



Analysis of Education for All Program Plan in Educational Policies of Pakistan (1990-2020)

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Abstract

In today's world, knowledge is a weapon of strength and may prove to be a necessary component of active participation in social life. UNESCO has made it a priority to eradicate illiteracy from the world and it is one of the major objectives from prescribed six for Education for All (EFA) program under the working group of The Dakar Framework of Action. The purpose of this article is to examine the efforts with multiple steps made by Pakistan since many years to combat illiteracy as a signatory to the global EFA movement. Another objective of this article is to paint an exact and realistic image of the country's literacy scenario and the long span efforts to improve it following the launch of this program in Pakistan. In Pakistan, one of the main issues is that people are not literate broadly. The situation of illiteracy in Pakistan is at dire level and despite the fact that various governments have declared several programs to promote literacy; the situation remains dire due to a variety of political, social, and economic complications. Keeping in view the significance of basic education as well as literacy, Pakistan has been engaged by worldwide community in a variety of measures to facilitate extensive discussions with prime actors of EFA Program.

Key words: EFA Program, Literacy, The Dakar Framework

1. Introduction

Education is essential to the success of a person in life. It could have a substantial effect on the quality of life for people. Economic prosperity, social vitality and political strength are widely regarded as the cornerstone of society. Education is a fundamental human right and the way societies characterize their societal and fiscal growth (Mahbub-ul-Haq, 1998). It is now viewed as 'critical to socialized arrangement, nationality, sustainable pecuniary development and the reduction of poverty' (World Bank, 1995, p.4). The broader objectives of balanced development cannot be understood without ensuring that all masses have equal access to education. Fundamental education, therefore, is seen as a precondition for global socio-economic growth. About 1,500 participants participated in the World Education for All Conference (Jomtien, Thailand 1990). Representatives from 155 governments and policymakers all around the world participated in the conference to debate key aspects of EFA. Education for All by the year 2000 was agreed by all the participating governments at that conference. It became evident that this aim had not been achieved when they returned to Dakar, Senegal, in 2000. As a result, the Group reiterated its assurance to 'Education for All' and set a new goal year – 2015. (Education International Report)

The following are the major areas consistently accepted by the Dakar Forum of Action:

- I. Universal Primary Education
- II. Learning needs of young and adults
- III. Education quality
- IV. Gender equality
- V. Adult literacy
- VI. Childhood care and early education

Source: UNESCO (2006). Paris, EFA Monitoring Report

All regimes and other stakeholders since that time have begun efforts to promote literacy among children, youth and adults. However, developing countries are not allocating a sufficient budget to implement the program's various measures. It is obvious that traditional educational structures, policies and plans will be unable to keep up with the radical stride of the Dakar EFA goals.

As the objective of this article is also to depict an exact and realistic image of the country's literacy scenario and the long span efforts to improve it following the launch of this program in Pakistan.

1.1. Education for All Programme

EFA is a broad term that refers to providing fundamental education to all kids (boys and girls), young and old, male and female, as defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2005). According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's global synthesis (2000, p.31), "Education for all is not only an ethical duty and a privilege; it is also an extremely profitable asset in terms of individual and social returns." The adoption of more countrywide plans and expenses into countrywide growth projects and policies is therefore encouraged. However, due to a variety of factors, nearly all countries, particularly developing countries, have fallen short of the goal of universal literacy, which they set for themselves. Nearly eighty percent of the world's population is illiterate, with the majority of those people living in 29 developing Asian and African countries (UNESCO, 2006). In response to the gravity of the situation, the

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international community convened the first EFA conference in 1990 to discuss possible solutions. Though not a new concept, Education for All (EFA) is a concerted effort to advocate for universal access to education for all members of a society, with a particular emphasis on important matters like literateness of people at massive level.

1.2. Objectives

Following were the objectives of this study:

1. To examine the efforts with multiple steps made by Pakistan since many years to combat illiteracy
2. To review analytically Education for All programme in Pakistan

2. Historic Background of Education for All Programme

Aristotle, a Greek philosopher, opposed mass education, believing that it should be restricted to the privileged few. Finally, Christian proselytism was paired with Islamic proselytism, emphasizing the importance of mass education. After World War II, many people thought that decolonization would result in a similar situation in the former colonies. It was the first organization to argue for universal education in the modern era, in 1948, when the United Nations Organization (UNO) was founded. During the 1990s, an extensive range of scholastic alterations whether were in a straight line or indirectly linked to the six Jomtien marked proportions were implemented in numerous countries around the world, according to Malcolm (2000, p.44). In the world's first ever World Conference on Literacy, held in Dakar in April 2000, a number of contemporary researches, local compound reports, nationwide general reports and many related leaflets were used to investigate literacy changes. The Dakar Forum made the claim in 2000 that the Jomtien conference's objectives had not been accomplished. For this reason, the previously planned milestones were completely redone, and 2015 was established as the new target year (UNESCO, 2000a). These are additional significant and visible steps in the direction of educating all children (UNESCO, 2000b). On the global scale, the EFA movement's impact is widely acknowledged. While some indicators show that EFA is off course, others indicate that it is proceeding as planned. A great many countries have moved slowly in the direction of EFA, and the statistics for literateness of people in Pakistan has also no exception.

2.1. Education for All Programme in Pakistan and UNESCO

Educational programs of this international organization (UNESCO) have historically been oriented around the needs of the countries that are passing from developing phase. UNESCO and UNICEF are currently collaborating with almost twenty countries of this particular type to develop and implement classroom assessments of level 4 classrooms students' learning achievement in their primary schools. Pakistan is amongst these countries, (UNESCO, 2002). It's worth noting that all activities carried out by the partners of this program must be well-matched with each other as well as with the EFA plan.

Pakistan is a country who is carrying itself on the road of development, and as a member of the international community under the umbrella of the United Nations and a signatory to the Education for All movement, UNESCO plays an important role, particularly in the field of education. Central and regional education departments formed and launched EFA forums with the assistance of UNESCO, as well as developed a National EFA Plan of Action. In Pakistan, a draft of the National Plan of Action for EFA was organized and offered at the South Asian Ministerial Review Meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 10th to 12th April, 2001. 2001, UNESCO, p.26) Islamabad Office of UNESCO assisted the Ministry of Education was supported by the Islamabad office of UNESCO with reference to technical and financial aid in the planning of the draft plan and contribution of the delegation from Pakistan in the meeting of this region. The activities of UNESCO in Pakistan can be divided into three broad categories. The first priority should be to ensure that all children are receiving primary education; the next priority should be to sponsor basic reading ability and beyond traditional level of education amongst adolescence and grownups; and the third priority should be to renew the educational system (UNESCO, 2002).

2.2. EFA in Pakistan

The following is a brief summary of the different projects which have had been used to combat this poor state of literacy in Pakistan:

In 2000, the federal as well regional (provincial) Ministry of Education, with the cooperation and association of UNESCO, launched the National Protocol for Assessment (NPA) to fulfill the requirements of EFA. NPA focused on primary school education, grown-up literacy and early childhood care and education were its focal points. Grown-ups ability to read at smaller level was a target as specified in the NPA is as follows:

1. From the year 2001 to 2006, Phase I accounted for 61% of the total (male 71.5 percent: Female 50.5 percent)
2. From 2006-07 to 2010-11, Phase II accounts for 68 percent of the total (male 77 percent: Female 65 percent)
3. From 2010-11 to 2015-16, Phase-III accounted for 86 percent of the total (male 86 percent: Female 86 percent)

2.3. Constitution of Pakistan and Literacy

Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights entitled the privilege of education to everyone in all societies. At the least level, education is to be affordable with no expenses during the primary and elementary

stages. (Yves and Kishore, 2001) In this regard, the constitution of Pakistan has always been recognized this significant field of education as fundamental right of the citizens without any differentiation of race, cast, locality as well as last but not least gender. In this reference, article 37 of the constitution (1973) of Pakistan stresses the requirement to abolish the strength or ratio of people who could not even know or recognize the alphabets of any language with ensuring the provision of compulsory education of secondary level for a specific period of time. Pakistan's constitution states that education is every citizen's fundamental right. It is the responsibility of the Pakistani Government to educate the whole people. GOP has recognized that education is important for both human and economic development, in addition to its constitutional obligations.

With this in mind, the government emphasized the need in post-Dakar period to increase access and increase the quality of education. In order to structure these problems, the EOM developed a 10-year Outlook Plan (2001-11) that provides a broader framework for educational development in the country. In addition, EFA has developed and implemented its comprehensive Education Sector Reform (ESR) and National Action Plan (NAP), with the aim of achieving EFA objectives in 2015.

2.4. Educational Policies of Pakistan and EFA Program

Since 1990, the Government of Pakistan has prioritized EFA programs in all educational policies and plans. A brief summary of these policies is as follows:

2.4.1. National Education Policy (1992) and EFA Program

Keeping in view the discussions to the Jomtien Conference, many stakeholders of EFA provided consultancy to prepare and design the National Education Policy (1992) in consultation in key dimensions at the state and indigenous stages was a significant step toward EFA (Saleem, 2000). The following points summarize the policy's major objectives and targets for addressing various dimensions of Education for All:

- Primary education was recognised as a fundamental right of every child
- Primary education would be made compulsory in order to achieve universal primary education
- Decreased drop-out rate
- Satisfaction of educational needs by the end of the decade
- Primary education would be reclassified as elementary education.
- The primary school enrollment rate would be increased from 66 to 99 by 2002.

Source : (Government of Pakistan, 1992)

The historic progress provided base for the National Education Policy (1998-2010), contemporary educational tendencies and evolving national needs. Basic education, grown-ups ability to read and early childhood care and education are the main policy provisions of EFA. This policy established the following objectives:

- Access to elementary education by maximizing the use of existing facilities.
- Elimination of illiteracy through formal and informal means, with the goal of expanding access to basic education through community involvement.
- Priority given to out-of-school children receiving elementary education.
- Incorporation of non-formal systems in order to complement formal systems.
- Establishment of schemes to bring back children who are presently not enrolled in schools in spite of having the age of school going by adopting untraditional ways at elementary level.

2.4.2. Education for All Program and National Education Policy (2009)

This education policy showed strong agreement on that early childhood education should be a priority in the future in order to meet EFA targets. To this end, the following suggestions have been made:

- Comprehensive view of the child's growth in quality improvements must be grounded in ECE program.
- The age range for ECE students intended to be defined as three to five years.
- A two-year specialized training course for ECE teachers will be introduced.
- This training shall be conducted in accordance with the revised ECE National Curriculum.
- This most recent educational policy reaffirms the following policy actions aimed at achieving the EFA targets:
 - a. Through NFE, the rate of literate people will be enlarged to 88 percent till the year 2015.
 - b. Grownups' literacy as well as appropriate relevant programs must be sustainably funded.
 - c. General syllabus/course must be designed with proper attention for literacy by the government.
 - d. Provinces and districts shall devote at least 5% of their educational resources to the programs of literacy improvement and non-traditional education known as (NFBE)

2.4.3. Expenditure of Education 2006-07 to 2008-9

2.50 % of GDP & 12.0 % of Total Expenditures

- 2006-07

2.47 % of GDP & 9.8 % of Total Expenditures

- 2007-08

2.10 % of GDP & 11.52 % of Total Expenditure

- 2008-9

The detail is as:

- In 2006-07, 159.5, 56.6 and 275.5 rupees in billions for current, development and public sector expenditures on education
- In 2007-08, 190.2, 63.5 and 253.7 rupees in billions for current, development and public sector expenditures on education
- In 2008-09, 200.4, 75.1 and 216.5 rupees in billions for current, development and public sector expenditures on education

The scenario for EFA program is not satisfactory although different strategies and planes have been made with utmost struggle. Indicators show improvement but not as was expected. Provision of funds to improve education or literacy is not up to the mark as compare to the suggestions of international organizations for this purpose like UNESCO suggested minimum 4% (Govt. of Pakistan, 2004) for emerging countries. Basically no child can be deprived from basic education although the situation in our country is contrary as school going age children can be seen in the markets working in different departmental stores, hotels, shopping plazas and workshops. It is another setback that enrolled children cannot continue their education and left school before completing their even schooling.

3. Discussion

In the ever changing age of science and technology, modern use of latest technical sources of education are increasing day by day. EFA program needs are widely highlighting with passing time. To live in this scenario of globalization, it is indispensable for all people to get education at every cost. The objectives of this program can be achieved positively only after organizing and executing in regional settings of values guaranteeing gender equivalence, satisfying learning ambitions of local communities. All initiatives for the sake of this agenda duly linked to diverse needs of individuals' societal needs as well as to countrywide growth. Therefore, all programs of EFA should be associated to all-inclusive platform of fiscal, public and ethnic features.

Though, the situation is making progress towards improvement in public schools including enrolment of out of school children. The findings of the survey with positive response in percentage in which 5271 people were interviewed about the improvement of public schools were as:

- Overall in Pakistan: 51 %
- Punjab: 64 %
- Sindh: 32 %
- KPK: 37 %
- Baluchistan: 37 %
- AJK: 41 %
- GB: 51 %

Source: Next Generation Pakistan Survey (2013) Michal Barber

To meet the commitments made in these educational policies for EFA program, many steps were taken in the province of Punjab:

3.1. Chief Minister (CM) Roadmap

CM roadmap was launched in 2010 in the province of Punjab with the following objectives;

- Every child should enrolled
- Every child should retained
- Every child should progress

These objectives reflect the commitment of the government for this program. To realize these objectives, following initiatives were made part and parcel of this map:

- Provision of free text-books
- Stipend for girls' students
- Cash prizes for position holders
- Minimization of drop-out
- Review of these steps with regular intervals

3.2. Admission Campaigns

Admission campaigns were launched at the start of every academic year with the main purpose to conduct surveys to know the real number of children who are out of school even having the school- age. Plans at central and district level were made on the basis of data achieved from these surveys. For the first time, district administration (District Coordination Officers) was made responsible for the execution of these campaigns at district level.

3.3. School Census

To know the real figures of students' strength and new enrolled students, school census was made compulsory at 31st of October every year. This census then was considered as standard for all types of educational planning including strategies to attract out of school children for admissions.

3.4. Early Childhood Education (ECE)

Focus on ECE or pre-primary education offers that young kids are ready for school and has positive impact on enrolment, learning and cost-effective. The Government of Punjab has given special focus on establishing ECE rooms in schools to promote and ensure EFA targets. Specials teachers designated as "Caregiver" are hired and trained to deal this level of kids.

3.5. Admission Drive 2020-2021

Keeping in view the importance of EFA program, the present government has introduced admission campaign with the name of "Admission Drive 2020-2021" with particular focus on students' drop out during prolonged closure of schools due to the Covid-19 epidemic. Another main target of this AD was to enrolled one million out of school children. This target is divided annual basis and further division is made on monthly basis to know the progress. To ensure the success of the targets, following strategic steps are taken into consideration:

- School council meetings would be conducted regularly to sensitize the members of School Council for this Enrollment-Drive.
- Targets for the out of school children to lessen the drop-out rate given from Govt. would be shared and assigned to the members of schools council.
- Announcement on the loud speakers of Masjids would be ensured for admission campaign.
- The heads must organize Parent Teacher Meetings (PTM) to promote awareness among the parents for continuity of education and for new admission in school.
- Reconstruction of School Councils by excluding inactive members and including dynamic persons to achieve these targets.
- Corner meetings and walks should be arranged by the school-heads for the significance of education and Enrolment Drive.
- The Heads will nominate two "Education Champions" from the members of school council for holding of corner meeting with local community and parents. The Head-Teacher will harmonize and provide essential support to the "Education Champions" for holding of corner meetings.
- The head-Teacher will participate at least in 03 corner meetings in a month.

Education and Literacy Department, the Govt. of Sindh has inaugurated its new gender unit in the city to encourage girls' literacy in the province. ECE program is also a part of efforts of this government to achieve goal of enrolment at maximum level. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Elementary and Secondary Education (E&SE) Department launched an enrollment campaign on Tuesday to meet the province's target of enrolling 850,000 children in nursery classes. On 5 February 2017, the KP Assembly passed an act mandating free education for all children aged 5 to 16. Any parent who violates this act will face legal consequences. As part of its efforts to address the province's massive out-of-school population, the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) government has set a target of enrolling approximately 800,000 children in government schools through a new enrollment campaign beginning on September 8, 2020. Each year, enrollment drives (School dakhla muhem) are held. Teachers and

members of civil society were seen walking through bazaars, streets, and various villages, carrying placards and banners, pleading with parents for their children's admission to school.

Source: The Express Tribune, September 14th, 2018.

These targets can only be achieved when government would figure out a dynamic collaboration with a multiple sponsors. So, it is mandatory to stimulate the native populations, teacher unions and other research organizations working for this cause, the corporate segment and other shareholders to subsidize and join in all activities of EFA congregations.

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