain is a team leader of Federal Ministry of Pakistan.

from various private and public sectors. Education experts from other departments were also invited for the valuable suggestions.

The staff members of Federal Education Ministry served the participants as Facilitators under the supervision of Javed, whose team members Sabina, Arshad Bhatti and others were facilitating as how to reach the conclusion and help the group leader to present the gist of discussions held by his group, for consideration of all experts. All these discussions were also noted or recorded by NEP review team leader, Javed, who also asked the experts to put questions relating to the presentation by each group leader<sup>4</sup>. The group leaders replied questions put by the participants.

The Education Secretary, Education Minister and Javed also presented their views on the fruitful deliberations of Conference and thanked the participants for their valuable time and views for quality education. To conclude Arbab Ghulam Rahim, Chief Minister Sindh addressed the participants of NEP Review Conference. His speech was enriched with facts, as he was well conversant with all types of flaws in our education system. The information collected through the said Conference reflects the perspective of the conference.

### **3. INFORMATION COLLECTED DURING THE CONFERENCE**

#### **3.1 Back Ground Characteristics**

In the light of emerging global village, there is need of a global language to unite the humanity and to train the people to exchange knowledge thus making every innovation by any country beneficial to all the people of the world. Knowing a language means that a person should be well conversant in speaking, hearing, reading and writing any language.

Present Education Policy lacks technical flaws specially its implementation. It was felt that this policy would be unable to achieve the targets of NMDGs. Therefore this Conference was arranged to review NEP.

The word literacy is defined as an ability of “a person, who can read a news paper and write a simple letter in any language” (Provincial 2000:85). The global definition of literacy should be ability “to read a news paper and write a simple letter in English, understand and express her/himself in English.” Sindh Government’s attempt to review NEP was appreciated by team leaders of NEP Review Conference. Secretary Education and Literacy Department, Education Minister to Government of Sindh and Chief Minister also expressed encouraging opinions on the views given by the experts during the review of NEP. The educationists and experts, who were deeply involved

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<sup>4</sup> Group Leader. A group leader is the leader who presented the groups’ discussion in front of all the audience selected by the team of that group. There were four groups: Assessment, Teacher for Quality Education, Curriculum and Text Books and Education and Management.

in education stressed the need to upgrade the Education Policy keeping in view the needs of emerging global village. There were four groups of discussions: Assessment, Curriculum and Text Books Policy, Teachers for Quality Education and Education and Management. Suggestions of each policy group are summarized as under:

### **3.1.1 Assessment**

During the discussion it was opined that in elementary classes the system should be withdrawn to avoid competition, which compels the students to use unfair means to achieve higher grades. The experts observed that it is a prevalent practice that syllabus for text books is prepared without taking into consideration the ratio between the text book's syllabus and the actual hours of teaching in the schools. Therefore, not a single book of any subject is fully taught during the year.

The flaws and corrupt practices in Secondary Examination is well known to all and repeatedly published in Newspapers. Therefore, the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) Examination Board should strictly monitor the secondary classes' examination system. Assessment done by subject teacher (in schools) should be considered as a proportional part of the annual result. This system is already being followed in Computer studies, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. The subject teachers are allowed to give about 5 percent marks for preparation of journals or Program Files and external examiners 20 percent marks practical.

Regularity, punctuality and conduct of the student should also be a part of assessment by the subject teachers. Teaching without training is worthless. Schools must also be the place of character building and producing good world citizens as well as well-wishers of their own country. SSC Examination papers should be prepared on conceptual basis and not on information basis. Student should be encouraged to make it a habit to consult other books on the subject and try to understand the concept of it. Student participation in co-operative learning in groups must be encouraged.

### **3.1.2 Curriculum and Text Books' Policy**

Curriculum is a course of study offered by an educational institution, which must be mastered by student in order to obtain the SSC certificate, Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) or a Degree. The person who is not concerned with the curriculum must keep in mind that there is always demand by pressure groups to inflate the curriculum and to compel those in charge of the schools to trim the subjects. For a curriculum which is composed of subjects, independent of one another, calls for a faculty of subject specialists. It is clear that the curriculum, in whatever way it may be designed, must be consistent with the comprehension of the student to benefit by it and for sharing it with others by serving the humanity.

The nature and the quality of curriculum planning within private local school districts vary widely. Large school systems often employ professional staff with direct

responsibility for coordinating and aiding curriculum planning within the individual school.

The comprehensive purpose of the SSC curriculum is to prepare young people for early occupational preservation and advancement of a social order, which will assure them of freedom to grow according to their capacity and to make them increasingly eager to engage in self-improvement. The curriculum is accordingly intended to quicken the will to learn and to cultivate interests and ideals, which will direct and safeguard the individual through the years as a free citizen. The subject that is being taught in different languages or books on one subject must be the same in nature and material and the same books be taught at national level.

Curriculum needs review of present system of education to meet the NMDGs targets and globalization. Technical education should be promoted. Mathematics should be compulsory at intermediate level. Participation method for collective studies should be encouraged. All over Pakistan same course should be introduced without discrimination of provinces. Public and private schools should give the same education following the same curriculum. It should also meet international standards, which will keep us updated at international level of education. Latest technology should be included in the curriculum. Audiovisual CD should be available for each book (Group Leader).

### **3.1.3 Teachers for Quality Education**

The technological changes and globalization is setting an unprecedented process of transformation of the world from the traditional resources of learning to knowledge-based resources.

There is need to train Primary and Secondary School Teachers to cope with new curriculum. Pre-primary education and training at home provides strong foundation for quality education. Primary education is the next step to further strengthen the character of students. At primary level trained teachers, who are fully conversant with latest teaching skills, based on concept, are required. For secondary and higher secondary schools computer-based teaching and use of audio visual aids are essential.

### **3.1.4 Education and Management**

Education is shared step by step to mold the brain with enhanced knowledge, which requires proper planning and management.

Management's dictionary meaning is "An act of managing affairs; state of being managed; body or individual managing a business etc; administration of public undertaking."

Subject Development has long been a convenient means of learning. A subject is a more or less systematic organization of related knowledge, Arithmetic, Algebra, History, Chemistry, Physics, Fine Arts, Social studies and computer etc.

Subjects are challenged by problems and by the developmental method. The learner must be guided through skillful questioning to discover meaning for him. The main difficulty that modern curriculum makers have faced is a lack of agreement as to the objectives for which the curriculum is designed.

For proper management of a school, experienced and skillful personnel are required. All the postings and transfers should be based on set rules and regulations, qualification, and seniority cum fitness, and of course must be freed from political interference. The CM has promised to minimize this trend. It was also told by CM that Teachers Associations are also interfering in management affairs. The Head of School must be qualified or experienced in school management (Group Leader).

The organization of the curriculum requires the Educational Heads to face the problem of applying educational theory to a workable policy of school management:

- Assigning teachers to their respective tasks,
- Organizing the seating arrangements for students
- Provide a smoothly functioning schedule of sessions
- Providing school supplies, and
- Utilizing the school in the best interest of the management.

#### **4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

It is summarized that all the experts who were present have given valuable suggestions. It is appreciated that Government of Sindh has initiated this Review Conference. It is expected that the new policy will meet the targets of NMDGs and at par with the requirement of globalization. From speeches and discussions of all groups it is concluded that they are in favor of modernization, globalization, and uniform education system at national level. Each child, girl or boy, rich or poor of the country, must be provided with the uniform educational opportunities.

It is surprisingly observed that those with Graduation or Master's Degree in other subjects when failed to get job in their respective field, unwillingly, prefer to join educational institution. Teaching requires special skill or God given intellect. Teaching is a sacred job and a teacher is the educator of future generation, to accept the responsibility of smooth governance of this country. Therefore, the teachers must be treated as the most respectable persons of the society.

#### **5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

It is recommended that following up conferences be held to further review the Education Policies for better prospects.

Conceptual and logic-based system of assessment be introduced to examine the ability of students in schools. The question papers be set, of course, within the limit of syllabus, yet avoiding book-based direct answers. The student must understand the hidden logic in the question.

The subject experts, to meet the NMDGs target and upgrading it at par with international curriculum, must review the existing curriculum. More emphasis be given to Technical Education and Information Technology. Mathematics and English subjects should be made compulsory from Class I to Intermediate level.

Educationists should review the books prescribed for respective classes. Books should be comprehensive but maintaining international standard. There is a need to provide Subject Teacher with Guide Book with the Text Book.

To manage the school, at every level, teachers should be selected on the basis of seniority-cum-fitness and specially those with degree or Certificate in Management. An examination system be introduced to check the ability and Managing Skill. Marks be assigned with the ratio of 40 (Degree or Certificate in Management) and 60 for seniority-cum-fitness. If person with Management Certificate or Degree is not available, the senior most teachers must be promoted to the higher post and his or her Training in Management be arranged.

It is recommended that teachers' selection should be on the merit basis and trained persons such as those holding PTC, CT, B.Ed or M.Ed. be given preference over those who are not trained.

Teachers are most respected citizen because they are responsible to teach and train and produce good citizen and promoter of ever-advancing civilization. Therefore:

Pay of all government employees should be same on the basis of qualification. Teachers must be paid *Teaching Allowance* in addition to their fixed salaries, to attract well talented persons.

There should be no difference in Basic Pay Scale (BPS) of different cadres. The salaries of teachers should be increased on the basis of qualification and not on the basis of primary, secondary, college or university cadres.

Highly qualified persons, who are really an asset for the country, should be given options to serve at any level of education i.e. at college, university or at any other post for which they are entitled and their should be no discrimination in salaries.

Researchers and PhD degree holders should be encouraged to work at primary and secondary levels, and should be awarded by attractive salaries, Ph.Ds allowances and Working in Low Grade Allowance (WLGA). WLGA should be triple than Ph.Ds allowances at primary level, double at secondary level and equal at college level. At

the same time Ph.Ds, who are experts in research work, their research work will be more valuable than the work of those who are researchers but not well experienced with this environment. On the basis of number of articles published by them in journals should also be paid twenty to thirty thousand Pakistan rupees per paper/article to encourage them to research constantly, so that they may be released from inferiority complex.

Public private partnership should be developed and NGOs should be encouraged to adopt schools. But managers must have some educational back-ground, otherwise they will not be able to manage the school and their negative attitude may create problems.

Teachers may also be allowed to serve as visiting subject teachers, such as University Professors, who serve as visiting Professor and Doctors are allowed to work in different hospitals, but that should not affect their regular duties. This will help the teacher to learn and earn more; to be mentally fit to work more efficiently. A general notification be issued that any government employ who intends to do part-time job or as a visiting employ must apply for permission. This application be taken as permission as is usually done by teachers, apply for teachers' trainings.

By working in other institutions teachers will much benefit from new techniques and from experience of others. In fact, he will pay the tax to government for earning extra amount.

The teachers with PTC., CT., B.Ed. or M.Ed are considered as trained teachers. The lecturers or subject-specialist with M.Phil, and Ph.D. may also be considered as trained lecturers or subject-specialist, and they must be given preference for seniority or for promotion over lecturers with simple Master's Degree.

For the promotion of Lecturers; Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors, Higher Education Commission (HEC) has fixed the criteria of M.Phil and Ph.D. The same criteria may also be followed by Education Department for all promotions, especially Grade-16 and on ward. Those who are contributing research articles in reputed journals may also be considered such as being followed by Universities.

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