

# **Gaining Educational Equity through Promotion of Quality Education at Affordable Cost in Public Private Partnership**

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## **Gaining Educational Equity through Promotion of Quality Education at Affordable Cost in Public Private Partnership**

### **Executive Summary**

**Key Words: Education, Equity, Public-Private Partnership, Quality Education, Empowerment**

Education is an essential pre-requisite and basic building block for social capital formation. Pakistan is the sixth most populous country with 160 million people, 33% mired in abject poverty, living below the poverty line. The analysis of development issues trickles down to the dearth of human social capital. The overall literacy rate is 54% whereas it is 36% for females. Pakistan has 6.5 million children out of school and 80% of them have never been enrolled in schools. 77% of the enrolled children drop out while climbing the ladder and reaching X grade. The country currently has an enviable annual growth rate of almost 6%, but has the most unenviable profile of human development. Pakistan is at serious risk of not attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) targets by 2015. Keeping in view one of the lowest Human Development Index (HDI) indicators, there is an urgent need to have a system of affordable quality education, socially acceptable to all stakeholders. The policy makers are sanguine now that the conscientious, concerted and collaborative effort of all stakeholders is the only panacea.

Government alone will not be able to accomplish the gigantic task of attaining the goal of sustainable quality education and meet the targets of MDGs and EFA. Policy change is necessary to involve and facilitate Non-State Providers for extending access, equity and quality. There is greater sensitivity to facilitate private sector by financial, administrative and management empowerment and autonomous academic leadership through Public Private Partnership (PPP). The idea is to ensure trust-based synergy and synchronization culminating in a longeval win-win situation. The evidence has suggested that PPP is extremely successful. Efficient private sector leadership facilitated by public sector financing securely integrates and bleeds into an optimal level of service delivery, resulting in better learning outcomes, less drop-outs, ensured presence of teachers and no truancy.

The central thematic area explored in the paper involves how robust PPP models are in terms of affordability and sustainability. The paper elucidates on evidence-based research findings with multi-dimensional contents and contours. The findings are based on actual data and practices in operational theatrics in the context of PPP models in the largest province of Punjab under the auspices of Punjab Education Foundation (PEF). By now, there is irrefutable and convincing supporting empirical evidence that PPP carries very secure potential not only for long-term viability but also for sustainable quality education at affordable cost to the less-privileged and disenfranchised sections of society.

## **Gaining Educational Equity through Promotion of Quality Education at Affordable Cost in Public Private Partnership**

### **Introduction:**

It is almost a truism for all societies that education is the first and the best stepping stone for everything good in life. Pakistan like many other developing countries is facing myriad challenges for improving access, equity and quality of education. Education especially in developing countries lies at the heart of the dynamic that immensely influence the destiny of individuals and societies. Pakistan is a country where 33% of the population lives below the poverty line. The overall literacy rate is 48% whereas it is 36% for females<sup>2</sup>. Pakistan achieved an enviable annual growth rate of almost 6% but has the most unenviable profiles of human development. Education is the quintessential pre-requisite and basic building block for social capital formation in all societies. It is a quite valid truism for all communities that education is the first stepping stone for everything good in life. Keeping in view one of the lowest Human Development Indicators (HDI)<sup>3</sup>, there is an urgent need to have a system of affordable quality education, socially acceptable to all stakeholders. The policy makers are cognizant of the fact and know that facilitation through secure financial empowerment and autonomous leadership in PPP is the way forward. In Public Private Partnerships there exists a very close nexus between public and private sectors, both serving the goals and interests of education (Levin, 1999).

The paper highlights the empirical evidence on ‘Gaining Educational Equity through Promotion of Quality Education at Affordable Cost in Public Private Partnership’ in Pakistan. It has been demonstrated that Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models are extremely successful primarily due to the private sector providing efficient leadership of through public sector facilitated financing, which securely integrates and bleeds into optimal level of service delivery. The merry marriages of partnerships resulted into better learning outcomes, less drop-out, ensured presence of teachers and no truancy. In partnerships through transparency and trust, there is ensured an efficient allocative mechanism, Pareto optimal utilization of the allocated funds, financial, administrative and management empowerment and autonomous academic leadership. Through PPP, it has also been demonstrated that better quality education could be provided at a much lesser cost as compared to public sector schooling system.

The paper consists of four parts. In Part-1, empirical analysis has been carried out, in the light of the latest statistics published by National Education Census (NEC), 2006, Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education. Part-2 takes into account the challenges and issues in the context of educational and socio-economic milieu of Pakistan. Part-3 elaborates on and analyzes the pattern of the rapidly growing private schooling system in Pakistan and facilitation of the

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<sup>2</sup> Literacy Trends in Pakistan; Compiled from Population Census (1998) by UNESCO; Islamabad; 2003  
Literacy rate is estimated at 54% for 2004-05 (Economic Survey; Govt. of Pakistan)

<sup>3</sup> Pakistan is ranked at 127<sup>th</sup> position in the global Human Development Index (HDI). HDI is a global instrument to measure progress of countries in human resource development. Basic human indicators include population growth rate, life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, female literacy rate, enrolment ratio, infant mortality rate and GNP per capita etc.

private sector through secure financial, administrative and managerial empowerment and autonomous academic leadership through PPP. In Part-4, statistical analysis has been carried out for the Quality Assurance Tests (QAT) conducted by PEF<sup>4</sup> and elucidating on supporting empirical evidence. It has been established that PPP carries very secure potential not only for long-term viability but also for sustainable quality education at affordable cost to the less-privileged and disenfranchised sections of society translating into better learning outcomes of the students.

## Part-1

### Situation Analysis

While the focus of education policy in developing countries like Pakistan has largely been centred on increasing the resource base and the number of state-run schools, the role of private fee-charging schools in the education sector has not been appreciated by academics and policy-makers. The systematic data on private schools was not available and it was exceedingly difficult to estimate the exact share in enrolment in private sector schools in Pakistan. The Ministry of Education (MOE), Government of Pakistan has carried out the National Education Census (NEC, 2005).

The public sector education system in Pakistan displays gross inadequacies in terms of access and quality of education. There is a severe shortage of schools, especially in rural areas, where over 60% of the country's population resides (UNESCO, 2006). The tables below indicate the total number of educational institutions in Pakistan (Table 1), the number of institutions in public and private sector (Table 2), educational institutions by level and locations (Table 3), and educational institutions having basic missing facilities (Table 4).

**Table 1: Total Number of Educational Institutions Covered**

Area	Total	Public	Private
Pakistan	245,682	164,579 (67.0)	81,103 (33.0)
Punjab	115,311	66,770 (57.9)	48,541 (42.1)
Sindh	59,312	46,738 (78.8)	12,574 (21.2)
NWFP	40,706	29,430 (72.3)	11,276 (27.7)
Baluchistan	11,492	9,742 (84.8)	1,750 (15.2)
ICT	1,348	598 (44.4)	750 (55.6)
FATA	5,344	4,704 (88.0)	640 (12.0)
FANA	4,366	1,505 (34.5)	2,861 (65.5)
AJK	7,803	5,092 (65.3)	2,711 (34.7)

(Figures in the parenthesis are percentages)

**Source:** National Education Census 2005, Government of Pakistan (GOP), Ministry of Education, Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPM), Statistics Division Federal Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad

<sup>4</sup> PEF has been established under an Act of the Parliament as an autonomous organization for promotion of quality education in Public Private Partnership by actively involving Non-State Providers. The vision of PEF is to promote quality education through Public Private Partnership, encourage and support the efforts of private sector through technical and financial assistance, innovate and develop new instruments and enable private sector to champion the wider educational opportunities at affordable cost to the poor. [www.pef.edu.pk](http://www.pef.edu.pk)

**Table 2: Number of Educational Institutions by Sector**

Area	Total	Public	Private
Pakistan	227,791	151,744 (66.6)	76,047 (33.4)
Punjab	110,459	63,962 (57.9)	46,497 (42.1)
Sindh	51,006	39,141 (76.7)	11,865 (23.3)
NWFP	37,761	27,720 (73.4)	10,041 (26.6)
Baluchistan	10,986	9,433 (85.9)	1,553 (14.1)
ICT	1,189	566 (47.6)	623 (52.4)
FATA	5,145	4,583 (89.1)	562 (10.9)
FANA	3,977	1,435 (36.1)	2,542 (63.9)
AJK	7,268	4,904 (67.5)	2,364 (32.5)

(Figures in the parenthesis are percentages).

**Source:** National Education Census 2005, GOP, Ministry of Education, AEPM, Statistics Division Federal Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad

**Table 3: Number of Educational Institutions by Level and Location**

Level of Institutions	Total	Rural	Urban
Total	227,791	167,446 (73.5)	60,345 (26.5)
Pre-Primary	1,081	589 (54.5)	492 (45.5)
Mosque School	14,123	12,995 (92.0)	1,128 (8.0)
Primary	122,349	103,863 (84.9)	18,486 (15.1)
Middle	38,449	23,986 (62.4)	14,463 (37.6)
Secondary	25,090	11,971 (47.7)	13,119 (52.3)
British System	281	29 (10.3)	252 (89.7)
Inter and Degree College	1,882	470 (25.0)	1,412 (75.0)
General Universities	49	13 (26.5)	36 (73.5)
Technical/Professional	1,324	129 (9.7)	1,195 (90.3)
Vocational/Poly Technique	3,059	802 (26.2)	2,257 (73.8)
NFBE	4,831	3,726 (77.1)	1,105 (22.9)
Deeni Madaris	12,153	6,658 (54.8)	5,495 (45.2)
Others	3,120	2,215 (71.0)	905 (29.2)

(Figures in the parenthesis are percentage)

**Source:** National Education Census 2005, GOP, Ministry of Education, AEPM, Statistics Division Federal Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad

**Table 4: Number of Public Schools without Basic Facilities**

Area	Educational Institutions				
	Without Boundary Walls	Without Drinking Water	Without Electricity	Without Latrines	Without Building
Punjab	18,339	13,690	32,189	22,206	3,433
Sindh	14,838	11,586	22,149	12,842	001
NWFP	9,014	9,774	13,716	10,392	1,214
Baluchistan	5,447	5,621	6,950	6,137	585
ICT	51	32	20	39	-
FATA	1,275	2,013	2,045	2,079	292
FANA	748	1,085	1,033	738	36
AJK	3,769	2,965	3,531	2,783	215
Total	5,481	46,766	81,633	57,216	9,776
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>37.8</b>	<b>32.3</b>	<b>56.4</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>6.8</b>

**Source:** National Education Census 2005, GOP, Ministry of Education, AEPM, Statistics Division Federal Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad

40% of the public schools at primary, elementary and secondary level, under the auspices of the Government, lack basic facilities like drinking water, Adam's ale etc. There are 245,682 public schools in the country but 17% of these had no roofs, 39% were without drinking water, 62% were without electricity, 50% were without toilet facilities and 46% did not have boundary walls (NEC, 2006). The overall enrolment in the institutions is recorded as 33.380 million with a teaching staff of 1.357 million. In 151,744 public institutions the enrolment and teaching staff have been reported as 21.258 million and 0.724 million respectively, whereas the 76047 institutions in private sector have 12.121 million enrolment and 0.633 million teaching staff. (NEC, 2006).

The quality of service extended in public schools is extremely weak primarily due to governance, monitoring and management issues (i.e. political interference in posting and transfer of teachers), absenteeism among teachers; shortage of books, reading and teaching materials; numerous teacher unions and pressure groups, miserable teaching and learning environment, often with negative externalities. For the past five years, the percentage of the national budget allocated to education has not exceeded 2.8% of the GDP. More importantly, in several instances, even this meagre allocation has not been properly utilized due to a variety of institutional deficiencies and at times questionable institutional integrity of performance and service delivery mechanisms (Malik, 2005, 2006, 2007).

Public sector institutions predominantly (68.3%) follow Urdu as medium of instruction followed by 22.4% having Sindhi as medium of instruction and only 1.4% have English as medium of instruction. In the Private Sector 57.2% follow Urdu as medium of instruction and

28.4% institutions follow English (NEC, 2006). The expenditure in private sector institutions during 2004-05 is Rs.35.91 billion which is three times higher as compared to last census of Private Educational Institutions conducted in 2001 (Malik, 2006). The Public Sector Expenditure on education is about Rs.132 billion. The spending on education is higher than reported in the census because 9000 institutions have refused to provide the information on expenditure (NEC, 2006). The ratio of public and private schools in Pakistan is 164579 (67%) and 81103 (33%) and in Punjab it is 66770 (58%) and 48541 (42%) respectively. If the pattern continues, the expenditure on education in private sector will exceed the total expenditure in public sector in the next five years (Malik, 2006).

## Part-2

### Challenges and Issues

Provision of education is the constitutional responsibility of the state. The state has been partially successful in providing access but could not ensure quality. Dissatisfied with the quality of education with public sector school system, the parents opted for better opportunities for their children. Those who could afford opted for expensive elite school systems in the urban metropolis and those who were less affluent started looking for private educational institutions in urban and rural areas. The private educational institutions took a meteoric rise from early 80's and now constitute a formidable part of the educational system. As a consequence of perpetual deterioration of the public school system in the last two decades, two broad categories emerged in private school system: Elite School System (7% of the private sector) and Street School System (93% of the private sector) in the country (Malik, 2005).

The reasons for the low participation and high dropout rates can be attributed to both demand side and supply side factors. The demand side factors include low levels of household income, high opportunity costs of sending children to school, the distance of the school from home and low priority accorded to education by many households. The supply side factors are linked to the poor quality of education delivered through public schools (Najeeb, 2006).

Literacy rates exhibit a wide range across provinces, especially in rural areas and for females: from 74% for urban males in Punjab to 10% for rural females in Baluchistan. In other provinces, too, literacy rates are dismally low, with 19% and 14% among rural females in NWFP and Sindh provinces. Participation rates at the primary level; too, show wide variations across provinces. Gross participation varies from 100% among boys in urban NWFP to 37% among girls in rural Sindh (NEC, 2005).

Since the turn of the century the share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) allocated to education has not exceeded 2.8% in Pakistan. The bulk of this amount is spent as recurring expenditure and over 95% of which is disbursed in salary payments. Consequently, limited amounts remain for quality improvements or expansion services in public sector. Keeping in view the situation, promotion of education through Public Private Partnership is the only viable, workable, suave and transparent solution of the myriad educational issues (Malik, 2006).

## Part-3

### 3.1 Private Schooling System in Pakistan

Being cognizant of the persistent gross inadequacies in public sector institutions, even the less affluent households are voting with their feet and opting for private schools, despite their often minimal facilities. The parents view private schools as a measure of quality education. (Kardar, 2006). A 1996 survey of five districts in Punjab showed that nearly 50% households with monthly earnings of less than US\$ 70 were sending their children to private schools, 87% of which were charging a school fee of less than US\$ 2 per month<sup>5</sup>. The private sector is taking more prominent role, not only in the main urban centres but also in less affluent rural of rural districts (Kardar, 2006). Out of 245,682 educational institutions covered by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, 81,103 (33%) were to be found in the private sector. In other words, the government is rapidly moving towards its goal of shifting the load of education to the private sector (NEC, 2006).

The pattern of ownership of educational institutions that emerges from the National Education Census (NEC) is also somewhat worrying. The institutions in the private sector are not evenly spread out at all levels. The private sector has more schools at the secondary and middle levels (61%) than the government has. According to NEC (2006)<sup>6</sup>, the private sector operates more technical, vocational and professional institutions, such as polytechnics and monotronics (70%) than the government is running. In Punjab, there were 46,096 private educational institutions with only 40% in rural areas: 14,758 primary school; 12,250 middle schools and 5,940 secondary schools; 700 higher secondary and above institutions. The private sector accommodates 8.3 million children (39% of the enrolment). In the past two decades, the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) have displayed their immense capabilities and potential in several thematic areas such as education, health, family planning, legal and human rights, women empowerment, poverty reduction, humanitarian assistance and other socio-cultural and economic activities (Malik, 2006).

About two decades before NGOs and CBOs were few and operated in urban areas but over the passage of time and with support from government and international development partners, their number and jurisdictions have expanded. Many NGOs are now working in far

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<sup>5</sup> A Study demand for education among low and middle income households in Lahore and five districts in the Punjab, for the ODA by Systems (Pvt.) Ltd., 1996 and another study with the same title for households in Karachi for the World Bank in 1996 by Kardar (2006).

<sup>6</sup> The National Educational Census Pakistan (2006), Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Education, Academy of Educational Planning and Management, Statistics Division, Federal Bureau of Statistics (FBS), Islamabad.

flung and remote areas, tribal belts, mountainous regions and even in risk-averse conflict locations. Although several NGOs lack adequate financial and technical resources, there is little doubt in their abilities, potentialities and effective outreach to support the public sector in their attempts to provide free and compulsory education to the masses. This has been adequately demonstrated by them during the 2005 earthquake catastrophe in Pakistan.

There is not only a requirement for public-private partnership in education, but the private sector also has a competitive advantage and access to effective supplementary channels for the delivery of education. The commitments to achieve universal primary education and literacy targets enshrined in several key national and international documents reflect the urgency to meet this challenge – a challenge, crucial to the country's progress and sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **3.2. Empowerment and Leadership through Public-Private Partnership.**

Through organic initiatives of PEF, private sector educational institutions are being facilitated by financial, administrative and management empowerment and autonomous academic leadership through Public Private Partnership (PPP). Private, low-cost private schools providing socially acceptable quality education at affordable costs are ensuring access, equity and quality. After experiencing PPPs and better quality through better learning out-comes, there is greater sensitivity than ever before. Based on empirical evidence it has been proved that there are several benefits of financing of education through the public-private partnership (Malik, 2006):

- Sharing of resources, expertise and pooled wisdom through better coordination;
- Optimal use of available resources with a better allocative efficiency;
- Symmetrical information;
- Efficacious expression of transparency and accountability;
- Proactive engagement of the private sector for improving access and quality of education;
- Improved transparency through involvement of the local community in design and implementation of an intervention;
- Less radical alternative to privatization, which is often controversial and less desirable;
- Well-coordinated partners engaged in an enabling environment gain from each other's expertise and experience;
- Better appraisal, monitoring and evaluation and child centred approach.

The PPP organic initiatives were introduced by PEF opening a window of opportunity. Private sector towards has been provided enabling environment and conducive atmosphere to be a credible partner towards the educational development of Pakistan. Government of Pakistan is cognizant of the fact that quality service delivery is possible by private sector by ensuring financial, administrative and managerial empowerment and autonomous academic institutional leadership through trust based and quality assured PPP. It is almost a truism now that efficient leadership of private sector and financing and facilitating by public sector, securely integrates and bleeds into optimal level of service delivery resulting in better learning outcomes, less drop-outs, ensured presence of teachers and no truancy. The public-private partnership requires an arrangement and conduit which is mutually beneficial for all the parties and there is a win-win

longeal situation for all partners. Through synergy based PPP arrangements, the government benefits from the ownership and efficiency of private sector. The involvement of private sector helps in sharing state burden and also fulfilling constitutional responsibility by providing education to the masses. The resource deficient private sector benefits from a variety of financial assistance and technical inputs extended to it by PEF.

PPP is an efficient and time tested mechanism to encourage and promote market-based social entrepreneurship. The transparent service delivery mechanism could be effectively employed to promote quality education at affordable costs for the less privileged and marginalised sections of our societies. Affordable quality education is the only viable conduit to prevent the societal plague of educational apartheid in a polity and an emerging economy like Pakistan. To ensure the quality education, there has to be a nice mix of institutional and governance arrangements both in public and private sectors dovetailed with quality mentoring in an enabling teaching and learning environment with transparency and accountability in terms of assessments for objectively verifiable indicators in the shape of better learning outcomes of the students.

PEF has a pro-poor approach focusing on disenfranchised masses, ensuring quality education in partnerships. Providing every child with an opportunity to go to a *choice school* has not only expanded the set of the choices open to the poor but has also forced the policy makers of public schooling system to improve in order to be viable and socially acceptable. PEF has demonstrated that affordable quality education is possible through PPP which may help to ensure an egalitarian and integrated society. The financing models are competitive, economical and cost effective with an in-built mechanism of monitoring and evaluation.

PPP models have greatly stimulated investment by private sector in quality school education for the poor because of the greater empowerment in terms of financing and autonomous leadership. The replicable PEF experiences for quality assurance and promotion of quality education at affordable cost for less affluent sections of society in Pakistan are worth sharing.

### **Part-4**

#### **Foundation Assisted Schools (FAS) – FAS Program – A Model of Institutional Empowerment and Leadership.**

Affordable quality education is a dire felt need of the less affluent and those at the edge of society. The Foundation has demonstrated that quality education at primary, elementary and secondary level is possible at a much lower cost as compared to other school systems. Foundation Assisted Schools (FAS) is an initiative of PEF in a quest to achieve the goal of quality education. FAS<sup>7</sup> have been primarily successful because of empowerment and leadership

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<sup>7</sup> During the 2005-2008, 1157 schools in eighteen districts of Punjab invested heavily in physical infrastructure of the academic institutions. They also engaged qualified teachers for their schools by offering higher competitive salaries according to the local market salaries. In four schools, the school leaderships were replaced where results of at least 40% agreed in the terms and conditions of partnership with PEF were not delivered.

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of the private educational institutions. It is almost a truism now that efficient leadership of private sector and financing and facilitating by public sector, securely integrated into optimal level of service delivery resulting in better learning outcomes, less drop-outs, ensured presence of teachers and no truancy

The Foundation Assisted Schools (FAS) scheme is the flagship program of the PEF to encourage and promote access to, and improve the quality of education by providing financial assistance at the rate of Rs.300 per child per month to private schools on a per- enrolled child basis. Through this intervention, the PEF has tried to demonstrate:

- a) Whereas it is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that all school going children should get free education and the state should fund it, it should not necessarily provide the service i.e. there is a need to separate the financing of the service from its provision; and
- b) That through public private partnerships better quality education can be provided at a cost significantly less than incurred by the Government of Punjab to educate a child in the public schooling system.

The financial assistance on per child enrolled basis through FAS model is driven by considerations of equity, quality and access to all.

The target schools under the programme are those charging Rs.300 per month or less than this amount as tuition fees. The fee being paid is subject to change and review on an annual basis and it is linked with the official rate of inflation in the country. The partner schools cannot charge anything additional from the students after entering into partnership under FAS. All the parents are informed about FAS program by PEF. The parents are sensitized about free quality education by PEF to their children. There is symmetrical information to the parents that payment of fee and free text books are being provided by PEF. The enrolment in these educational institutions is checked and verified through surprise visits by the monitoring and evaluation teams of PEF. The selection of the schools is made in a transparent manner in local and national dailies. Apart from criteria like school location (rural, urban slums), availability of physical infrastructure to accommodate the children, delivery of quality education is the most important variable for accessing PEF financial assistance. The twice yearly Quality Assurance Test (QAT) is the chief determinant for the continuation of the partnership with PEF. The financial assistance to the recipient institution is contingent upon the school conforming to the quality standards set by the PEF. For continuation of this partnership, it is mandatory for 2/3<sup>rd</sup> students of the partner school scoring at least 40% marks in the QAT. So far, four QAT have been conducted and the results show a steady improvement in the results of schools. Presently, 1157 educational institutions (with 500,000 Students) are being supported by the PEF under this program which currently focuses on seven districts in the province, which have the lowest literacy rates and the highest proportion of Out of School Children in the province. For these districts, the entry test criteria have been relaxed to two third children securing only 33% pass marks in the entry test. The PEF is considering raising the bar in terms of the scores that two thirds of the children must achieve in the QAT after two years of partnership to remain eligible for funding. The PEF has also introduced incentives to enhance the competition among schools to improve their performance. The highest performing school in the district is given a cash reward of Rs.50,000

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while five teachers in all schools in which 90% or more students score at least 40% marks in the administered QAT are given Rs.10,000 each.

It is not possible to raise the standard of education without qualified, satisfied and competent teachers. The development of a human didactic resource base is a gradual and consistent process. To ensure the quality education, there has to be a nice mix of institutional and governance arrangements both in public and private sectors dovetailed with quality mentoring in an enabling teaching-learning environment with impeccable integrity and transparency in terms of assessment with objectively verifiable indicators. There is an expressed realization amongst all the stakeholders and policy makers that quality education will be a remote possibility in practical theatrics sans enhancing the core content knowledge and pedagogical skills of the teachers. Quality education is assured primarily because of quality mentoring, quality curriculum, resilient management, conducive, congenial and enabling teaching-learning environment, good governance, transparent processes, rigorous and candid monitoring and evaluation, evaluative scrutiny and integration of the lessons learnt into the system for continuous improvement. For quality mentoring of students in FAS schools, reflective, reflexive and experiential practitioners are required, aiming at better quality learning outcomes. The quality mentoring at primary level is of immense significance because the majority of the students and teachers are concentrated at primary level where maximum creativity, innovation and reflective thinking is required. The most effective intervention could be made at primary level since the synoptic connections, cognitive development and mental wiring of the students is at the formative stage (Malik, 2004). At elementary and secondary level of mentoring under CPDP, the main focus and major thrust is on core content subject knowledge and pedagogical skills.

To ensure quality education in FAS and non-partner private schools Continuous professional Development Program (CPDP) has been introduced as a compliment to FAS. Through CPDP the dissemination is need-based and convenient, right in the environments where teachers are working. For female teachers, CPDP is again the only window of opportunity keeping in view the prevalent socio-cultural milieu of Pakistani society where it is exceedingly difficult for females to move away from their homes for their professional development. The processes in CPDP involve a thorough consultation with all the stakeholders in the cluster. This helps to design the syllabus of the sessions keeping in view the findings of Training Need Assessment (TNA). A six-day intensive workshop is designed after TNA for a cluster, in a consortium of 8-10 schools. As a result of financial and administrative empowerment and autonomous academic leadership at the school level through Public Private Partnership (PPP), the following statistically significant landmarks have been achieved:

- PEF and economically empowered private sector is providing quality education to 500,000 students in 1157 schools to the less privileged and disenfranchised sections of society. The best performing schools have better educational leadership.
- During a period of three years (2005-2008), the mean average of students in terms of learning outcomes in FAS partner schools was raised from 63 % to 77 % and 79%.
- The parents have been relieved from payment of fee with increase in disposable income.

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- The private school leadership has been relieved from financial hardships. The schools exclusively concentrate on quality education and are relieved from collection of fee from poor parents, which used to get delayed for months and in case of drop-out of the child, the schools were often deprived of fee amount.
- The private sector schools have invested heavily in physical infrastructure to accommodate more students, thus enhancing their revenues because in FAS model money follows the child and not the school.
- In order to enhance quality standards, the private schools hired better and more qualified teachers in addition to the existing faculty; the former impacting not only the learning outcomes of the students but also the peers and associates in that particular institution. The salaries of teachers before introduction of FAS model were Rs.2500 approximately, now enhanced to Rs. 5000.
- In Pakistan, more than 40% of students dropout of school by the time they reach grade IV and 77% dropout by the time they reach grade X. but in FAS partnership model, there has been zero dropout.
- Through the reward mechanism by the PEF and better salary structure the teachers are motivated, enthused and in high spirits engaged in teaching with stoic determination.
- The best performing schools have complete administrative, managerial and financial empowerment with impeccable academic leadership and situation deteriorated in the absence of these accoutrements.
- The best performing schools are empowered to engage the qualified teaching staff in English, Mathematics and Sciences and the less performing have the situation otherwise.
- The results of 200 schools in the band of 80%-90% have been analysed. They have qualified Mathematics and Science teachers.
- The schools falling below the threshold of 40% have another important nexus. None of the teachers of these schools has been imparted pre-service training. .
- The girls performed very well in the QATs and excelled over boys.
- The high performing schools have a very high concentration of post-graduate teachers. More than 95% of teachers in these educational institutions are either graduates or post-graduates.
- There has been 47% increase in enrolment in these schools. Due to free quality education the children going to other schools both in public and private sector, opting for these institutions.

### **Conclusion**

Gaining educational equity through promotion of quality education at affordable cost in PPP is possible through empowerment and leadership. The PPP model of quality education is cost-effective and efficacious in terms of service delivery. PPP ensures value for money. PEF has demonstrated that quality education at primary, elementary and secondary level is possible at a much lesser cost as compared to other school systems. Private sector is capable of providing quality education ensuring access, equity and quality. The financial and administrative

empowerment and autonomous academic leadership through PPP is sine-quo-non for involvement of all stakeholders for promotion of quality education. It squarely ensures an effective outreach, devolution of functions, decentralization and socially acceptable service delivery. PPP in education creates mutual trust and a sense of ownership. The PPP model ensures longevity and sustainability of human development programs. Through the PPP model, the target of quality education is achieved through synergy, synchronization, shared knowledge, shared vision, shared common perceptions and shared accumulated wealth of expertise. In Public Private Partnership, it is easier to ensure allocative efficiency and optimality in the utilisation of resources in an effective, suave and transparent manner. PEF has demonstrated that affordable quality education is possible through PPP. The financing models are competitive with an in-built mechanism of monitoring and evaluation. There is very strong statistical evidence on account of improvement in learning outcomes of the students in PPP resulting in a longeval win-win situation. The competitive advantage of the private educational institutions catering for less affluent sections of society are mainly in terms of financing and conducive environment with less bureaucratic and regulatory controls. The private educational institutions welcome the regulatory frameworks of the state but the intervention should aim at regulatory facilitations instead of creating conundrums and rigmaroles commonly known as red-tappism. The PEF models of financing and facilitation in PPP to the private educational institutions, on the basis of per child enrolled has demonstrated that it is the safest mechanism of investment in the human development, in terms of transparency and sustenance.

**Acronyms & Abbreviations**

**AEPM:** Academy for Educational Planning & Management  
**AJK:** Azad Jammu Kashmir  
**AKDN:** Aga Khan Development Network  
**BOD:** Board of Directors  
**CBO:** Community Based Organizations  
**EC:** European Commission  
**EVS:** Education Voucher Scheme  
**FANA:** Federally Administered Northern Areas  
**FAS:** Foundation Assisted Schools  
**FATA:** Federally Administered Tribal Areas  
**FBS:** Federal Bureau of Statistics  
**GDP:** Gross Domestic Product  
**GNP:** Gross National Product  
**GOP:** Government of Pakistan  
**HDI:** Human Development Indicators  
**ICT:** Islamabad Capital Territory  
**MOE:** Ministry of Education  
**NEC:** National Education Census  
**NGO:** Non Governmental Organizations  
**NPEP:** Northern Pakistan Education Project  
**NWFP:** North Western Frontier Province  
**PEF:** Punjab Education Foundation  
**PPP:** Public Private Partnership  
**QAT:** Quality Assurance Tests  
**TICSS:** Teaching in Clusters by Subject Specialists  
**UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations

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