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AUTHOR Sharma, Motilal  
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ABSTRACT

In Pakistan female students and teachers have much less access to education, both geographically and academically, than their male counterparts. For rural areas this inequity is even more severe. In light of the national government's policy to universalize primary education, the most critical shortage in the education system is for properly trained teachers, especially rural female teachers for rural schools. The concept of the project proposed in this paper is based on a balanced, innovative, and optimal use of a multi-mode and open learning system aimed at motivating female students to enter the teaching profession, particularly females in rural areas. The project promotes open learning systems using a conventional teacher training system, distance education, non-formal education, and a mix of these systems depending on the situation and clientele needs. A list of roundtable participants is attached. (IAH)

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**REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION:  
A MULTI-MODE APPROACH**

**MOTILAL SHARMA  
SENIOR EDUCATION SPECIALIST  
ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK  
MANILA, PHILIPPINES**

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**REVITALIZING TEACHER EDUCATION:  
A MULTI-MODE APPROACH  
FOR QUALITY AND EQUITABLE ACCESS FOR FEMALE TEACHERS**

**MOTILA'. SHARMA**  
Senior Education Specialist  
Asian Development Bank

1. We have in our hands a great and powerful potential to make a difference in the education system of Pakistan. This potential is not in terms of vast sums of money, or more and more buildings, or facilities, or equipment. It is simply in terms of teachers. Teachers are the most crucial input to the whole learning process. And the function of teaching is the key critical process of learning. Yet examining the situation today and in the past, we find that teachers are also among the most neglected public servants in Pakistan society. Teachers are among the least motivated and trained professionals. Given their role therefore we should ask: has education failed Pakistan society? Or has society and its families failed education? The evidence indicates that it is society that has failed education. Its most telling weakness is in teacher education.

2. This question is relevant and important because as we span the next 9 years towards the 21st century, decisions about our future must be made now. These decisions must not begin with the conventional approach of designing and specifying physical targets. Our vision must start with a "people first" concept and the prioritization of the values that ensure the fullest development of people in an environment of peace. The main beneficiaries of such decisions must be the most destitute and deprived members of our society: the rural poor, particularly women and children. It is most painful to realize that the age-old problems of poverty, ignorance, malnutrition and disease continue to plague millions of rural families in developing countries. At the heart of this crisis is our inability to confront the issue of ignorance. It is ignorance that breeds poverty, disease, crime and runaway populations. The most potent weapon to fight this crisis is the education of people. Ignorance should be tackled with serious plans for action and not with empty rhetoric. Furthermore, strategies for human resource development need to have appropriate resource support : men, money technology, management.

3. Pakistan, the ninth most populous country in the world with a 1991 population of 113 million today, has a literacy rate of 31 per cent, the overall literacy rate for females being 11 per cent; but the corresponding percentage for females in rural Balochistan is only 2.2. The country's population expands at an annual rate higher than the annual increase in the literacy rate (less than one per

cent), employment rate (2 per cent), and only recently has been left behind by the primary school enrolment rate (6 per cent). While there has been physical expansion and enrolment growths in primary and secondary education, the proportion of female enrolment in primary and secondary education remains low. Furthermore, the quantitative expansion continues to favour males and urban sectors. In addition, the internal and inefficiencies are alarming, e.g. the dropout rate in primary education is over 50 per cent in NWFP and Balochistan, and for rural females, a staggering 79 per cent; out in the cities and countrywide are 53 million adult illiterates (10 years and above), and over 6 million out-of-school youth. The United Nations Development Program's "human development index" (HDI) for Pakistan was only 0.423, a low indicator of quality of life, compared to 0.789 for Sri Lanka and 0.996 for Japan.

4 Although past governments recognized the importance of education, investment in this sector has been one of the lowest in Asia. Inequalities in the distribution of educational services and financial constraints have hampered successful implementation of the Government's policies in the education sector. During the First to the Sixth Five Year Plans, the achievements averaged only 49 per cent of targeted enrollments and provision of schools. The ratio of the education budget to GNP and to the total government budget is, likewise, comparatively small. In addition, through 36 years, from the First to the Sixth Plan, the shortfall or gap between budgetary allocations for education versus actual expenditures amounted to a high 52 per cent. It is encouraging that the forthcoming 8th Plan (1993-98) and 1991 Education Policy give high priority to increased funding for education, and the stress on quality improvement. The Plan will address the currently low participation rate, shortage of female teachers in rural areas and lack of appropriate facilities, all of which keep enrolment rates in primary education, especially for girls in the rural areas, low.

5. As of 1991, there were 127,575 primary schools (with 218,300 teachers) in Pakistan, of which 99,000 or 76 per cent were for male, and 28,535 or 24 per cent for female. Out of 7,389 middle schools (with 70,200 teachers) for the same year, 5,056 or 68 per cent were for male and 2,333 or 32 per cent for female. A similar pattern occurs in high schools. In 1991 there were 6,215 secondary schools (with 114,000 teachers), of which 70 per cent were for male and 30 per cent for female. Also in 1991, there were 930 arts and sciences colleges (with 17,593 teachers), of which only 23 per cent were female colleges. Out of 99 professional colleges in 1991, there were only 8 for female. Finally, in 1991 there were 22 universities enrolling 77,400 students, of which 10,600 or 14 per cent were female students. These data indicate that inequalities within the education sector persist to a degree almost unprecedented in the region: the access, both geographically and academically, of female teachers and students remains dismally low; and the equity for rural areas is likewise severely low compared to urban areas. And if these trends persist up to the year 2000, as they have during the past 1.5 decades, the share of female schools and of female enrolment will continue to remain low in Pakistan. The status quo violates the rights due to women, especially the rural female population.

6. In the sector of education, if quality promotion is the main agenda of the draft Eight Plan and the 1992 Education Policy, then that quality must begin with teacher training. It is difficult to obtain accurate, updated, and detailed education statistics. To stop the repeated criticisms about statistics on teacher education, perhaps we can use the database of this study on Pakistan Teacher Training Project as a start for official statistics on this subsector. Certainly, there will be some revisions and corrections to be made. But let this be the baseline data and pick up from here. Be that as it may, a review of various reports (1987 World Bank Strategy Review, 1988 ADB Education Sector Study, 1988 ODA/British Council Teacher Survey, 1991 ADB Draft Master Plan for School Education, and the BRIDGES/Harvard University Report), tend to corroborate, in varying degrees, the conclusions made by various sources. The scenario suggests that approximately 173,900 additional teachers for primary schools, 82,800 teachers for middle schools, and 147,500 teachers for high schools will be required by 2000. This changes however in the light of the universalization of primary education, wherein the high-scenario indicates the need for 480,000 to 540,000 additional teachers for primary education. In addition, an estimated 29 to 40 per cent of the existing teacher force are untrained teachers. The overall capacity of the existing 131 teacher training institutions amounts to only 30,000 per annum.

7. The main issues in teacher education are: (i) low quality of teacher's instructional competence and subject knowledge, as well as lack of relevance of the 15-year old curriculum; (ii) internal inefficiency, such as lack of cost-effectiveness, inadequate management of teacher training institutions, and inability to optimize existing resources; (iii) limited teacher training opportunities for females, and lack of optimum use of distance education, technology and media to expand such opportunities; and (iv) severe underfinancing and inadequate incentives and motivation on the part of teachers to achieve high performance. The most critical shortage in the education system will be properly-trained teachers, especially rural female teachers for rural schools. In the name of expansion and growth, many shortcuts have had to be taken in recruiting and mobilizing teachers thus relaxing the professional requirements without paying serious attention to quality control. In addition, Pakistan's primary problem is the need to formulate realistic policies and plans with appropriate resource provisions.

Furthermore, it is essential that educational planners and policy-makers examine their commitment to conventional training and consider the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of multi-mode approach including increased use of media and technology. Lastly, an analysis of educational development trends in Asian countries indicate that while in theory and concept, Pakistan's education policy pronouncements and goals are in step with the rest of the world, in implementation capability and quality improvement, it is among the least advanced in the Third World.

8. With the massive expansion of education and government's commitment for universalization of primary education in the shortest possible time,

the need for trained teachers is likely to increase manifold during the next few years. The conventional system of teacher education itself needs improvement in order to meet the growing demand of trained teachers for quality education. Hence, there is an acute need to explore alternative modes of teacher education. Distance education (DE) is already serving the country to meet its requirement of trained teachers under the umbrella of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). However, no comprehensive and indepth evaluation of DE has been made to measure its comparative advantage or disadvantages against conventional training or even o. nonformal education (NFE). Needless to say, such an analysis cannot be done in a matter of 2 or 3 months, but should be properly designed and implemented over 1 to 2 years.

9. The conventional schooling system is unable to cope with the increasing demands for physical spaces in education. There is, therefore, a need for open learning systems and for a continuing stream of education, in which informal, formal, and non-formal education are not treated as rigidly-separated forms of education but as alternative delivery systems providing education services to various sectors of the population according to their needs and requirements. These systems can be differentiated from each other. For example, informal education is a life long process by means of which the individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge through day-to-day experience. On the other hand, formal education refers to the hierarchically structured and chronologically organized education system extending from primary school to the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, variety of specialized programs and full-time technical and vocational training institutions. Finally, non-formal education is considered to be any educational activity organized outside the established formal system - whether functionally separate or as a significant component of a broader activity - and designed to serve identifiable clientele and educational objectives.

10. The concept of the proposed Project is based on the balanced, innovative, and optimal use of multi-mode and open learning system, aimed at motivating female student-teachers to enter the teaching profession, particularly females in remote rural areas. It promotes "open learning systems" using (i) conventional teacher training system, (ii) distance education, (iii) non-formal education, and (iv) a mix of these systems depending on the situation and clientele needs. The concept likewise promotes adult education and lifelong learning to supplement traditinal pedagogy, which is the prevalent training strategy today. As you know, pedagogy is based on the teaching of children, and tends to create a climate of rote memory, total recall, oral drills, blackboard lectures, and one-way monologues where the teacher is the dominant personality.

There is no feedback or inter-active relationship that takes place under such a setting. On the other hand, the proposed Project suggests a three-pronged strategy: (i) optimization and consolidation of existing teacher training institutions, resources and capabilities, by directly assisting them in a package of quality inputs; (ii) building upon the gains and lessons learnt from foreign-aided education projects; and (iii) launching new initiatives that directly address the main issues in teacher education.

11. The objective of the proposed Project is to improve the quality and relevance, expand training opportunities or equity for female student teachers in rural areas, optimize the efficiency, and institute cost-effective and adequate resource generation for teacher education in Pakistan. It will do so by: (i) upgrading existing teacher training institutions through staff development, provision of library books, laboratory equipment and consumables, and instructional equipment; (ii) establishing a Technical Panel in Teacher Education to be integrated in the Curriculum Wing, Ministry of Education, so as to streamline policy-making, standards-setting, as well as monitoring and evaluation of the subsector; (iii) establishing a National Institute for Teacher Education (NITE), an apex center to ensure renewal of quality teacher-educators and administrators, exemplar research and development, promotion of networking of local institutions and linking up with international centers of teacher education; (iv) establishment of new Teachers' Resources Centre (TRCs) which will promote an "open learning system" that will use an appropriate mix of conventional training, distance education (in cooperation with Allama Iqbal Open University) and NFE, as well as a combination of such systems, supported by appropriate materials and guides, instructional technology and communication media; TRCs will also promote involvement of parents, students and communities, and the private sector and NGOs in teacher education; (v) establishment of Female Colleges of Elementary Teachers which will launch a series of curricular pilots and experiments to improve upon the existing pre-service programs, and to establish a career path for teachers based on merit and performance; as well as to facilitate collaboration and coordination among GCETs, GCEs, and IERs; (iv) setting up of "training outposts" in remote, far-flung areas to service female student-teachers, which shall offer NFE and home study courses using innovative field services and methods, such as use of mobile training vans, and where these are not feasible, use of animal caravans; and (v) strengthening curricular enrichment with instructional materials development, teaching methods improvement, and use of communication media and technology, such as working with Channel 2. The Project will also recommend policy dialogues and studies on how to increase incentives and rewards for teachers based on merit and performance.

12. One concrete example of these new initiatives, Mr. Chairman, is this Round Table Conference on Teacher Education. It provides a public forum in which the proposed concept and design of this Project can be subjected to public and professional scrutiny before it is finalized. It addresses itself directly to the concerns and aspiration of its beneficiaries, which is why representative teachers, students, parents, and local community leaders are here today - as well as national policy-makers, educationists of the highest calibre, program implementation managers, field administrators, teacher educators and staff of teacher training institutions, and representatives from the international donor agencies and local media. We shall seek your advise and guidance on how to cope with the issues identified, on what options or alternatives should be considered and why, and what decisions should be made to effect immediate and long-range improvements in teacher education in Pakistan.

13. This Round Table, in the light of changing trends in teacher education, could usefully examine among other issues: (i) use of multi-mode approach to teacher training to increase training opportunities in rural areas specially for female; (ii) increased use of distance education for upgrading in-service training of teachers; (iii) mobilizing institutional capabilities and expertise available in the country to rationalize teacher education; (iv) identification of alternative strategies to mobilize resources for teacher training; and (v) mechanism for realistic policy design and its effective implementation.

14. This Round Table, with so many eminent people and some of the best brains of the country should be in a sound position to answer the following major options:

- Is it not the teacher who exerts the maximum influence on the young minds and thinkers of the nation ?

- Can any country afford to ignore the education of women?

Should we not immediately utilize the various systems of imparting education, instead of persevering with the formal system only, which is unable to provide the much-needed wide access ?

- Distance education has already proved its efficacy in widely different contexts and situations, both in developed and developing countries. Should we still hesitate to use it here in even greater extent in the most remote rural areas?

- In today's industrialized world, almost everything has to be cost-effective. Should education also not be cost-effective?

- As Alvin Toffler once said: "... the future is not remotely distant. It is here, now. If we ignore it now, the world will not wait for us. It will move on at tremendous speed, leaving us not in the immediate past but far behind in history..." Can we take such a risk ?

15. Only through giving specific answers to these issues can we design a program towards our goal of revitalization of teacher education. It is therefore with genuine sincerity that I ask you to give serious consideration to the issues and questions that I have raised, in our endeavor to combat ignorance through teacher training programs that can lay a strong foundation to achieve the goal of quality education for all.



## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### Government of Pakistan

1. Dr. M.A. Bhatti, J.E.A. (F.I. Wing)  
Ministry of Education
2. Brig. Muhammad Saeed, Directorate of Army Education  
GHQ, Rawalpindi
3. Dr. Ghulan Farid Malik, Chief Education  
Planning Division
4. Mrs. N.H. Pirzada, Principal  
Islamabad College for Girls
5. Mr. Baqa Muhammad Qureshi, Director  
Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing  
Jamshoro
6. Prof. Muhammad Hanif Khan, Principal  
College of Education, Sukkur
7. Miss Zubaida Tufail, The Pakistan Times  
Rawalpindi
8. Miss Salma Zaman, The Daily Muslim  
Islamabad
9. Mrs. Sadiqa Salahuddin, Aga Khan Foundation  
Education Programme, Karachi
10. Miss R.A. Bhatti, Director  
Bureau of Curriculum Development and  
Education Services, NWFP
11. Mrs. Azra Ikram, Director  
Education Extension Centre, Lahore
12. Miss Qamarunissa Sherazi, Director  
Curriculum Research Dev. Center, Lahore
13. Mrs. Mumtaz Khokhar, Principal  
Elementary College of Education, Layari, Karachi
14. Mr. Zaffar Hussain Khan, Principal  
Jamia Millia Govt. College of Education  
Malir, Karachi
15. Mr. Ruhul Amin, Principal  
Islamia Collegiate School, University of Peshawar

16. Mr. Abdul Latif Mir, Chief Instructor  
Education Extension Centre, Abbottabad
17. Miss Roohi Kausar, Subject Specialist  
Govt. College for Elementary Teacher (Women)  
Township, Lahore
18. Mr. Abdul Hamid Baluch, Chief Instructor  
Regional Education Extension Centre  
Faisal Colony, Karachi
19. Mr. Abdul Qayyum, Allama Iqbal Open University  
Islamabad
20. Dr. M.A. Bokhari, Allama Iqbal Open University  
Islamabad
21. Dr. Muhammad Athar Khan, Allama Iqbal Open University  
Islamabad
22. Dr. R.A. Farooq  
Academy of Educational Planning and Management  
Islamabad
23. Mr. Muhammad Anwar, Director  
Bureau of Curriculum, Balochistan, Quetta
24. Mr. Muhammad Isa Khan  
Assistant Professor (Education)  
Government College of Education for Science  
Township, Lahore
25. Mr. Ramzan Gill, Subject Specialist  
Government College of Education for Science  
Township, Lahore
26. Dean, Institute of Education & Research  
Sindh University, Hyderabad
27. Miss Afrose Begum, Director General  
FGEI, Islamabad
28. Mr. Shah Jehan Khan  
Director, Primary Education, Peshawar
29. Mr. Muhammad Rafiq Jadcon  
Director of Education  
Secondary Education, Peshawar
30. Mr. Shahid Shamsi, Principal  
Islamabad College for Boys

31. Dr. Saeed Anwar, Director  
Institute of Education and Research  
Gomal University D.I. Khan
32. Mr. Tamkeen Ahmad Abbasi  
Director of Schools, Quetta
33. Deputy Director (Female)  
Education Department, Quetta
34. Raja Muhammad Ashraf  
Principal, F.G. Higher Secondary School No.1  
Islamabad
35. Mr. Moeed A. Farooqui, Additional Secretary  
Education Department, Sindh, Karachi
36. Dr. Muhammad Ijaz, Rtd. Chief Education  
Pakistan Education Foundation, Islamabad
37. Dr. Abudl Ghafoor, Secretary  
National Education Council, Islamabad
38. Rtd. Brig. Abdul Wasiq Ahmad Khan  
Secretary, Educators Club  
c/o Anglo Arabic Secondary School  
Satellite Town, Rawalpindi
39. Principal. College of Education, Multan
40. S.Ijaz Hussain Bokhari, Director  
Federal College of Education, Islamabad
41. Mrs. Sultana Baluch, Principal  
Govt. College of Elementary Education  
Quetta
42. Mrs. Munawar Malik, Associate Professor  
Institute of Education and Research  
University of the Punjab, Lahore
43. Dr. Tanveer Jehan, Associate Professor  
Department of Education  
Balochistan University, Quetta
44. Dr. M.H. Abbasi, Joint Educational Adviser  
Curriculum Wing
45. Mr. Abdur Rashi. Deputy Educational Adviser  
Curriculum Wing

Asian Development Bank

1. Mr. Motilal Sharma, Sr. Education Specialist

Consultants

1. Dr. Ernesto A. Franco
2. Mr. E. Dagot
3. Mrs. Humala Khalid
4. Dr. Shaukat Ali Siddiqui
5. Mian Riazul Haque