

BOOK REVIEW

“EDUCATION PROBLEMS OF PAKISTAN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SINDH” by Dr.Habibullah Siddiqui, published by the Pakistan Study Centre, University of Sindh, Jamshoro 2008, pages 306, price Rs.400/- PB.

Review By:

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Education is a burning problem of the day, more so in Pakistan. The book under review is not only a study presented by an acknowledged scholar; but, infact, it is a well-researched thesis on the topic: The educational problems of Pakistan.

The research scholar has explored important areas viz. historical educational developments, the education status visa-a-vis the current national education policy, the area of the reforms and development covered by the government and the difficulties encountered. Having addressed these topics, the scholar engages in a down-to-earth analysis and interpretation of the existing educational data, citing reliable statistics and employing modern techniques of analysis and interpretation of important data e.g. through GER and NER concepts etc.

The research is further directed towards important aspects of the current national educational policy (1998-2010) i.e., the public-private partnership and the incidence of madrasah education reforms to bring it into the mainstream education system. The relevant chapter discusses the positive and the negative aspects of the reforms measures: legislation and implementation gaps, the Quality Assurance Measures and the constitution of a private institutions board. The functioning of the private educational institutions (PEI) is thoroughly discussed along with their problems and the need of proper public sector interventions. The draft bill regarding the public-private partnership and private

educational institutions management and control is fully reflected to illustrate the measures, already taken and these which are proposed to be undertaken.

The goals of Education-For-All (EFA), the millennium-goals and globalization trends are discussed in Chapter-VII. The concept and the relevant indices are shown in the context of the regional and the international facts and ground-realities; and the official attitudes capabilities and losses are also reflected in the study.

Chapter-VIII is more important for its deals with the "capacity and resources of the existing education system", as estimated by an experienced educationist and a senior educational administrator. The reader may appreciate his positive assessment based on professional and technical measures. The researcher is out to explore the capacity of the existing education systems institutions both in physical and human terms. The international Human Development Index (HDI) and the regional socio-economic matrix are employed to assess the various national educational milieus. The quality of education is defined in terms of the qualities of the present generation. The inborn dynamic force and capacity of children is highlighted together with the "Rights of the Child" as enshrined in the UN Convention of November 20, 1989, signed by Pakistan. Child labour, abuse and perversion are pointed out with facts and figures.

A sample case study is made out of the University of Sindh in the context of "Making Use of Available Capacity". The sample case contains the financial, professional and students-related problems of the institution and the measures taken to off-set them. The university's achievement is assessed in terms of meeting the Higher Education Commission (HEC)'s requirements as well as generating own resources to accommodate more students and meet their requirements. The researcher's access to the documents and record of the University, in the capacity of a Member of the Senate, has provided actual and factual facts and figures to show how the University of Sindh, under versatile administration, is coping with the increasing requirements of delivering the goods.

Conclusions and suggestions is the last chapter, which is infact the sum total of the researched facts and the researcher's own professional acumen. A 41-points discussion contains solid facts and viable suggestions to solve the present day problems of education in our resourceful country as well as make tangible progress towards meeting the international standards in terms of management, planning, implementation and control of educational institutions and improving the quality of human development in and through the institutions.

The Pakistan Study Centre of the University of Sindh and the Higher Education Commission - financed Research Committee have provided a very useful thesis on today's burning problem of education faced by Pakistan. It is a demi-sized handy book which would also serve the purpose of reference book for other researchers and writers. The more interested and expert readers can go through the 306 pages of the book in one go as the language, and style of the write up is easy and well sequenced in its topics, which are interesting and prompting.