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Principles and general objectives of education

Education and training should enable the citizens of Pakistan to lead their lives according to the teachings of Islam as laid down in the Quran and Sunnah and to educate and train them as a true practicing Muslim. Under the National Education Policy 1998–2010, one of the general objectives is to make the Quranic principles and Islamic practices an integral part of curricula so that the message of the Holy Quran could be disseminated in the process of education and training; and to educate and train the future generation of Pakistan as a true practicing Muslim who would be able to usher into the next millennium with courage, confidence, wisdom and tolerance.

The National Education Policy 2009 recognizes the importance of Islamic values and adheres to the agreed principles in this regard. Taking into account the Planning Commission's *Vision 2030*, the Ministry of Education has adopted following vision: "Our education system must provide quality education to our children and youth to enable them to realize their individual potential and contribute to development of society and nation, creating a sense of Pakistani nationhood, the concepts of tolerance, social justice, democracy, their regional and local culture and history based on the basic ideology enunciated in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan." The objective of education is the development of a self reliant individual, capable of analytical and original thinking, a responsible member of his/her community and, in the present era, a global citizen. It is imperative to identify and, possibly define, the touchstone for development of the child as a member of society. Each culture has its own ethos that bears relevance for its individual constituents. The challenge today is to secure values without regressing into unnecessary anachronism and parochial insularity. The other relevance of education is its ability to provide the graduates with an opportunity to earn a living. Education should be able to increase the earning potential of the individual who is literate; irrespective of the eventual vocation opted. The main aims and objectives include:

- To create a sense of unity and nationhood and promote the desire to create welfare State for the people of Pakistan.
- To promote national cohesion by respecting each others faith and religion and cultural and ethnic diversity.
- To promote social and cultural harmony through the conscious use of the educational process.
- To provide and ensure equal educational opportunities to all the citizens of Pakistan and to provide minorities with adequate facilities for their cultural and religious development, enabling them to participate effectively in the overall national effort.
- To develop a self reliant individual, capable of analytical and original thinking, a responsible member of society and a global citizen.
- To aim at nurturing the total personality of the individual, dynamic, creative and capable of facing the truth as it emerges from the objective study of reality.



- To raise individuals committed to democratic and moral values, aware of fundamental human rights, open to new ideas, having a sense of personal responsibility and participation in the productive activities in the society for the common good. (MOE, 2009).

Laws and other basic regulations concerning education

The **Constitution** (1973) ensures equality and well-being of all citizens, and no discrimination on the basis of sex, caste, creed or race. Article 37 stipulates that the State shall: (a) promote with special care the educational and economic interests of backward classes or areas; (b) remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory education within the minimum possible period; and (c) make technical and professional education generally available and higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”

The **Federal Supervision of Curricula, Textbooks and Maintenance of Standards of Education Act No. 10**, 1976 specifies the functions of the federal Ministry of Education (Curriculum Wing) in this area. The Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (FBISE) has been established under the **FBISE Act** of 1975.

The Higher Education Commission was established by the **Ordinance of 2002**, replacing the University Grants Commission.

In pursuance of the 1979 Education Policy measures to encourage participation of the private sector in educational development, the **Punjab Private Institutions (Promotion and Regulation) Ordinance No. II** was adopted in 1984. Similar Ordinances were adopted by the Governments of Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) and Sindh. These Ordinances provide for the registration of all private institutions with the Registration Authority. The constitution of a managing body for each institution spells out the conditions for registration.

A **Compulsory Primary Education Act** has been enacted in three out of four provinces of the country as well as in Islamabad Capital Territory. Although enforcement of the act is still pending, significant efforts are being made to get all children into school. (MOE, 2008). The **Compulsory School Attendance Bill 2008**, still to be approved by the National Assembly, should be applied to the whole country. The Bill defines primary education as a six-year programme normally commencing when a child has attained the age of 4 years (thus including the pre-primary class and the five-year primary education stage). The Bill envisages the establishment of the Compulsory Federal Education Board to implement the provisions in federal areas as well as the creation of Compulsory Provincial Education Boards.

Administration and management of the education system

The country is a federation of four provinces, each with a parliamentary system (Punjab, Sindh, Northwest Frontier Province—NWFP, and Balochistan), and other territories under the administration of the federal government (Federally Administered



Tribal Areas—FATA). The division of responsibilities between the provinces and the centre has been defined by the 1973 Constitution and subsequent agreements. Urdu is the national language. However, at the government level Urdu and English are the official languages. Urdu is spoken and understood by 75% of the population while the rest speak regional languages of the areas they inhabit.

Education has been and is primarily a provincial matter, under provincial Departments of Education. Through the **Federal Ministry of Education** (MOE) the federal government continues to be the overall policy-making, coordinating, and advisory authority in the field of education. Educational institutions located in the federal capital territory, centres of excellence, area study centres and other institutions in various parts of the country are administered by the federal MOE. The federal Minister of Education is assisted by the Education Secretary. The federal MOE is structured in six administrative wings/cells: Curriculum Wing; Policy and Planning Wing; Project Wing; Training Wing; Administration Wing; and Monitoring and Evaluation Cell. The Joint Educational Advisor heads each wing. Besides wings the Ministry of Education has a number of subordinate and attached bodies. The major functions of the federal MOE are to: formulate national education policy and to ensure its implementation; coordinate with provinces and other organizations in educational matters; develop the curriculum and ensure uniformity in education throughout the country; coordinate with foreign governments/international agencies; award scholarships for professional growth of students and teachers; look after the development of education in the country and provide necessary funds to the provinces. (MOE, November 2008).

In accordance with the 1976 Act, the main legal mandate of the **Curriculum Wing** is to prepare schemes of studies, curricula, textbooks and strategies for their introduction in various classes (grades) of educational institutions in connection with the implementation of the education policy of the federal government, and to approve textbooks produced by other agencies before they are prescribed in various classes of an educational institution. Accordingly, the Curriculum Wing has the following main functions: preparation of schemes of studies for grades 1-12; development, review and approval of curricula for grades 1 to 12, in consultation with representatives of provincial Departments of Education and Curriculum Research and Development Centers; preparation of strategies for the implementation of the curriculum; review and approval of textbooks and supplementary reading material produced by other agencies such as Textbook Boards and private publishers.

The **Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education** (FBISE), established under the FBISE Act of 1975, is an autonomous body of the Ministry of Education. It is empowered with administrative and financial authority to organize, regulate, develop and control intermediate and secondary education in general, and conduct examinations in the institutions affiliated with it.

The **Inter-Board Committee of Chairmen** (IBCC) oversees the 26 boards of intermediate and secondary education. The boards (one federal and the remainder provincial), implement, regulate and monitor schemes of studies and curricula, and hold Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) examinations. IBCC was established in 1972 with a view to exchange information among member Boards, coordinate activities of the Boards, achieve fair



measure of uniformity of academic, evaluation and curricular standards, and to promote curricular and co-curricular activities on Inter-Board basis. It provides a forum for discussion and consultation for the chief executives of the Boards and provincial Curriculum Bureaus on matters relating to development and promotion of intermediate and secondary education and also technical education. Besides, coordination of educational activities like curriculum, testing and evaluation, examinations, educational planning and administration are also considered by this forum. Another function of great importance assigned to the IBCC is to decide and grant equivalence to foreign qualifications with corresponding Pakistani certificates as well as local certificates/diplomas with the comparable certificates awarded by the Boards. IBCC also converts foreign grades into Pakistani marks at SSC/HSSC level. IBCC has also been entrusted the assignment of attestation of certificates and diplomas, issued by the Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education and Boards of Technical Education in Pakistan, for those candidates who want to go abroad for further education and/or for employment purposes.

The **Higher Education Commission** (HEC) has been set up in 2002 to facilitate the development of the universities of Pakistan, replacing the University Grants Commission. The mandate of the HEC encompasses all degree granting universities and institutions, public and private, including degree granting colleges. The Commission supports the attainment of quality education in these institutions by facilitating and coordinating self-assessment of academic programmes and their external review by national and international experts. The HEC also supervises the planning, development and accreditation of public and private sector institutions of higher education.

The **Provincial Departments of Education** are headed by the Ministers of Education of the respective provinces and the executive authority is vested in the Secretaries of Education. The provincial Department of Education is responsible for the administration of elementary, secondary, technical and higher education in the province. Each provincial Department has many bodies such as curriculum bureaus, provincial institutes of teacher education, textbook boards, Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education, etc., to carry out various functions. Under the Devolution of Power Ordinance 2001, educational administration of schools has been devolved from provincial governments to the district governments. Since 2001 most of the educational planning and decision-making now takes place at the district level. Provincial governments retain primary responsibility for pre-service teacher education and share responsibility for in-service teacher training with the district governments.

Each province is divided into regions/divisions for educational administrative purposes. Each **Regional/Divisional Office** is headed by a Director. The regions/divisions are further divided into **Districts** and the officer in charge of a district is the District Education Officer (DEO). The structure is moving towards a three-tier education system, namely elementary, secondary and higher education. In the provinces of Punjab and NWFP separate Directorates of Elementary, Secondary and College Education have been created.

The Literacy and Mass Education Commission has been recently renamed as **Prime Minister's Literacy Commission** (PMLC), whose task is to raise the literacy rate in the country.

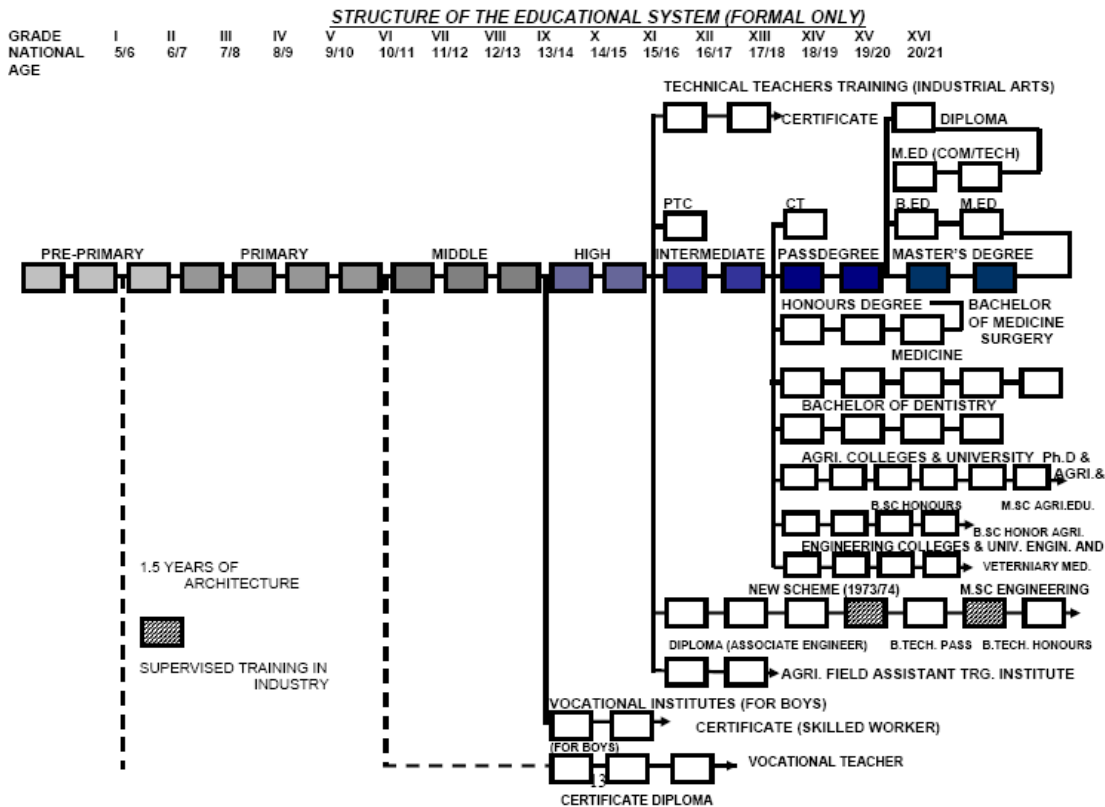


The establishment of the **Academy of Educational Planning and Management** (AEPAM) was recommended within the framework of the 1979 National Education Policy for the training of educational planners, administrators and supervisors. Accordingly, the AEPAM became functional in 1982 as an autonomous organization of the Ministry of Education with the following objectives: to identify and evaluate various projects based on modern planning and management techniques; to collect and consolidate educational statistics and information; to provide in-service training to planners and administrators so as to enhance their capabilities in planning, management and use of computers; to offer pre-service training to those educators who are being considered for appointment as educational administrators and planners at various levels; to contract and carry out action-oriented research in order to facilitate the effective implementation of the Action Plan and the National Education Policy formulation; to provide expert advisory services to the provincial education departments and other institutions in the country when required. Since its inception, the Academy has conducted a number of in-service training programmes in educational planning and management and several research studies, surveys and reports in areas such as: primary, secondary, higher, vocational, and women education; teacher education; structure and organization of the education system; financing of education; educational statistics; educational information; educational policy and planning. The Academy has also developed professional linkages with several international agencies.

Established in June 2002, the **National Commission for Human Development** (NCHD) is a public private partnership created under the directive of the President of Pakistan with a mission to promote development in the fields of health, education and micro-finance. It is funded through the Pakistan Human Development Fund registered under the Company's Ordinance 1984. In the field of education, the NCHD aims to support the government in achieving EFA objectives by 2015 by providing technical assistance in teacher training, syllabus development and instruction in practical life skills, as well as securing the participation and commitment of communities. Currently, the NCHD is operating in 32 districts and its core strategy consists of: (i) public private partnership; (ii) capacity building of government's line departments, community organizations and selected officials; and (iii) community ownership and participation.

Structure and organization of the education system

Pakistan: structure of the education system



Source: Ministry of Education, 2008.

Pre-school education

Early childhood education (ECE), termed *katchi* or pre-primary classes, is defined as formal and informal as well as public or private education services for children aged 3-5 years. Besides the *katchi* classes (that were discontinued during the 1980s and reintroduced at the end of the 1990s) in government schools, several private schools also provide pre-primary classes. Nursery, kindergarten or Montessori style education are offered in profit-making private schools, usually operating in urban localities; and enrolling children aged 2-5 years in appropriate classrooms by well-trained teachers using proper ECE materials.

Primary education

Primary education lasts five years (grades 1 to 5); children are admitted to primary/elementary schools at the age of 5+. On the basis of the three-tier education system model under implementation, primary education is the first stage of elementary education; the second stage is middle level education (grades 6-8). At the end of grade 5, a public examination is held for promotion to the next level and the award of merit scholarships. Only outstanding pupils compete for merit scholarships.



Secondary education

Secondary education is divided into three stages: middle level education (grades 6-8) in middle schools; secondary education (grades 9 and 10, provided the humanities, science and technical streams) in high schools, and higher secondary education (grades 11 and 12) in higher secondary schools and intermediate and degree colleges. Higher secondary education is also called 'intermediate stage' and is considered a part of college education. Under the three-tier education system model, elementary education covers grades 1-8 (including primary and middle level education), and secondary education grades 9-12, divided into secondary (grades 9 and 10) and higher secondary education (grades 11 and 12). At the end of grade 10 students sit the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination (matriculation) administered by the Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education through out the country. At the end of grade 12, students sit the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) examination, a pre-requisite for admission to tertiary and higher education. Vocational institutes offer one-year certificate and two-year diploma courses in various trades. Commerce education to train manpower for the business sector is provided in commercial training institutes, which offer one-year certificate in commerce (C.Com) and two-year diploma in commerce (D.Com) programmes. Technical education is an independent stream started in the mid-1950s with the establishment of two polytechnic institutes in Karachi and Rawalpindi. Mono/polytechnic institutes and colleges of technology (including private sector institutes) offer three-year diploma programmes (associate engineer) in over twenty fields of specialization.

Higher education

Higher education is offered in universities and colleges. Admission to undergraduate courses is based on the HSSC examination or equivalent qualification, normally followed by an interview and admission test. College education provides instruction from grade 11 onwards at two levels: intermediate colleges, imparting instruction both in humanities and sciences (grades 11 and 12); and grades 13-14 degree colleges, offering a four-year programmes (including grades 11 and 12). Traditionally, the bachelor's degrees in arts, science and commerce have been of two or three years' duration following ten years of schooling and two years of secondary study. This structure, referred to as 10+2+2 or 10+2+3, is the old Indian structure and goes back to the time when Pakistan and India shared the same education system. The two-year degree, referred to as bachelor (pass), consists of three major subjects studied to an equal extent. The three-year degree is referred to as bachelor (honours). Three subjects are studied with one major subject chosen for the last year. Three bachelor's degrees are based on a previous bachelor degree (pass or honours): the Bachelor of Law (two-year programme), the Bachelor of Education (one-year programme), and the Bachelor of Library Science (one-year programme). The professional bachelor's degrees in agriculture, engineering, pharmacy and veterinary medicine are awarded after four years of study (five years in the case of architecture and medicine). Four-year bachelor's degree programme have also been introduced in other fields, mainly by private universities. At the postgraduate level, master's degree programmes in the fields of arts, science or commerce take one or years to complete. The duration of the programme depends on the previous degree (to make a total of four years). The professional master's degree is a two-year programme following a professional bachelor's degree in the same field. A thesis is not always required in order to obtain a



master's degree. The Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) is a two-year research degree programme usually involving course work as well as a thesis. Programmes leading to the award of a doctoral degree (PhD) normally require three to four years of study and research (two years in the case of M.Phil. holders). The Higher Education Commission HEC decided that all pass and honours bachelor's degrees of two and three years' duration should be phased out beginning in 2003/04. They will be replaced by a new four-year bachelor's degree. Accordingly, the duration of master's degree programmes will be one and a half years, and the duration of doctoral programmes will be three years. (NORRIC, 2006).

“*Madrassahs, Makhtabs, Jamias and Dar-ul-Ulooms*, the institutions which aim at the dissemination of Islamic thought, mainly through the study of the Holy Quran and Holy Prophet's teachings, constitute a system of education running parallel to the prevalent system of modern education. [...] *Makhtabs* are institutions at the preliminary level teaching *Hifz* (memorization) and *Nazra* Quran (recitation). The terms *Madrassah, Dar-ul-Uloom* and *Jamia* are used more or less synonymously for institutions which are engaged in teaching *Dars-e-Nizami* (*Nizami* School of Learning) in its original or modified form. The curriculum of these institutions includes the Quran, *Tafsir, Hadith* and *Fiqah* with some elements of logic and philosophy. Most of these *Madrassahs* award *sanads* (certificates) either on their own or through one of their affiliating organizations. Most of these *Madrassahs* have regular classes, examination system and (generally) a nine-year course. They have their own libraries and hostel facilities. Nearly 50% of the students live in hostels and are provided free boarding and lodging. *Madrassahs* use Urdu as language of instruction and conduct all their educational activities on self-financing basis by raising donations” (APPEAL, 1991, p. 16-17).

There is no research study available concerning the average number of school days per year. An estimate was made with the help of some head teachers and principals in Islamabad and further discussed with head teachers coming from provinces attending a National Training Workshop at the Academy of Educational Planning and Management in Islamabad. On the average, classroom instruction in primary/elementary and secondary schools takes place for about 180-190 days per year. At the primary/elementary level, pupils receive an average of 26 hours of instruction per week (780 hours per year); at the secondary level, students receive an average of 30 hours of instruction per week (900 hours per year). This information is based on the official records. The average number of working hours and days has been calculated on the basis of the Scheme of Studies (not including holidays, examinations and extra-curricular activities). However, there may be differences in actual classroom practices in different areas and schools.

The educational process

The Ministry of Education, Curriculum Wing, approves the curriculum for uniform implementation across the country. In order to assist the Curriculum Wing, four federating units have set up a Bureau of Curriculum and Education Extension Centres. Their task is to collect opinions from the stakeholders, prepare the draft curriculum and submit it to the Curriculum Wing, where national curriculum development committees (consisting of experts, teachers, teacher educators, subject experts, textbook authors and researchers) analyze the drafts and produce a mutually agreed



draft of the national curriculum, which is circulated for comments before its universal adoption. Before implementation, the curriculum is tested at micro and macro levels. In order to translate the curriculum into text, each federating unit has established a Textbook Board which develops the manuscripts with public and private partnership. Master trainers are trained in the contents and methods by the Ministry of Education in order to replicate the training in the provinces. The selection of subjects is made taking into account societal and global needs and standards and a National Scheme of Studies for grades 1-12 is finally adopted.

The curriculum is revised every 5-10 years. The process of curriculum development follows a cyclic order: (i) identification of societal needs and framing of aims and objectives accordingly; (ii) selection of contents; (iii) translation of contents into textbooks; and (iv) evaluation. A major change has been the recent introduction of integrated curricula for grades 1 to 3 concentrating on: basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing); mathematics; social studies, science, Islamic education, and subject matters of arts, etc. (concepts, skills and activities), presented in one textbook meant for each grade as a language book. (MOE, 2001).

A comprehensive review of school curricula was initiated in 2005. The MOE's Curriculum Wing, supported by professionals from the field, reviewed the scheme of studies in the first phase. In the second phase, the revised curricula for 25 core subjects (grades 1 to 12) were made available in 2007. The review of remaining subjects as listed in the scheme of studies was expected to be completed in December 2009. The curriculum development process included comparison of current curriculum with curricula of different countries; consultations with teachers, administrators, educationists, curriculum experts and students; field visits to collect feedback from teachers and stakeholders; identification and training of working teams through workshops and seminars; reviews of drafts by subject experts and in-service teachers leading to further revision and refinement of contents; and preparation of a uniform curriculum format consisting of standards, benchmarks and learning outcomes. Emerging trends and concepts such as school health, prevention education against HIV and AIDS and other infectious diseases, life skills, population and development education, human rights education including gender equality, school safety and disaster and risk management, peace education and inter-faith harmony, abuse, etc., shall be infused in the curricula, and awareness and training materials shall be developed for students and teachers, keeping in view cultural values and sensitivities. (MOE, 2009).

The key features of the National Curriculum 2006/07 are as follows: standards and competencies driven; learning objectives correspond to students' learning outcomes; progressive approaches for primary, middle, secondary and tertiary stages of learning: life skills are integrated across subjects; vertical and horizontal connections are ensured; focus on promoting creative writing and analytical thinking for learners rather than rote learning; detailed guidelines have been provided in the curriculum for textbook writers and teachers for delivery of the curriculum effectively; guidelines have been provided for assessment and evaluation in addition to the learning outcomes specified in the curriculum. (Jamil, 2009).



Pre-primary education

Early childhood education (ECE) had been well organized until the 1970s. *Katchi* or pre-primary classes were organized in formal primary schools. However, officially this practice was almost discontinued during 1980s. Realizing the role and significance of ECE especially for improving learning achievement, provision has been made in the National Education Policy 1998-2010 to reintroduce *katchi* as a formal class in primary schools.

ECE is defined as formal and informal as well as public or private education services for children aged above 3 years and below 5 years. Besides the *katchi* classes in government schools, several private schools also provide pre-primary classes. Nursery, kindergarten or Montessori style education are offered in profit-making private schools, usually operating in urban localities; and enrolling children aged 2-5 years taught in appropriate classrooms by well-trained teachers using proper ECE materials. In general, the main objectives of ECE are to: help the children develop their potential to learn and grow; provide an appropriate environment to ensure safety and holistic development of children; use play way method and concrete experience in teaching and learning; prepare children for formal schooling; develop awareness of basic cultural values and norms.

In public primary schools, especially in rural areas, children below 5 years of age attend school informally and learn basic concepts of literacy and numeracy. But their number is still limited as compared to the total population in the age group 3-5 years. In private schools, pre-primary education is well organized being an essential part of primary education. Almost all such schools arrange pre-primary education in the form of pre-nursery, nursery, or kindergarten I and II classes.

As various ministries/departments are responsible for a variety of services addressed to various age groups, there seems to be no clear-cut division in the ministerial responsibility of providing early childhood services on the basis of age. For example, there are the daycare facilities in some urban centers for children of less than 3 years provided by the Ministry of Women Development and the Ministry of Social Welfare and Special Education. Childcare also extends beyond 3 years of age, when ECE, implemented by the Ministry of Education, begins for preschool learners.

In private schools, the ECE teachers are usually qualified and well-trained in relevant methods. Other staff include non-teaching staff such as the *ayas* (maids), hired for assistance with young children. In public schools, the qualification required for teaching in *katchi* class is the same as that for primary school, i.e. higher secondary education certificate plus one-year teaching certificate. The provinces usually adopt the same criteria except where suitable staff is not available and relaxation of criteria is exercised.

Apart from ECE classroom classes and centers in government schools, the MOE, with the technical input from the Teachers Resource Center (TCR), developed and disseminated an ECE curriculum to be implemented in 2002. This was followed by teacher training materials and guides for *kachi* teachers developed in 2003, and a revised ECE curriculum made available in 2007, again with the continued assistance of TCR. (Sindh Education Foundation, 2010).



The revised National ECE Curriculum of 2007 aims to: provide for the holistic development of the child, which includes physical, social, emotional, cognitive and moral development; develop critical thinking skills; nurture in children tolerance and respect for diversity; nurture in children a sense of identity and pride in being Pakistani; provide knowledge and understanding of Islam and Islamic society; develop an understanding and respect for the beliefs and practices of all other religions; create in children a sense of citizenship in community, country and the world; foster a sense of independence, self-reliance and a positive self-image; equip children with lifelong learning skills; provide opportunities for active learning; and provide opportunities for self-initiated play and decision making. The ECE curriculum is organized around six key learning areas, each including three to seven competencies or learning goals. The key learning areas are: personal and social development; language and literacy; basic mathematical concepts; the world around us (providing a foundation for historical, geographical, scientific and technological learning); health, hygiene and safety; and creative arts. Children's progress should be measured by the teacher's ongoing observations during the entire year. This progress should be compared to their own previous level of development and not to that of other children. The results of evaluating a child's progress should be used to plan the future learning programme for the ECE classroom. (MOE, 2007).

In 1999, it was estimated that the number of children aged 3-5 enrolled in pre-primary education was only 0.73 million or 8.5%. In Sindh and Balochistan the gross enrolment ratio was only 3-4%. (MOE, 1999). In 2003/04, there were 3,531,907 children (487,598 in urban and 3,044,309 in rural areas; 44.1% girls and 55.9% boys), enrolled in *katchi* or pre-primary classes in government schools. In urban areas, 52% were girls and 48% were boys. In rural areas, 43% were girls and 57% were boys.

The National Education Census of 2006 showed that, out of a total of 227,791 educational institutions in the country, 1,081 were pre-primary schools (of which 73% in the private sector). However, it should be noted that most of the primary schools do have an informal or formalized *kachi* arrangement. Many children between the age range of 1-4 attend schools 'informally' and do not enrol. (Sindh Education Foundation, 2010).

For 2005/06, MOE reports a total ECE enrolment of 7,135,446 children aged 3-5 years, of whom 2.7 million in the private sector; the gross enrolment ratio was estimated at 91%. As regards teachers in the private sector, 47% were trained. In the same year, MOE estimates that about 64% of children entering primary grade 1 had some previous ECE experience. (MOE, 2008).

Primary (elementary) education

As mentioned, primary education lasts five years (grades 1 to 5); children are admitted to primary/elementary schools at the age of 5+. On the basis of the three-tier education system model under implementation, primary education is the first stage of elementary education; the second stage is middle level education (grades 6-8). At the end of grade 5, a public examination is held for promotion to the next level and the award of merit scholarships. Only outstanding pupils compete for merit scholarships. The primary education curriculum is practically the same throughout the country.



Instruction is imparted in the national language (Urdu) or in the regional languages of the area concerned.

Primary education suffers from several deficiencies and shortcomings. Most primary schools, especially in rural areas, do not have proper physical facilities and their retention rate is very poor. Examinations are held annually at the school level, and they are the sole criterion to promote pupils to higher grades or to retain them in the same grade. However, a system of automatic promotion up to grade 3 has been recently introduced in some schools.

“The highest rate of drop-out occurs between Grades 1 and 2. Twenty-five per cent of boys and 40% of girls stop attending schools before reaching Grade 2. The urban drop-out rate at the national level is 32%, and the rural drop-out rate is estimated to be 59%. The male rural drop-out rate is 54% and the male urban drop-out rate is 26.5%. As compared to the male drop-out rates, the rural female drop-out rate is 67% and the urban female drop-out rate is 38%. The drop-out rates in the provinces vary sharply. In the Punjab the rural drop-out rate is 54% and the urban drop-out rate is 47%; in Sindh the rural drop-out rate is 75% and the urban rate is 40%; in NWFP the rural drop-out rate is 72% and the urban rate is 63%, and Balochistan has a rural drop-out rate of 78% against a 68% urban drop-out rate” (APPEAL, 1991, p. 21).

The weekly lesson timetable for primary education in 1996 is presented below:

Study plan for primary education (1996)

Subject	Grades I and II		Grade III		Grades IV and V	
	No. of weekly periods	No. of weekly hours	No. of weekly periods	No. of weekly hours	No. of weekly periods	No. of weekly hours
1. First language					6	4
a. Listening and speaking	9	2	3	2		
b. Reading	12	8	9	6		
c. Writing	6	4	6	4		
2. Second language	-	-	6	4	6	4
3. Activity based on textbooks	4	2.40	3	2	-	-
4. Mathematics	9	6	6	4	6	4
5. Islamic education	2	1.20	3	2	6	4
6. Physical education	3	2	3	2	3	2
7. Science	-	-	-	-	5	3.20
8. Pak./social studies	-	-	-	-	4	2.40
9. Arts	-	-	-	-	3	2
10. Tree plantation / manual work	-	-	-	-	1	0.40
Total weekly periods/hours	39	26	39	26	40	26.40

Source: Curriculum Wing, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

During the week, schools operate for five full working days (4 hours and 40 minutes divided into seven periods) and one half day (2 hours and 40 minutes divided into four periods). Working hours exclude time for daily assembly (ten minutes) and breaks (thirty minutes on full days and fifteen minutes on half day).

At the middle stage, schools operate five full working days (5 hours and 20 minutes) and one half day (3 hours and 20 minutes); total weekly periods are expected to be forty-five. Working hours exclude time for daily assembly and breaks (thirty minutes on full working days and a short break of fifteen minutes on half working day). Provinces may have the choice to utilize the time allocated for provincial language (first language). Two periods per week are at the disposal of the head of the institution to adjust co-curricular activities according to local needs. Arabic is not compulsory for non-Muslim students. Non-Muslim students study moral education instead of Islamic education. In addition, schools have the option to teach one trade out of electricity, woodwork, metalwork and agriculture; or may add new trades relevant to the local employment market. The 1996 study plan for middle classes is shown in the table below:

Study plan for middle classes (1996)

Subject	Grades VI-VIII			
	No. of weekly periods	% of total time	Marks	Papers
1. Languages				
a. First language	6	13.33	150	2
b. Second language	4	8.88	100	1
c. English (compulsory)	6	13.33	150	2
d. Arabic	3	6.67	100	1
2. Mathematics	4	8.88	100	1
3. Science	3	6.66	100	1
4. Pakistan/social studies	3	6.66	100	1
5. Health and physical education	3	6.66	100	1
6. Islamic/Moral education	4	8.88	100	1
7. Drawing/Persian/Agro. Tech.	6	13.33	100	1
8. Tree plantation/manual work	1	2.22	100	1

Source: Curriculum Wing, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan.

In 2003/04 there were 154,970 primary schools in the country with 19.794 million pupils enrolled and 432,222 teachers. A total of 133,952 schools were under the Ministry of Education, 3,397 schools were under other ministries, and 17,621 schools in the private sector. A total of 133,022 schools were in rural areas with an enrolment of 13.09 million pupils and 297,376 teachers. In the same year, there were 28,728 middle schools with an enrolment of 4.318 million students and 239,351 teachers. A total of 13,668 middle schools were under the Ministry of Education, 60 schools were under other ministries, and 15,000 schools in the private sector. A total of 17,918 middle schools were in rural areas with an enrolment of 2.167 million students and 133,606 teachers. (MOE, 2005).

For 2008/09, MOE reports that there were 17,205,194 students enrolled at the primary level (public and private sectors), of whom 7.574 million were girls. At the middle level there were 5,346,736 students enrolled, of whom 2.272 million were girls. There were 155,827 primary schools (of which 17,512 in the private sector) with 434,577 teachers (of whom 202,421 were female teachers). The number of middle schools was 40,917 (of which 25,224 in the private sector), and the number of teachers at this level was 323,935 (of whom 210,703 were female teachers). (MOE-AEPM, 2009).

Secondary education

Under the three-tier system, secondary education consists of two stages: grades 9 and 10 in high schools, and grades 11 and 12 in higher secondary schools and intermediate and degree colleges. Higher secondary education is also called 'intermediate stage' and is considered a part of college education. At the end of grade 10 students sit the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination administered by the Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education through out the country. At the end of grade 12, students sit the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) examination, a prerequisite for admission to tertiary and higher education.

Vocational institutes offer one-year certificate and two-year diploma courses in various trades. Commerce education to train manpower for the business sector is provided in commercial training institutes, which offer one-year certificate in commerce (C.Com) and two-year diploma in commerce (D.Com) programmes. Technical education is an independent stream started in the mid-1950s with the establishment of two polytechnic institutes in Karachi and Rawalpindi. Mono/polytechnic institutes and colleges of technology (including private sector institutes) offer three-year diploma programmes (associate engineer) in over twenty fields of specialization.

Schools are often upgraded to include higher grades. Middle schools (grades 1-8) are established by adding additional facilities to existing primary schools. They can be located in the same building or on a separate piece of land near a cluster of primary schools. The same is the case with secondary schools (grades 6-10) and higher secondary schools (HSSs, grades 6-12). Some secondary schools are upgraded to HSSs by adding classrooms, laboratories and teachers to cater to the needs of grades 11 and 12. Thus, such HSSs have middle, matriculation, and intermediate level classes. Although HSSs generally provide education for grades 11 and 12, separate intermediate colleges exist where only grades 11 and 12 are taught. Some degree colleges also have classes for grades 11 and 12. These colleges function under the college education section or higher education departments of the provincial governments. In these degree colleges, professors also teach students in grades 11 and 12. As a result, students prefer to attend grade 11 in a degree college. Their second choice would be an intermediate college and the least preferred is the higher secondary school. (UNESCO Bangkok, 2010).

The annual examination for promoting students to the next grade in elementary and middle schools is administered internally by the school. Question papers are created and marked by subject teachers. The principal along with subject teachers make the final decisions. Students appear in separate examinations for each subject they are studying, and promotion is granted to students who score at least 33% in each subject as well as in total. In the past, the year-end examination for grade 9 was conducted by the school, but now it is conducted by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education of the area which also administers the end-of-the-year examinations for grades 10 to 12. There is no special student assessment procedure for graduation from middle school except for the annual end-of-the-year school examination. To graduate from matriculation schools, students have to appear in written examinations for each subject. The Boards of Intermediate and Secondary

Education take charge of the administration. Question papers are comprised of: (a) 'subjective type (80%)', which consist of long and short essay questions; and (b) 'objective type (20%)', which consist of a number of multiple choice questions. In science and technical subjects, students are also assessed through oral/practical examinations which usually make up 25% of total marks for the subject. The minimum passing mark for graduation is 40% in both theory and practical portions of each subject. The examination is standardized across different schools within the same geographical territory. The respective Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education conducts the examination and does the certification. (*Ibid.*).

The major types of technical and vocational (TVE) institutions at the secondary level include: (a) vocational institutes under Provincial Education Departments; (b) commercial training institutes under the MOE and Provincial Education Departments; (c) training centres operating under various departments, for example, labour and manpower, social welfare, industries and agriculture; and (d) the MOE's new technical stream at upper secondary schools. In the latter programme, students are taught technical subjects such as woodwork, electricity, IT and metalwork in mainstream schools as elective subjects. After graduation, they are granted a matriculation certificate in technology, just as certificates in other subject areas such as science or arts are granted by their respective Boards. (*Ibid.*).

The scheme of studies for grades 9 and 10 (Secondary School Certificate–SSC examination) according to the three streams (humanities, science and technical stream) are shown below:

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 9, science stream

Subject	Marks			Number of Periods
	Theory	Practical	Total	
English –I	75	-	75	6
Urdu-I	75	-	75	6
Islamic education/Ethics	75	-	75	5
Physics-I	65	10	75	4+3
Mathematics-I	75	-	75	7
Chemistry-I	65	10	75	4+3
Biology-I/	65	10	75/	4+3/
Computer Science-I/	55	20	75/	4+3/
One technical subject	40	35	75	4+3
Total			525	45

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 9, humanities stream

Subject	Marks	Number of Periods
English –I	75	6
Urdu-I	75	6
Islamic education/Ethics	75	5
Mathematics-I	75	7
General Science-I	75	7
Two social science subjects or one social science subject and one technical subject (If one technical subject is opted, it will have the same weightage and number of periods as for science group)	150 (75 each)	14
Total	525	45

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 9, technical stream

Subject	Marks	Number of Periods
English –I	75	6
Urdu-I	75	6
Islamic education/Ethics	75	6
Mathematics-I	75	6
General Science-I	75	7
Two technical subjects (comprising of two theory papers of 40 marks each and practical of 35 marks each)	150 (75 each)	14 (3+4 each)
Total	525	45

List of social science subjects (grade 9)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Computer Science | 8. Elements of Home Economics |
| 2. Islamic Studies | 9. Food and Nutrition |
| 3. Islamic History | 10. English Literature |
| 4. Economics | 11. Arabic |
| 5. Education | 12. Art and Model Drawing |
| 6. Civics | 13. Geography |
| 7. Clothing & Textile | 14. Commercial Geography |

List of technical subjects (grade 9)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Electrical Wiring | 10. TV Servicing |
| 2. Wood Working & Furniture Making | 11. Servicing and Minor Repair of Tractor |
| 3. Welding (ARC & GAS) | 12. Computer Hardware(Orientation) |
| 4. Dress Making & Fashion Designing | 13. Beauticians |
| 5. Plumbing & Sanitary Fitting | 14. Radio & Tape Recorder Repairing |
| 6. Auto Mechanic (Motorcycle & Scooters) | 15. Food Processing and Preservation |
| 7. Repair & Maintenance of Domestic Refrigerator, Air Conditioner & Desert Cooler | 16. Motor Winding |
| 8. Fish Farming | |
| 9. Poultry Farming | |

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 10, science stream

Subject	Marks			Number of Periods
	Theory	Practical	Total	
English –II	75	-	75	6
Urdu-II	75	-	75	6
Pakistan Studies	75	-	75	5
Physics-II	65	10	75	4+3
Mathematics-II	75	-	75	7
Chemistry-II	65	10	75	4+3
Biology-II/ Computer Science-II/ One technical subject	65 55 40	10 20 35	75/ 75/ 75	4+3/ 4+3/ 4+3
Total			525	45

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 10, humanities stream

Subject	Marks	Number of Periods
English –II	75	6
Urdu-II	75	6
Pakistan Studies	75	5
Mathematics-II	75	7
General Science-II	75	7
Two social science subjects or one social science subject and one technical subject (if one technical subject is opted, it will have the same weightage and number of periods as for science group)	150 (75 each)	14
Total	525	45

Pakistan. Scheme of studies for SSC, grade 10, technical stream

Subject	Marks	Number of Periods
English –II	75	6
Urdu-II	75	6
Pakistan Studies	75	6
Mathematics-II	75	6
General Science-II	75	7
Two technical subjects (comprising of two theory papers of 35 marks each and practical of 40 marks each)	150 (75 each)	14 (3+4 each)
Total	525	45



List of social science subjects (grade 10)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Computer Science | 12. Management for Better Homes |
| 2. Islamic Studies | 13. Urdu Adab |
| 3. Islamic History | 14. English Literature |
| 4. Economics | 15. Arabic |
| 5. Education | 16. Persian |
| 6. Civics | 17. Art and Model Drawing |
| 7. Child Development and Family Living | 18. Physiology and Hygiene |
| 8. Clothing & Textile | 19. Geography |
| 9. Elements of Home Economics | 20. Commercial Geography |
| 10. Food and Nutrition | 21. Geometrical and Technical Drawing |
| 11. History of Indo-Pak Sub-continent
(History of Pakistan) | |

List of technical subjects (grade 10)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Electrical Wiring | 10. TV Servicing |
| 2. Wood Working & Furniture Making | 11. Servicing and Minor Repair of Tractor |
| 3. Welding (ARC & GAS) | 12. Computer Hardware(Orientation) |
| 4. Dress Making & Fashion Designing | 13. Repair & Maintenance of Household Appliances |
| 5. Plumbing & Sanitary Fitting | 14. Beauticians |
| 6. Auto Mechanic (Motorcycle & Scooters) | 15. Radio & Tape Recorder Repairing |
| 7. Repair & Maintenance of Domestic Refrigerator, Air Conditioner & Desert Cooler | 16. Food Processing and Preservation |
| 8. Fish Farming | 17. Motor Winding |
| 9. Poultry Farming | |

For 2008/09, MOE reports that there were 2,491,681 students (of whom 1.04 million girls) enrolled in higher secondary schools (public and private sectors), and an additional 1,017,376 students (of whom 461,824 girls) enrolled in grades 11-12 at colleges. There were 24,322 higher secondary schools (of which 14,266 in the private sector) with 380,068 teachers (of whom 211,027 were female teachers). Furthermore, there were 3,159 TVE institutions (of which 2,212 in the private sector) with 15,092 teachers and 264,712 students enrolled. (MOE-AEPM, 2009).

Assessing learning achievement nationwide

The first systematic attempt to assess learning achievement in primary schools on an on-going basis using the results in a well-planned manner was made by the Northwest Educational Assessment Programme (NEAP) of the NWFP Directorate of Primary Education. The main objective of the NEAP is to develop, collect and report on pupils' achievement in primary schools and to use the results to examine the quality and appropriateness of the curriculum, textbooks, and instructional methodology, with a view to remedying weaknesses identified. Grades 3 and 5 science, mathematics, and Urdu/Pashto tests have been administered to a representative sample of primary school pupils since 1992/93. The Programme provides feedback to supervisory staff on the quality of teaching and learning in the schools, and information from NEAP



has been used to prepare district-based, in-service teacher and supervisor training materials and programmes.

Recently, some national research studies based on standardized achievement tests, and a few case studies and surveys for monitoring learning achievement at the primary level have been conducted. A national study on monitoring learning achievement at grade 4 level has been conducted by the Academy of Educational Planning and Management in collaboration with UNESCO in 1999. The main objectives of the study were to measure the learning achievement of grade 4 pupils in the subjects of science, mathematics and Urdu language as per prescribed curriculum.

The study was based on standardized tests and instruments developed in consultation with the experts of all provinces/regions. The sample comprised a total of 2,794 pupils (1,411 boys and 1,383 girls) from 145 primary schools (75 for boys and 70 for girls) in twenty-eight districts, covering about 20% of the area of the country. Out of these pupils, 1,345 (or 48%) were in urban areas and the remaining 1,449 were in rural areas.

The best scores in the three subjects—science, mathematics and Urdu—were recorded in Sindh followed by Punjab and NWFP, while the lowest scores were found in the federal areas (Islamabad, FATA and FANA) and Balochistan. It is interesting to note that in all the provinces girls outscored boys in science, except in Punjab. It was also observed that in most cases urban girls outperformed their male counterparts in science, except in Sindh, and that in all the provinces girls outperformed boys in Urdu. In all the provinces with the exception of Punjab and Sindh, boys performed better than girls in mathematics. In general, pupils were found weak in the competencies/skills of writing and comprehension in languages, problem-solving and sums involving use of currency and conversion in the subject of mathematics, and life skills knowledge in the subjects of science/general knowledge. Pupils' performance was found better in rote reading, reading of Holy Quran, writing from dictation, general science and mental arithmetic, and especially in the cognitive areas which mostly involve rote memorization and mechanical reproduction. The performance in private schools was better than in public schools. Urban boys are the highest and rural girls the lowest achievers (MOE, 1999).

The Education Policy 1998-2010 and the Education Sector Reforms (ESR) Action Plan 2002-2006 recognize the fact that quality of education is an important factor contributing to national development. Monitoring students' learning achievement is, therefore, one of the key components to assess and improve the quality of education. (MOE, 2005).

The National Education Assessment System (NEAS) is one of the key programmes of the Ministry meant to improve the quality of education at elementary level (grades 1-8), with the following main objectives: to measure learning achievements of students in grades 4 and 8; to develop capacity in education assessment related activities; and to institutionalize sustainable monitoring system. NEAS is established by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with provinces, federally administrative areas and partner institutions to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. The Assessment Centers at the Provincial/Area levels have also been



established and the total nine Centers of NEAS network have become functional. (MOE, 2008).

The following national achievement testing has been carried out: grade 4 pupils' achievement in mathematics and Urdu (2005 and 2008); grade 4 pupils' achievement in mathematics, Urdu, science and social sciences (2006); grade 8 students' achievement in science and social studies (2007 and 2008). The Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS), under the Department of Education of the government of Punjab conducts research to explore students' learning achievement level and tries to identify factors influencing students' achievement. PEAS is partner and implementer of the NEAS.

Teaching staff

Teacher education has traditionally been considered a provincial subject. Each province has a distinct centralized organizational structure to prepare teachers for primary, middle and secondary school levels. The existing 270 teacher education institutions in the country are under the administrative and curricular control of the provincial Departments of Education. Primary school teachers are prepared at government colleges of elementary education (GCEE), which are supervised by the provincial Bureaus of Curriculum in Balochistan and Sindh. In NWFP the Directorate of Curriculum and Teacher Education is responsible for managing 20 regional institutes of teacher education providing pre-service preparation of primary school teachers. The provincial institutes of teacher education (PITE) were created in all the provinces to provide in-service continuous professional development of teachers and undertake action-research projects. In the Punjab since 2004 the Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) has established an apex body of teacher development to design and implement, with the active support of district departments of education, both pre-service and continuous professional development programmes for primary school teachers. The DSD has given administrative, financial and curricular authority over all 35 government colleges of teacher education (GCTE) in the province. The DSD is yet to fully engage GCTEs in developing standards-based four-year teacher education programmes. The bachelor's level programmes and postgraduate programmes in teacher education are the responsibility of university colleges and departments of education, institutes of education and research, and recently established universities of education. According to the National Education Census data in 2005 there were only 257,818 teachers with B.Ed degree and 67,143 teachers with M.Ed degree working as teachers or teacher educators (out of a total teaching force of 1.365 million teachers, from pre-primary to higher education). Most of the B.Ed and M.Ed degree holders had completed a bachelor's or a master's degree also. The typical bachelor's degree in 2005 used to be a two-year programme after twelve years of education. (MOE-PPW, 2009).

Each province has a centralized administrative system of teacher professional development (TPD). There are 270 TPD institutions in the country, 227 are publicly controlled by the provincial departments of education and the rest are operated by the private sector. Neither these TPD institutions nor their programmes have been subjected to serious scrutiny based on overt, objective professional standards or accreditation criteria. National professional standards are needed to foster greater inter-provincial linkages and overall standardization of teacher education, teacher



certification and accreditation of teacher education programmes and providers. There is general consensus that quality of teachers is abysmally low. Primary school certification programmes are relics of the 19th century normal school model. They neither provide general education necessary to foster effective communication skills, critical thinking and creative instructional leadership, nor promote in depth content knowledge. The pedagogical skills taught are also designed to foster rote learning, unquestioning acceptance of textual materials and passive preparation for the tests. The entry requirements for primary teaching certificate (grades 1-5 teacher; for grade 10 graduates) and certificate in teaching (grades 6-8 teacher; for grade 12 graduates) (PCT/CT), are not sufficient to prepare quality teachers. The proposed competency standards demand phased elimination of the existing teacher certification programmes and their replacement with a four-year undergraduate programme of teacher education in GCEEs, regional institutes of teacher education and university departments of teacher education. A national system of accreditation for all teacher education programmes based on the proposed standards needs to be implemented in all the provinces. This will standardize curricular content, critical pedagogical learning outcomes, performance skills and dispositions of teachers. A system of standardized testing for knowledge, skills and performance is needed before licensing begging teachers to enter the profession. A system of provincial licensing of teachers to teach at various levels of education with different disciplinary expertise needs to be instituted using national professional standards. (*Ibid.*).

TPD appears to be a subject primarily supported financially by donors, with provinces allocating, and that too only recently, meager funds towards this end from their own provincial resources. To date (2006), all teacher training programmes are operating without a viable policy framework. The government is aware of this vacuum yet it has not taken any concrete steps to implement a policy to bring all teaching programmes under a single umbrella. This has led teaching institutions to develop and implement teacher education programmes at their discretion leading to uneven and sometimes poor quality curriculum, teaching methods and practices. Hence, lack of standards and accreditation has led to varied and substandard training programmes. In 2005, the Higher Education Commission established the Rules for the Pakistan Accreditation Council for Teacher Education. It is unclear whether the Council has yet been officially established given that it was supposed to be formed within three months of the notification of the Rules. Nonetheless, the publication of the Rules is a step towards the right direction. The Rules state that all the existing teacher education degree and postgraduate diploma programmes shall be within the jurisdiction of the Council. Any new programme in teacher education shall also be referred to the Council for the grant of accreditation. In addition, the accreditation will be for specific degree programmes and not institutions. The numerous government teacher training institutions at the provincial levels have unclear mandates. An overlap between their roles and responsibilities also exists. There is no overarching body to regulate and guide these institutions particularly in terms of academic leadership within provincial departments of education. (UNESCO & USAID, 2006).

The current curricula being taught does not focus on nurturing a creative and learning environment involving questioning and problem solving. Subject matter is not regularly updated to keep pace with recent subject advances. There is no attempt to integrate subject knowledge with pedagogical skills. For most programmes, teacher trainees employ rote learning to pass the examinations. Not enough emphasis is given



to learning practical teaching skills; instead the emphasis remains on theory. Also, there is hardly any focus on making teachers efficient in improvising and creating low cost learning aids. Familiarity with use of modern information and communication technologies is also not given due importance. The various levels of teacher educators themselves are caught in the same cycle of poor teacher quality and delivery. They administer their classes in the traditional teaching style of lecture giving, dictation and notes. Trainers fail to cultivate any creative thinking, inquiry and problem solving among their trainees. Most of them are not aware of how to improve their own knowledge and skills or to bring themselves up to date with modern advances in teacher training. (*Ibid.*).

According to two independent research studies, the content knowledge of pre-service and in-service teachers in Pakistan is low. When teachers with or without pre-service training were tested on content knowledge, there was negligible difference between their performance. Approximately 75% of teachers are provided outdated and irrelevant training through the PTC or CT. Moreover, the Diploma in Education Programme introduced across Pakistan by the Technical Panel on Teacher Education to replace PTC/CT has not been evaluated due to lack of proactive planning and resource constraints, while the B.Ed and M.Ed extended duration courses were not even tested. As regards in-service programmes, courses are not designed according to the requirements of in-service teachers. No effort is made to modify and tailor the syllabus as per the requirements of the class/trainees. Subject knowledge is not integrated with teaching skills. Training programmes for various levels of teachers are not properly assessed and lack adequate materials and delivery aids. Training specialists and master trainers often themselves are not qualified, competent or motivated enough to make much difference in improving the knowledge and capabilities of the trainees. Promotion is currently based on seniority rather than performance. Low salaries characterize the profession. There is a dire need for recognition of performance. Moreover, no weightage is given to additional qualifications. There is a lack of a well-defined career structure for teacher educators; chronic shortage of specialist teacher educators; and most staff lacking experience of teaching in schools for which they prepare trainees (for instance secondary level subject specialists preparing primary teachers). (*Ibid.*).

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Web resources

Academy of Educational Planning and Management: <http://www.aepam.edu.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Federal Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education: <http://www.fbise.edu.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Federal Ministry of Education: <http://www.moe.gov.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Higher Education Commission: <http://www.hec.gov.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Inter-Board Committee of Chairmen: <http://www.ibcc.edu.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

National Education Assessment System: <http://www.neas.gov.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

Punjab Education Assessment System: <http://www.peas.gop.pk/> [In English. Last checked: July 2011.]

For updated links, consult the Web page of the International Bureau of Education of UNESCO: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/links.htm>