



Pakistan's Broken Education System is Destroying the Future of its Youth

In Pakistan, the quality of education has been constantly declining. Nearly half the students in primary schools are unable to read and write. The poor quality of the education system is one of the main reasons that we fail to fight poverty, and it reflects the rulers' dishonesty with their so-called nationalistic agenda. The reports of Alif Ailaan Pakistan District Education Rankings 2015, Annual Status of Education Report 2014, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, PSLMS 2012-13, Academy of Educational Planning and Management and National Education Management Information System 2013-14, present a dismal picture of even the most urbanized cities where some claim there is so-called quality education, which is presumed to be excellent. Approximately 41 percent in Lahore, 45 percent in Karachi, 50 percent in Islamabad and 30 percent of primary students in Rawalpindi are unable to read and write simple sentences. According to the 2016 report, of 154,144 schools in Pakistan, only 52 percent have the four essential components of infrastructure – boundary wall, electricity, water and toilets – whereas 11 percent of the schools do not have any of the four basic facilities available.

Extremely low level of public investment is the major cause of the poor performance of Pakistan's education sector. The government of Pakistan, since its creation, has failed to recognise the intensity of the issue. All so-called efforts over the last 70 years have proved to be futile, and the failures point to the basic flaws in Pakistan's capitalist secular system. The first education conference was held in Karachi and the then Governor General Muhammad Ali Jinnah convened it. Though it announced a number of policies and made many committees, it failed, and the number of immigrants and other administrative problems of the newborn country were blamed, and the British colonial system continued. Since then a number of policies have been announced and have failed to fulfil their promises. Policies were announced in 1959, 1970, 1972, 1979, 1992, 1998 and 2009, which applied the same formula in different words and blamed different political situations for the previous failure. In 2010-11 Article 25A was introduced, which states: ***"The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 5-16 years in such a manner as may be determined by law"***, but this still remains a dream.

In Islam not only is education a right that the Government is obliged to provide for all its citizens – male and female, Muslim and non-Muslim - but seeking knowledge is also a duty upon every believing man and woman, for Anas ibn Malik reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, «**طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ**» **"Seeking knowledge is an obligation upon every Muslim."**

The irony is that Pakistan's developmental expenditure for education in its 2015-16 budget was Rs 969,039 million which is only 2.3% of its GDP, while war-stricken Afghanistan allocated 4%, India 7%, and Rwanda is spending 9% of its GDP on education.

The presence of multiple education systems in the country is important evidence of the government not being interested in delivering the same quality or type of education to all its citizens. Furthermore, public, private and Islamic schools are working in three different directions and nurturing three different mindsets, leaving people thinking on different wavelengths. Public schools have their horror stories of extreme lack of facilities, an outdated curriculum and poor management. A working paper on education produced by USAID in 2011 highlighted that about 37% of the public schools in Pakistan have no latrines, 85% have no electricity and almost 50% of these schools in rural areas lack clean drinking water. According to data provided by UNESCO, Pakistan has the most crowded classrooms in South Asia with the ratio of 500 students per every three teachers. These statistics make it clear how neglected the area of education is, and it's clear that the rulers are totally dismissive towards their responsibilities as they have been blinded by selling their souls to the enemies of Allah.

The Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «مَا مِنْ وَاٰلٍ يَلِي رَعِيَّةً مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِيْنَ فَيَمُوْتُ وَهُوَ عَاشٌ لَهُمْ اِلَّا حَرَّمَ اللهُ عَلَيْهِ الْجَنَّةَ» **“There is no governor/wali who takes charge of Muslims and dies cheating them, except that Allah prohibits him paradise.”** [Bukhari]

Furthermore, authorities use the area of education for minting money in the most hideous ways - like ghost schools (schools which don't exist), which mostly affect areas in Sindh and Balochistan. Balochistan Education Minister Abdul Rahim Ziaratwal made a startling revelation during an Assembly session, “About 900 ghost schools have been detected with 300,000 fake enrolments of students, and out of 60,000, 15,000 teachers' records are unknown,” These ‘unknown’ teachers are being paid from the taxpayers' money and usually are the contacts or well-wishers of local politicians, while the number of students enrolled in these schools are working as laborers in the fields of these feudals. A large amount of money is made through such frauds.

In addition, Madrassas, another medium of education, have been facing the Government's wrath since after 9/11. In the National Action Plan (NAP) started in January 2015, points 10 and 18 convey the state's resolve to register and regulate Madrassas and eradicate so-called sectarian terrorism. However, the only action taken by the Government on madrassahs is to fulfill the interest of its US master by secularizing their education. In contrast, the quality and standard of madrassa education, which is the only source of some type of free education in Pakistan for many, is of no concern for the Government.

Another thing that affects education is the examination system. Instead of using qualitative and quantitative techniques to judge students' abilities, a stale rote-learning technique is relied upon. This technique is used in the Matriculation system, and the only reason to choose it, is that it is cheap and affordable for the masses. Furthermore, rational thinking, which once was the hallmark of the Islamic civilization, is gone, as are the brilliant minds of this ummah. Either they are sacrificed on the altar of an almost nonexistent education system, or they have been snatched from us in the form of brain drain from the country. Foreign universities literally hunt down the brilliant minds of Pakistan with the collaboration of private schools – to use for the benefit of Western states rather than for the population of Pakistan or the rest of the Muslim world.

The private sector follows the government designed curriculum but their standard of instruction varies. For example, an elite private school will prepare the children for foreign exams while a non-elite private school will prepare them for the local board exam. Elite schools charge much more than the facilities they provide, but if parents can afford it, they choose this medium to buy their children some quality education. Even after spending all this money most parents need to hire a tutor or send their kids to the academies which multiplies the time and money spent on education. Average per capita income in Pakistan is \$1,513 a year, while the average fee for a top ranking private institution is \$2,800 a year till middle school and thereafter it reaches \$5,200 for high school. On top of this, is the cost for O and A levels examinations which is separate to the general cost for the attendance of these schools. And this education is only good enough to help them gain some status in the worldly life, and not in the Hereafter for they are deprived of the proper teaching of Islam.

The colonial power designed an education system for the people it ruled, to change and secularise their mindset. It is this stale system which is the root cause of all problems in our education. In any nation, the purpose of education is to learn to stay at par with the new developments in the world and to rise and have a standing in the world. Islam encourages study of sciences and building of skills and knowledge in new developments, but it links it all back to the Islamic Aqeedah. In Islam, the goal of education is to produce the Islamic personality and to provide people with the knowledge related to life's affairs. Teaching methods are established to achieve this goal; any method that leads to other than this goal is prevented. Islamic history is full of scientific, religious, philosophical and cultural development and the reason was the sincerity of the Islamic rulers to the cause. It's a pity that Pakistan was ranked at 131 out of 141 countries in the **2015 report** of the Global Innovation Index — which explores the impact of innovation-oriented policies on economic growth and development. The Ministry of Science and

Technology, upon inquiry from the National Assembly, stated in a report that the reasons for the country's poor ranking include:

- 1) Low percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for science and development.**
- 2) Low standards of science education in our educational institutions.**

Study of the Arabic language is also not given its due importance, resulting in distancing Muslim youth from understanding the Quran, and ignoring the fact that it was not just a liturgical language, but also one that connected the Muslims all over. Scientific literature from the Golden Age of Islam commonly begin with Quranic verses that encourage seekers of knowledge and call on Muslims to reflect on the world around them. Successive generations of Pakistani rulers have snatched this knowledge and glory from the Muslim youth. These young minds spend the prime of their lives seeing their parents struggling to meet ends meet and provide them with an education - an education that is not even good enough to enable them to get a good job; and an education that they have received often at the cost of their obedience to Allah (swt).

Here we need to understand that the solution to all of this lies in the implementation of the Islamic education system under the glorious Khilafah (Caliphate) based upon the method of the Prophethood. Hizb ut Tahrir has detailed clearly and comprehensively the form of this Islamic education system in its draft constitution for the Khilafah, its booklet, "The Foundations of the Education Curriculum in the Khilafah State" and in other literature. Only this Islamic system has the answers to all the problems faced by today's youth as it is based on the Commands of Allah (swt) and only this will fulfil the needs of Muslim youth – the youth who have been blinded deliberately and asked to follow a path which will bring unrest in this life and will certainly do no good to their Akhirah (Hereafter).

Only the establishment of the Khilafah will make sure that this system is implemented honestly. Only then will we be able to see the force of true knowledge. It will be an intellectual learning that is designed to mould Muslim youth into productive beings who will spread the light of Islam all over the world and who will dominate the world in all areas of knowledge and this will certainly pave their way towards Jannah (Paradise) which is the ultimate goal for any Muslim. As Rasool Allah (saw) said:

«مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَطْلُبُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَلَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ طَرِيقًا مِنْ طُرُقِ الْجَنَّةِ»

"If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise."

**Written for the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir by
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