



EDUCATION

Development News

Annual Issue, 2019-2020

Annual newsletter | Department of Development Studies



Table of Contents

Note from the Editor	3
Notes from the Co-Editor & Graphic Designer	4
Faculty Profiles	5
Research Groups	7
Student Achievements.....	9
Guest Lectures & Seminars	10
Faculty Updates Articles	12
“Human Capital: Why is it important?” <i>by Dr. Ashfaque H. Khan, Dean S3H</i>	14
“Politics molesting education will do no benefit!” <i>by Iman Tariq</i>	19
“Education and Social Mobility” <i>by Muhammad Usman</i>	20
“Interview: Saeeda Baji” <i>by Symrun Razaque</i>	22
“Covid-19: A silver lining in a dark cloud” <i>by Zara Naveed</i>	25
“Social Aims of Education” <i>by Osama Ijaz</i>	27
“Expanding Literacy” <i>by Nuha Saad</i>	29
“Book Review: Educated, Tara Westover” <i>by Maheen Zahra</i>	31
“South-South Cooperation & Chinese Foreign Aid, Meibo Huang, Xiuli Xu and Xiaojing Mao” <i>by Khadija Javed, Zara Naveed, Dr. Umer Khayyam</i>	32
Our Alumni Community	35



*Take two minutes to answer this question:
What does education mean to you?*

Note from Editor

Maheen Zahra | maheen@s3h.nust.edu.pk

Education comes from the Latin noun *educatio*. Etymologically, it indicates the process of leading or bringing up (Dewey, 1916). To John Dewey, an education is necessary for the continuation of society. In *Education and Democracy*, Dewey (1916) explains how education ensures this continuity:

“Every one of the constituent elements of a social group, in a modern city as in a savage tribe, is born immature, helpless, without language, beliefs, ideas, or social standards. Each individual, each unit who is the carrier of the life-experience of his group, in time passes away. Yet the life of the group goes on.” (p. 2)

Education helps preserve the memory of the groups gone by. At the same time, it allows for progress, by way of learning, critical thought, and innovation.

As I write this note, a question comes up. What does education mean to me? Two moments frame my view. One is *The Runaway Pancake*, my first book after I learned how to read. The joy of words telling a story was not lost on me, as I am told I read this book at least two hundred times. The second moment relates to my graduate studies, where the constant why? forced upon me by my advisors meant that I became

acutely aware of each thought, each decision, and eventually, more cognizant of the context of things around me.

Education is a privilege. At present, about 22.8 million children in Pakistan are out of school. This means that 22.8 million children will not experience the joy of reading stories. This means that in twenty years, 22.8 million adults will have little opportunity, let alone social mobility. This means that 22.8 million children’s imagination and ability to think critically will have been stifled. Furthermore, in the midst of a pandemic, a number of schoolchildren are excluded from distant learning measures simply because they don’t have access to the necessary infrastructure required for these modes of education. This exclusion is a disaster.

Take two minutes to answer this question: What does education mean to you?

I hope you will enjoy reading through the articles in this edition of *Development News*. You will find perspectives from our student body, inspiration from books, and we hope, determination to continue seeking and sharing knowledge. I would also like to thank my team for their commitment, ideas, and hardwork: Nuha Saad (co-editor) and Mehrbano Mahsud (graphic designer).



Nuha Saad | Co-Editor

I have always had a loving relationship with words. It started with me reading them excessively, and then deciding I wanted to be a writer. As I went off to university, I realized that although writing was cathartic, there was a rush that came with editing and ensuring that a statement is punctuated just right so it can hit its mark, or rewording a sentence so it flows like magic. Because that is what words are: magic. Even more so when they are strung into

meaningful sentences; the meaning of each word adding onto the meaning of the others, the meanings almost melting together but only in a specific order. So when I saw this opportunity, I knew I had to reach for it.

Having a part in bringing this newsletter into existence has been a privilege in itself, but being able to read, write, comprehend, and edit, is actually just a testament to the greater, underlying privileges; education and literacy. These are privileges everyone reading this newsletter has. I would like to ask you to be acutely aware of this as you read this newsletter. I want you to read each article with a critical lens, and also hold your own opinions up to the light. What are your perceptions of what education is and what education means in the Pakistani concept? What are your perceptions of what it should be? What can education, or literacy, do for an individual, his or her family and descendents, and society in general? Our writers have attempted to answer some of these questions over the next few spreads. We hope your journey with this newsletter will be cover to cover, and full of insights.

Notes from **Co-Editor & Graphic Designer**



Mehrbano Mahsud | Graphic Designer

For me, education is more about exploring where I can be more flexible, independent and take risks. Education with a blend of creativity has taught me to critically think and develop my own style of analysis. Likewise, it has enhanced my creative skills and visual understanding of

how to produce an appealing piece of writing, both, written and visually.

A special thanks to **Mr. Ibrahim Khan**, student of MSDS 2019, for providing with the photographs.

Dr. Umer Khayyam is an HEC-approved PhD supervisor and has vast experience in the field of Development Studies, which includes theory, policy, and practice along with a major focus on climate change. Dr. Umer Khayyam did his PhD from the University of Münster, Germany. Prior to this, he did his MS in Management of Non-Profit Organizations from Osnabrück, Germany, and MSc in Development Studies from COMSATS University, Abbottabad Campus. He has working experience of over four years with PERRA, Mercy Corps International and UNCCD. Dr. Umer Khayyam is currently working as the Head of Department for Development Studies, NUST. The entire faculty and student body is honored to have him as the Head of Department.



Dr. Umer Khayyam
(Chief Editor, Development News)
Head of Department | HEC-Approved Supervisor

Faculty Profiles



Our faculty at the Department of Development Studies strongly believes in interdisciplinary approaches to solve development-related issues. The courses offered in the MS Development Studies programme benefit from this commitment.



Mrs. Fariha Tahir | Lecturer

Mrs. Fariha Tahir is a development practitioner in the field of social development, since 1996. She is an academic, consultant, and since 2010, an honorary CEO of an NGO named Rehmat Ali Community Development Organization. She is currently working as a lecturer at the Department of Development Studies, NUST. She holds vast experience of working as a project consultant on different community-based projects funded by local, national, and international donor organizations. Her research endeavours and work experience also includes rural multidimensional poverty alleviation through skills enhancement and gender empowerment. Mrs. Fariha's research interests include non-traditional security issues. She is working on a research executing a critical evaluation of fundamental rights that are guaranteed by the 1973 constitution.



Mrs. Sheeba Farooq | Lecturer

Mrs. Sheeba Farooq is a development practitioner with over ten years of work experience in the development sector and academia. She has a vast experience of working as a Research Officer at a think tank named Centre for Policy Studies, where she drafted policy briefs on social development with a focus on the centre's thematic areas such as food security, water governance, and sustainable development to create better awareness. Her work at Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund included the initiation of Livelihood Enhancement project for creating income generation opportunities for the poor and marginalized communities of Punjab. She also conducted needs assessment exercises with the beneficiaries ensuring social inclusion and organized Skill Development trainings. She is currently working as a lecturer at the Department of Development Studies, NUST.



At the Department of Development Studies, we strive for academic work that reflects contemporary development issues. Students' theses - on topics ranging from inclusivity in education, to the impact of renewable energy initiatives in rural areas - serve as testaments to our aim to produce practical research.

Ms. Maheen Zahra specializes in Comparative Education Policy, Poverty and Inequality, as well as Social Policy. She completed her MSc in Comparative Social Policy at St. Antony's College, University of Oxford. Prior to that, she graduated with a BA in Social Research and Public Policy, and a concentration in English Literature from New York University. As part of her undergraduate program, Maheen has studied in Florence, London, New York, Istanbul, and other locations. Maheen's research interests include development policy, education, poverty and inequality. In her spare time, she enjoys reading books on culture, history, and welfare. She is currently working as a lecturer at the Department of Development Studies, NUST.



Ms. Maheen Zahra | Lecturer

Climate Change and Development:

Climate Change and Development (research group) is set-up to address contemporary challenges in the development sector, importantly from climate change prospective. As, development and environment interact in powerful ways, a series of research projects are underway by individual researchers at the department to investigate national and transnational development challenges to development e.g., disasters, forced migration and diasporas; socio-economic and politico-cultural dynamics, elite capture (process & resources), mitigating strategies and poverty aspects. Furthermore, investigating intensively the main causes of environmental degradation, and climate change threats to humans, economy and environment itself, similarly the adoptive techniques to the environmental problems (resilience and conservation).

CCD Research Group has an interdisciplinary team. Members of the group are:

Dr. Umer Khayyam (PhD Muenster, Germany)

Ms. Maheen Zahra (MPhil, University of Oxford, UK)

Research Groups

Department of Development Studies
S3H | NUST

Peace, Conflict, and Development

Security is a basic human need. The state provides a peaceful society, and an environment free from internal and external threats. In this endeavour, NUST takes it as a challenge to produce such quality graduates with the aim and concern to propose and facilitate state institutions, as academicians, researchers, analysts and development practitioners. As well, maximum strengthening of the social contract between the local masses and the state. Moreover, through their intellectual input, NUST

Social Work and Community Development:

Social Work and Community Development (SWCD) research group covering a wide range of topics, reviewing significant developments and providing a forum for cutting-edge debates about theory and practice. This unique research group aimed at students, and researchers with an interest in Disaster preparedness (Local institutions and Schools), Vulnerability and Resilience, Mitigation, Social Adaptation, Civil Society and NGOs, Public Health in Emergencies, Effectiveness and Impacts analysis of the International Development Assistance, Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), Culture and Public Management, Rural Left Behind Population and Rural Education, Emergency Food Security and Livelihoods (EFSL), Development Interventions, and Agrarian Change. Furthermore social transformation in Social Policy Pertaining to Poverty, Inequality, and Social Inclusion/Exclusion. The SWCD also focus on Participatory Development, Power and Social control, Women Empowerment, Social Mobilization, Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation, Inclusive Growth and Social Investment, Integration of Social and Economic Policies, Poverty and Inequality, Equal Distribution of Wealth.

SWCD has an interdisciplinary team with multidimensional professional experience. The lead member of SWCD group is:

Mrs. Sheeba Farooq (MSc University of Reading, U.K)

graduates ensure economic, environmental and political security. Our graduates are fully mindful and attentive to the complexities of social, economic, and political development in the Pakistani context, and the development challenges of the new global security paradigm where internal and external dimensions of security are important, simultaneously.

The lead member of the PCD research group is:
Mrs. Fariha Tahir (MS Middlesex University)



**Guest
Lectures
&
Seminars**

National Cohesion & Youth Engagement

“SUB KA PAKISTAN”

30th - 31st December, 2019, Islamabad

Special Committee on National Cohesion

Ministry of



Student Achievements

Saba Laraib | MSDS 2019

Saba Laraib, a student of MSDS-2k19, attended a five-day training workshop on the topic of “Water Resource Management in Pakistan - Issues and Way Forward” from December 2nd to December 6th, 2019, at National Centre for Rural Development.

Saba was also a part of the team of course-content writers of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) working for the development of course material for B.Ed (4 years) program. Under the project, she successfully published a unit in the coursebook, Evolution of Muslim Civilizations in the sub-continent (code: 6488). In 2020, the book is finally ready to be included in the course used for the B.Ed program in AIOU.

The unit is a brief explanation of the expansion of Muslim rule in the Indian sub-continent, enabling the students to critically examine the development of Muslim political power in this region through the pages of history.

Sardar Khizar Riaz, MSDS 2018:

Sardar Khizar Riaz, student of MSDS-18 participated in two day workshop “SAB KA PAKISTAN” organized by Hum Pakistan under the patronage of Senate Special Committee on National Cohesion on the 30th and 31st of December, 2019. This is part of the series to engage youth from all Pakistan to become the "Youth Ambassadors of Pakistan" and create a youth movement in all provinces to promote positivity, and ownership of Pakistan.

Ossama Ijaz, MSDS 2k18

Ossama Ijaz interned at NIPS, NUST during the summer of 2019. As part of the internship, Ossama attended a seminar organized by NIPS, titled "Pakistan's Economic Insight: The Way Forward" held in NUST on 23 July 2019. The President of Pakistan graced the occasion as chief guest. The seminar was about discussing Pakistan's current economic conditions, trade relations with India and solutions by renowned economic experts to uplift Pakistan's economic status.

Mr. Salman Nasir, delivering a guest lecture to the batch of MSDS-2019 on the topic 'Approaching social change in a digital world'.



Guest Lectures & Seminar by Jinnah Institute

Miss. Afshan Hanif (Assistant Professor) and her students from the department of government and public policy presented a skit and a guest lecture on the topic "Gender and Communication skills".



A seminar on 'Democracy and Inclusion' by the Jinnah Institute at Serena Hotels Islamabad on 3rd, March, 2020 was attended by the students of MSDS-2K19.



Batches of 2016 & 2017

The Department is very happy to report that a majority of the students from MSDS 2k16 and MSDS 2k17 successfully defended their theses in 2019. We wish them the best in their future endeavours.



Faculty Updates

Recent and forthcoming publications:

Dr. Umer Khayyam

Conference Publications (Abstract only):

1. Khayyam U., Amir S. M., (2020). Post-Development Theory and the Question of Societal Matrix in the Rural Development Debate. National Conference on Qualitative Psychology (NCQP2020). Department of Behavioural Sciences, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, S3H, NUST, Islamabad, Pakistan. March 5, 2020.

2. Rayan M., Gruehn D., Khayyam U., (2020). Green Infrastructure Planning: A Strategy to Safeguard Urban Settlements in Pakistan. Dortmund Conference 2020: Rethinking Spaces Planning in a Changing World. Technical University of Dortmund, Germany. February 17-18, 2020.

Publications in Impact Factor Journals:

1. Munir, R. and Khayyam U. (2020). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and the Impacts of Coal-based Energy Projects on Tropospheric Ozone in Pakistan. Polish Journal of Environmental Studies. DOI: 10.15244/pjoes/112895. [IF:1.186]

2. Khayyam U., Noureen S. (2020). Assessing the Adverse Effects of Flooding for the Livelihood of Poor's and the Level of External Response: A case study of Hazara division, Pakistan. Environmental Science and Pollution Research. DOI: 10.1007/s11356-020-08303-4. [IF:2.914]

3. Amir, S. M., Liu, Y., Shah, A. A., Khayyam, U., & Mahmood, Z. (2020). Empirical study on influencing factors of biogas technology adoption in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Energy & Environment, 31(2), 308-329. DOI: 0958305X19865536. [IF:1.092]

4. Bano, R. and Khayyam U. (2020). Effects of Increasing Soil Fluoride on the Growth of Vegetation in the Vicinity of Brick Kilns: A Case Study of Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Polish Journal of Environmental Studies, Vol. 29:2, 1535-1544. doi:10.15244/pjoes/101610. [IF:1.186]

5. Khayyam, U., and Tahir F. (2019). Female as Political Power and the Complexity of Social Barriers in Pakistan. NUST Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities-NJSSH, 5(2), pp. 153-175. [HEC Indexed]

6. Bano, T. and Khayyam U. (2019). Livelihood Expansion and Local People's Expectations in the Realm of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor in Hunza Valley, Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan. European Journal of Sustainable Development, 8(3), 543-560. DOI: 10.14207/ejsd.2019.v8n3p543 [ESSCI]

Current Research Work:

Dr. Umer Khayyam

Research Grant:

As Co-PI/National Collaborator. The British Academy and Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) Writing Workshop Grant, Year 2020, (worth £19,710).

Ms. Maheen Zahra

Currently involved in a worldwide project titled CoronaNet Research Project, which tracks governments' policy responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Other professional achievements:

Dr. Umer Khayyam

Editorial Activities:

Editor: NUST Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities (NJSSH) – HEC Pakistan Recognised Journal. Reviewed research papers for: Sage Open, Environmental Science and Pollution Research, NJSSH, Asian Journal of Comparative Politics. IEEE Access.

Mrs. Fariha Tahir

The entire Department of Development Studies takes this opportunity to congratulate Ms. Fariha Tahir on earning her LLB degree. We are all very proud of you!

**Articles,
Interview
&
Book
Review**



Human Capital: Why is it important?

Dr. Ashfaq H. Khan
Principal & Dean, S3H/NUST

“Education is fundamental to enhancing the quality of human life and ensuring social and economic progress”

-United Nations, Report on the World Social Situations, 1997.

Health and education are critical inputs to overall human development. Health is central to well-being and education is essential for a satisfying and rewarding life; both are fundamental to the broader notion of expanded human capabilities that lie at the heart of the process of development. Education plays a key role in the ability of a developing country to absorb modern technology and to develop the capacity for self-sustaining growth and development. Health on the other hand, is a prerequisite for increase in productivity.

Both health and education are not only the vital components of growth and development but are connected with each other. When we speak of investing in a person's health or investing in a person's education, we are after all talking about the same person. Greater health capital may improve the return to investment in education. A longer life raises the chances of return to investment in education. The last several decades have witnessed unprecedented advances in human capital. Health and education levels improved in both developed and developing countries but, by most measures, these have improved more rapidly in developing countries.

Notwithstanding investment in health and education in developing countries, the fact remains that health and education levels are much higher in high-income countries. Thus, there are good reasons to believe that the causality between income and human capital indices runs in both directions: with higher income, people and governments can afford to spend more on education and health, thus improving



human capital which in turn, leads to higher productivity and more incomes. Because of this bi-directional causality, development policy needs to focus on income, health and education simultaneously.

Human Development and Prosperity: Empirical Evidence

Healthy human capital base makes a country more prosperous. Is there empirical evidence to support this hypothesis? The Asian region itself provides ample evidence to support it. Asia today is very much different from what it was some five decades ago. While some countries in Asia have moved up the developmental scale, others have lagged behind. Pakistan, India and Bangladesh in South Asia and Thailand, Malaysia, and Korea from East Asia present a distinct picture of economic development. Per capita income as measured by per capita GDP, in the 1960s for all these countries was quite similar and comparable to the extent that all the countries, with the exception of Malaysia, were below \$200. By 2011, per capita income ranged between \$700 (Bangladesh) to \$1400 (India) with Pakistan standing at \$1200 in South Asia and \$8000 (Thailand) to \$23000 (Korea) with Malaysia standing at \$10000, in East Asia. Per capita income has increased by 175 times in Korea, 55 times in Thailand and 29 times in Malaysia over the last five decades. The per capita income, on the other hand, increased only by 10 times in Pakistan and Bangladesh and 15 times in India during the same period. What made the difference so stark? While literacy rate ranged between 15% (Pakistan) to 28% (India) with Bangladesh taking the middle road of 22% in South Asia, it ranged from 53% in Malaysia to 71% in Korea with Thailand standing at 61% in East Asia in the 1960s. By 2011,

the three countries in East Asia achieved almost universal literacy; the countries in South Asia still moved in the range of 54% (Bangladesh) to 66% (India) with Pakistan's literacy rate still hovering at 58%.

Even in the 1960s when most of these countries were at similar stages of economic development in terms of per capita income, East Asian countries were far ahead of their counterparts in South Asia in literacy rates. Were the differences in human capital indicator between South and East Asian countries coincidental? The answer is no. While South Asian countries were spending less than \$2 per person per year in education in 1960s, the East Asian leaderships were spending in the range of \$20-\$32 per person per annum. By 2011, there was no match in the per capita spending in education in these countries of the two regions. This clearly suggests that a more educated country will develop at a faster pace than a less educated one. Furthermore, the leadership of the East Asian countries was more committed and gave higher priority to education than their counterparts in South Asia.

Some lessons can be drawn from above analysis. Firstly, higher per capita investment in education raised countries' literacy rate. A more educated society also improved social capital and created more awareness about health care. A literate society with strong social capital and improved health significantly contributed to improving human capital, increasing productivity of workforce, improving governance, enhancing economic growth, raising per capita income at a faster pace and thus making the society or nation to become prosperous. Rising income further enabled the countries to spend more on education and health—the two basic ingredients of human capital and thus creating a virtuous cycle of strong human capital and prosperous society.

Secondly, it is evident from above analysis that there exist an important link between healthy human capital and rapid economic development of a nation. Thirdly, it is the commitment of the leadership and the priority of the nations that enabled East Asian countries to invest and build their human capital base even when they were equally opulent or penurious as compared with

their South Asian counterparts.

There is no short cut for a developing country like Pakistan to attain the status like East Asian countries, in terms of economic development. It will require extraordinary commitment from the country's political leadership who will have to demonstrate their will or commitment by changing the composition of budgetary expenditure, that is, by investing heavily on education at all levels and health services. The leadership must be seen through their acts as committed to human capital development. Mere slogans have not worked in the past and will never work in the future.

Pakistan's Compulsion to Invest in its People

Investing in its people; education at all levels, and health, is Pakistan's compulsion, it is the need of the hour. Pakistan is a relatively young country with nearly 50% (105 million) of its population below the age of 20 years. The large share of adolescent and youth signaling, as it does, an increase in the productive capacity of the economy on a per capita basis in the years ahead is not without its downsides. Failure to invest in the young people and to nurture their talents could lead to social and political instability in the country.

Sustained economic crisis leach hope from society, replacing it with tension and imbuing unrest amongst all but the youth in particular. The recent tumult in the Arab world is a case in point. In these countries, dwindling opportunities and unfulfilled aspirations in the wake of prolonged economic crises have served to catalyze a wide wave of protests that challenge the status quo. While a large, particularly young population can be an asset for a country, it can also serve as high-octane fuel igniting repeated cycles of social and political instability. Pakistan's population at the time of independence was 33 million: by mid-2019, the population is estimated to have reached 213 million. Therefore, in roughly two generations, Pakistan's population has increased by 180 million or has grown at an average rate of 2.6% per annum. Over the next four to five decades, Pakistan stands to benefit from its large population, which serves as a demographic dividend with

the potential to fuel the country's economic growth. By 2050, Pakistan's population is likely to reach over 350 million. It is not the size of the population which is important as its age structure is the most significant factor. Pakistan's population is projected to reach 350 million by 2050, of which, over 235 million will be in working ages (15-64 years) from the current level of 110 million. Unless these young people are given access to education, health and livelihoods, the very economic potential of this demographic structure can have explosive social and political consequences.

Pakistan has a clear choice to make; it can grab the opportunities inherent in the challenging age structure of its population or risk an eventual implosion from failing to channel the energies of its over 100 million youth. Prudence demands that Pakistan should invest in education at all levels, health and training by improving both access and quality. Good health is as important as education and training in allowing young people to enhance the skills they need to become economically productive members of society. Creating gainful employment and ensuring that the young are deeply integrated into the fabric of society and share equitably in all its resources and associated benefits will also be required.

Undeniably, education is central to socio-economic development of a country. It plays a critical role in building human skills and the creative strength of the society. Education also helps reduce poverty and inequality and improves health status and good governance. It has been found empirically that every year of additional schooling increases an individual's wage income by 10% globally. For decades, Pakistan has given importance to primary education and neglected the secondary and tertiary levels of education. While primary and secondary levels of education are essential for laying the foundation of a competitive workforce, it is the university, which, by imparting quality education not only produces high quality manpower; a critical input to acquiring knowledge and joining the league of a knowledge-based economy, but also produces good quality graduates to teach at primary and secondary levels.

Promoting education at all levels along with investment in the health sector and vocational and technical training are essential for building a strong human capital base. Unless Pakistan builds its human capital base, it cannot reap the benefits of favorably disposed demographic structure and doom and destruction will be its fate. Our ability to educate and set the economy right will decide the fate of today's young generation as we move forward.

Unfortunately, the future of our younger generation does not appear to be promising as of now because of the overly restrictive policies being pursued by the government under the new IMF programme. It is well-known that Pakistan's economy has been stuck in a low growth mode (on average, 3.2% per annum) for the last ten years and it is expected to grow in the same range in the next five years, as well as during the IMF programme period (2019-2022). With population growing at an average rate of 2.4% per annum, real per capita income grew on average by less than 1.0% per annum during the last ten years. These levels are projected to grow by more or less at the same rate in the next five years as well.

With labor force growing at an average rate of 3.5%, employment elasticity of 0.51 and economy growing in the range of 3.0%, more than one-half of the new entrants including the youth (over 1.5 million new job seekers enter the job market each year) in the job market will fail to get employment and will join the league of the unemployed each year in the next five years. Similar numbers of job seekers have already joined the pool of lost generation in the last five years.

How long will these people remain unemployed? Naturally, they have been seeking low-paid and vulnerable jobs in the informal sector to survive. There is a limit to how many job seekers this sector can absorb. This is one of the key reasons why the country is witnessing an upsurge in crimes in all the major cities of the country. There are troubled areas in Karachi where youth unemployment is ranging between 40-60%. Educated youth are found to be involved in robbery and street crimes in various cities of Punjab as well. It is in this background that Pakistan is pursuing heartless stabilization

policy under the dictate of the IMF. A slow growing economy like Pakistan will continue to face resource constraints and will be forced to cut spending on education and health, thus further weakening the country's human capital base. A relatively poor quality of human capital will further reinforce the slower economic growth and hence a vicious cycle of deteriorating human capital and stagnant economic growth will continue. Pakistan will need to re-evaluate its macroeconomic policies. It will have to raise this issue with the IMF to moderate the pace of stabilization. Pakistan's macroeconomic policies cannot ignore growth and job creation anymore.

Policy Recommendations

The importance of human and social capital in making a country prosperous on a sustained basis cannot be overemphasized. A country can build its human capital base by investing in its people that is, investing aggressively in education, health and vocational and technical training. No nation can progress in a competitive world without investing in its people to build a human capital base. Given the current demographic structure of Pakistan where 50 percent of its population is below the age of 20 years, it has a clear choice to make; it can grab the opportunity to make this young population productive citizens by investing in their education and health and reaping the benefits of higher economic growth for over four to five decades. Pakistan may witness eventual implosion if it ignores over 100 million youth. Prudence demands that Pakistan should invest in its people to enhance their skills so as to make them economically productive members of society.

Building human capital alone is not enough. The country's macroeconomic policies should be aligned with promotion of growth and job creation. But what kind of growth should developing countries like Pakistan strive to promote? Growth should be broad-based, inclusive and sustainable. Growth which does not benefit the majority of the population is of little good to the country. In a democratic society, growth must be democratized as well.

What needs to be done to strengthen human

capital base as well as democratize economic growth? Following are the recommendations that stem from the above discussion.

Firstly, and most importantly, the Planning Commission of Pakistan needs to be strengthened with high quality manpower. There is no dearth of good people in the country. What is required is to make the Planning Commission a more attractive place to work. There is no harm in looking into the structure of the Indian Planning Commission and trying to build Pakistan's Planning Commission in the same footing. It is the Planning Commission which will serve as the Secretariat for the Vision 2025, therefore strengthening this organization must be the top most priority of the Government.

Secondly, after the 18th Amendment, the social sector has been decentralized. Education, health and technical training are now the responsibility of the Provinces. Given the importance of human capital for a country's economic development, it is proposed that the Government may like to establish a Ministry of Human Development at the federal level. This Ministry will serve two purposes – to coordinate with provinces on education, health and technical training and to become the face of Pakistan in international forums like UNESCO, WHO, etc. The Ministry will also monitor the progress on education, health and technical training sectors in the Provinces. Given its importance, it is proposed that the Prime Minister of Pakistan may keep this portfolio with himself and appoint an Advisor/Special Assistant with the rank of a full minister to run the affairs of this ministry. The Advisor/Special Assistant should be a thorough professional, an educationist or scientist or a medical doctor with impeccable character and known to the profession within and outside the country.

Thirdly, for decades, Pakistan has given importance to primary education and neglected secondary (college) and tertiary (university) levels education. While primary and secondary levels of education are essential in laying the foundation of a competitive workforce, it is the university which, by imparting quality education not only produces high quality manpower but also produces good quality graduates to teach primary and secondary levels. It is well-known

that the quality of teaching would depend on the quality of graduates graduating from universities. The world is witnessing the emergence of a knowledge-based economy where the role of knowledge is recognized as a critical input to economic growth and development. University-level education therefore, is a critical input to acquiring knowledge and joining the league of a knowledge-based economy. It is in this background that the government must emphasize development in all levels of education.

It is pertinent to note here that India is aggressively pursuing to build a knowledge-based economy and giving extra-ordinary emphasis to higher education, research, technology readiness and innovation and entrepreneurship. It has 504 universities and a university enrollment of over 15 million. Over the next five years, India will establish 200 new universities thereby increasing enrollment to 40 million by 2020. The higher education budget has increased by 34 percent just this year alone, to over \$3 billion and a sum of \$16 billion, the biggest-ever allocation, has been set aside for higher education development in its current 12th Five Year Plan. If India can do this why can't Pakistan? It is in this perspective that the government must strengthen the Higher Education Commission (HEC) by providing them adequate resources, addressing their difficulties, and patronizing them. The HEC has done wonders in recent years; today there are several universities in Pakistan which have earned the place in global rankings.

Fourthly, Pakistan is spending less than 2 percent of GDP on education, 0.2 percent on higher education and 0.3 percent of GDP on health. In contrast, India and Bangladesh are spending over 4.0 percent and 2.4 percent of GDP on education respectively. Allocation of meager resources to health and education sectors speaks volume about the state of human capital in Pakistan. With these meager resources Pakistan can never dream of building its human capital base and attaining the status of at least an emerging market. Under the Fiscal Responsibility and Debt Limitation Act 2005, Pakistan was bound to increase its spending on education and health from 2.0 percent to 4.0 percent and 1.0 percent to 2.0 percent,

respectively during the time span of ten years (2003-2013). Instead of doubling the health and education budget during the period, it is now even lower than that of the 2003 budget.

Pakistan is currently under the IMF Programme and will remain so till 2022. Fiscal situation is expected to remain tight in the next three years. Beyond 2022 and up till 2030, Pakistan must increase its spending on education and health aggressively. It is proposed that Pakistan may increase its education budget from the current level of 2.4 percent of GDP to 3.0 percent by 2022-23 (end of the IMF Programme) to 3.5 percent of GDP by 2024-25. Within education, allocation to higher education must also increase from the current level of 0.3 percent of GDP to 0.5 percent by to 1.5 percent by 2024-25.

Similarly, the health budget must rise from the current level of 0.53 percent of GDP to 1.10 percent by 2019-20, to 1.5 percent by 2022-23, to 2.0 by 2024-25. The Planning Commission and the proposed Ministry of Human Development may be entrusted with responsibility of monitoring the expenditure and achieving the desired results.

Fifthly, universities can generate knowledge provided they have high class faculty. To attract good faculty from within and outside Pakistan in the midst of resource constraints, a tax incentive was given to faculty members. They used to get 75 percent rebate on income tax. This incentive has been reduced to 40 percent in the current year's budget. This has emerged as a major disincentive for the teaching community and many good faculty members have left the country. In order to prevent brain drain on the one hand and attract good faculty on the other, it is recommended that the government may consider restoring the tax incentive given to faculty members.

Finally, the country's macroeconomic policies need to be realigned to promote growth and create jobs. The country's manpower needed to be employed for which an inclusive, broad-based and sustainable job-rich growth must be brought at the center of macroeconomic policies. A balance must be restored between stabilization and growth and composition of expenditure must be changed in favor of health, education and physical infrastructure.

Politics Molesting Education Will do no Benefit!

Iman Tariq | 2019



The political arena of Pakistan is dominated by the commotion created by the never ending tug of war between provinces, the endemic India-Pakistan rivalry, and the thirst for power in the political elites, barring this country's ability to regain stability. The history of Pakistan is overshadowed by shifts between democracy and dictatorship, secular extremism and the war against terrorism. Amidst the chaos, people looked up to the ruling government with the hope of a better Pakistan in their eyes, ignorant of the fact that they will have to endure a jaundiced political system for long. In my personal opinion, this can be changed only by a miracle.

With the shift of regimes from PPP to PML (N), and then to PTI, radical changes were observed in the educational budget. The standards of education were refitted in accordance with the conceit and suitability of the custodians of the power. Our respectable political elites seem to be involved in nucleating personal interests and not the national interest. According to the figures published by UNICEF, Pakistan has the world's second highest number of out-of-school children (OOSC) with an estimated 22.8 million children aged 5-16 not attending school, representing 44 per cent of the total population in this age group. In Sindh 52 percent of the poorest children (58 per cent girls) are out of school, while in Balochistan 78 percent of girls are out of school. Despite such startling stats, the role of the present government of Pakistan in pivoting this indispensable issue is quite incomprehensible.

To get the hang of the way the present government is making a go of the imperative issue of investing in human capital, we have to look at the way Prime Minister Imran Khan unveiled the

“Ehsaas Programme”. On November 4, 2019, he said in a tweet, “I will launch the largest ever needs-based undergraduate scholarship programme in the history of Pakistan today. 200,000 scholarships will be awarded over the next 4 years, 50,000 every year, 50% of these for women to promote human capital development under my @Ehsaas_Pk umbrella”. Twenty-four billion rupees were set to be spent on the four year programme to support 200,000 students while at the same time the government has put a cut of 50% in the budget depriving more than 800 students from scholarships under the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. Is investing in human capital another mendacious slogan?

According to the statement given by Dr Banuri, Chairman HEC “For the development budget, HEC had demanded Rs 59 billion but the government approved only Rs 28 billion” (The Express Tribune, 2019). Regarding HEC budget cut, secretary for the Finance Ministry in an interview to University World News (June, 2019) said that “*the government is facing severe financial difficulties and a large current account deficit, which has led the government to slash the budget of different sectors, including higher education*”, trajectory the idea that we can not do anything but suffer the fallout. Preposterous, no?

It is quite disconcerting that the political follies of opposition are never taken as a lesson by the ruling government. An end is required to the legacy of letting projects commenced by the prior governments perish, as the country lacks the capacity to withstand inconsistent and volatile endeavors.

Education and Social Mobility

Muhammad Usman | 2018



There is a thoughtful relationship between education and social mobility. If we define the term 'social mobility', it is the economic term that identifies the socio-economic shift of an individual in society. This shift can be from a lower level to a higher level and vice versa. This term is mostly used to define an improvement in one's earning and how one's social status changes from one group to another.

Thus the phrase 'education and social mobility' denotes a relationship concerned with achieving the pinnacles of a higher socio-economic level through the aid of higher education. There is a conflict with this as well. Some believe that education is very important and you are not going to be upwardly-mobile without education. But some believe that education is only loosely related to upward socio-economic mobility. Many other factors are related to this education and social mobility concept.

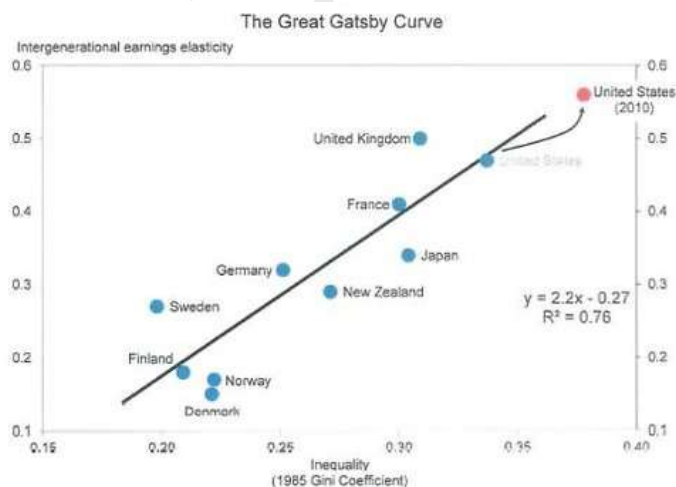
If we look into the history of mankind, we can see that humans today are more developed and much more socially organized and successful compared to 1000 years ago. We can see a clear difference between regions; those parts of the world where people believed in education and focused on spreading knowledge are more successful in every sector in comparison with those with more resources but lower literacy levels.

There is a very customary lesson taught in our secondary classes; education is the key to success. We were told that education leads you to climb ladders of success in the world. This was not wrong, to motivate students towards studies, but one important thing which was left out is that this is not the only factor which will enable upward social mobility. Many other aspects are related to education.

Some researchers do not believe in this

concept. According to Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett (in their book *The Spirit Level*, 2009), research found that education and social mobility are far worse in rich countries. These are the countries that have big economic gaps between rich and poor. Those who have rich financial backgrounds tend to be more successful than those with poor financial backgrounds. In the USA and the UK, it has been found that there is no major difference in fathers' and sons' incomes.

The infamous Great Gatsby curve illustrates the relationship of one generation's wealth and the ability of those in the next generation to move socio-economically upward compared to their previous generations. The world needs to follow the principle of meritocracy.

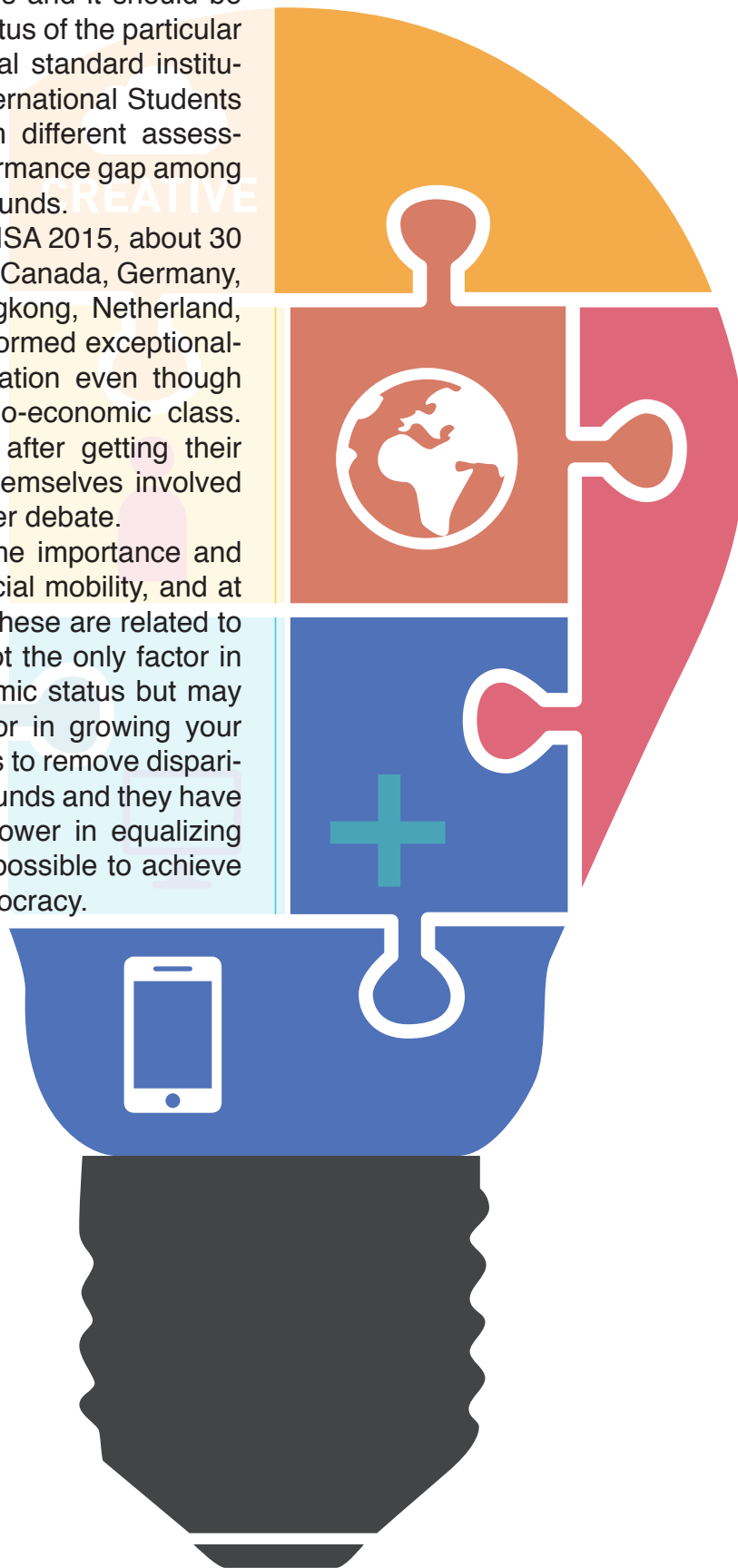


This curve shows that in countries like Denmark, Finland, Germany, and Norway parent's earnings had very little impact on their children's earnings. The education of the parents may have some impact on the child's level of social mobility success. It has also been seen that those children whose parents are less educated earn 20% less compared with those parents with a higher level of education, even though these individuals have the same level of qualifications.

The global economy needs to be broadened by maximizing human resources and it should be independent of the social status of the particular individual. Some international standard institutions like the Program in International Students Assessment (PISA) perform different assessment exams to find the performance gap among students of different backgrounds.

According to the results of PISA 2015, about 30 % of the students of Finland, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Korea, Hongkong, Netherland, Norway, and Singapore performed exceptionally well in higher-level education even though they came from lower socio-economic class. But how will they perform after getting their higher education and get themselves involved in the market? That is another debate.

One needs to understand the importance and influence of education in social mobility, and at the same time explore how these are related to other factors as well. It is not the only factor in improving your socio-economic status but may be the most important factor in growing your social mobility. The world has to remove disparities based on social backgrounds and they have to give education its due power in equalizing society. Only then will it be possible to achieve our cherished ideals of meritocracy.



Interview with Saeeda Baji

Symrun Razaque | 2019



Peer volunteer with Human Development Research Foundation in the Bishandote district of Mandra.

We first met Saeeda baji (as she is called by everyone in the community out of regard), when we were researching the social causes of postpartum depression. Saeeda baji is a force in the Bishandote area with her diminutive stature, sweet disposition, and wise twinkling eyes; she holds more power than a local feudal lord. She invited us to her home which she was in the process of decorating and confided to us that she had always dreamed of owning a wall to wall carpet but it had always been a luxury. She was finally getting her wish with the additional income she was contributing.

How did you get into the health care sector, or more appropriately, start working as a peer volunteer?

I had often heard from women especially when we would gather for milaad annually about the difficulties women had faced with home births, the problems they had faced after the birth of a baby and had not felt up to the task of resuming their daily tasks, or to care for the baby which had caused problems with their families despite the fact that they had been looking forward to the birth of their baby. A friend of mine told me that an NGO (HDRF) was recruiting women of the local area to train them and help other women. My children were all going to school and I had been looking for an opportunity to learn and this had seemed like a good idea, so after a series of training I signed on as a peer volunteer, to help women who were my friends, family and neighbours, who, like me, had undergone post-natal depression and the guilt associated with it without knowing that it was actually

a disorder and not carelessness or ungrateful behaviour.

How did you help these women?

I would visit them regularly, be their friend and urge them to care for themselves, and tell their family that they were not being neglectful on purpose but it was something the women were struggling with and needed support with. Most of the women who had undergone a similar experience were quick to offer help, pool resources, help with chores and send food to take off the burden from the suffering mother. I came from a position of trust and was not seen as an intrusive outsider (the way the original intervention was seen as), and it granted me access to personal details and homes. I urged them to resume their hygiene activities, a gap in which was amongst the first signs that the women were suffering from postpartum depression, and encouraged them as I had learned during my training.



Sunset in Bishandote, the view from Saeeda Baji's house

Saeeda Baji pushes the teacups of steaming doodh patti towards us and urges us to drink before we are to take a tour of her home and the fields behind it. We see her daughters, 14 and 12, giggling behind their school notebooks and her son 8 spies from behind the door.

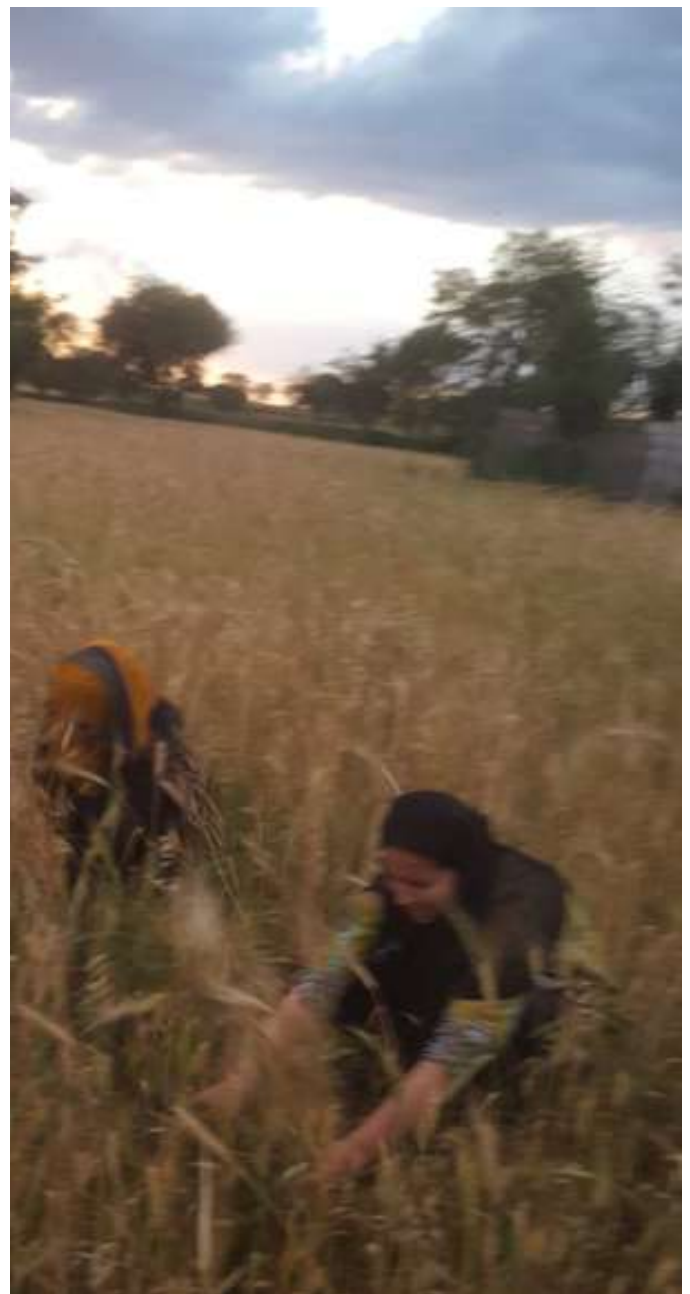
What does this job mean for you?

This started as something I wanted to do in my extra time for my people but it pays good money, which of course was not the motivation, but helps with the family income and allows me little luxuries and savings for my children's education.

She's determined that her eldest daughter will fulfill her dream of becoming a school teacher whereas the younger is more domestically inclined. Her son wants to be like his mother and help people. Her husband comes in upon Saeeda Baji's request and tells us how proud he is of his wife and how much her work means to him. He admits with quiet pride that people often come up to tell him that his wife had helped them and their family and often give them blessings. As if on cue, a little boy knocks at the gate and her son runs to fetch a covered plate from him, which is an offering from an Aqiqah (the Islamic tradition of the sacrifice of an animal on the occasion of a child's birth) celebration from the neighbours who Saeeda Baji had been helping for the past year or so. Saeeda Baji says this job has given her skills, polished her in ways she didn't believe possible, made her confident, and improved her social standing. She is regarded as an important pillar of the community. She says the program had started with 8 women who had been undergoing treatment for the issue and had expanded to encompass almost the entire area of Kallar Syedan of which, Bishandote was one out of eleven union councils. Saeeda Baji even holds sway with the local union councillor. Soon, after she had helped two women with their postpartum depression, other women of the area, who had heard that Saeeda baji was a miracle worker, had started coming up to her to seek help for their friends and family. She had helped HDRF sign on more women to their pool of peer volunteers which included but was not limited to Lady Health Workers to help more and more people, thus expanding the network.

Her training and work have provided her with upward social mobility. This can be assessed by the fact that when we had asked to interview her patients, or women that were undergoing or had undergone interventions of the similar kind, she had scheduled meetings, and was warmly

welcomed. By extension we were treated as family members and despite the short notice, were given a grand welcome in each of the eight houses we had visited. This was during the harvest season, and every single member is out on the fields at first light and works even after last light. But, upon her request the families we were to visit had relinquished their work for the day and gave us interviews. This is practically unheard of, because as a popular saying, loosely translated, goes, we even postpone funerals to continue harvesting and stuff the body in the coldest room in the house until sundown and then mourn or bury them.



Cutting wheat in the field

What advice would you like to give us and other girls?

Saeeda Baji smiled at this and walked with a spring in her step and with a sweep of her hand she presented her gold wheat fields that swayed in the fading light of the golden hour. She said she would like to tell all these girls (and boys, she added with an affectionate ruffle to her son's hair), that there was once a girl who could barely read, who was married off at 14 years of age, who even in her limited knowledge and naiveté had promised that she would befriend her husband and make sure her children had a shot at a future of their choice, despite how her life had turned out to be. She said this shot was only possible through education, and keeping a pure heart. She said the girl had very later in life learned to write from her daughters, and then gone on to take technical training. She concluded that she had no regrets but maybe in another life, she would like to be a doctor.

We ended our trip with a short and fun-filled lesson at hand cutting wheat stalks that Saeeda baji tied into bouquets for us. She bid us farewell with a sharp yet smiling reprimand to call her on eid and tell us how our research had turned out.



Saeeda Baji ties a traditional field worker style turban



COVID 19: A SILVER LINING IN A DARK CLOUD

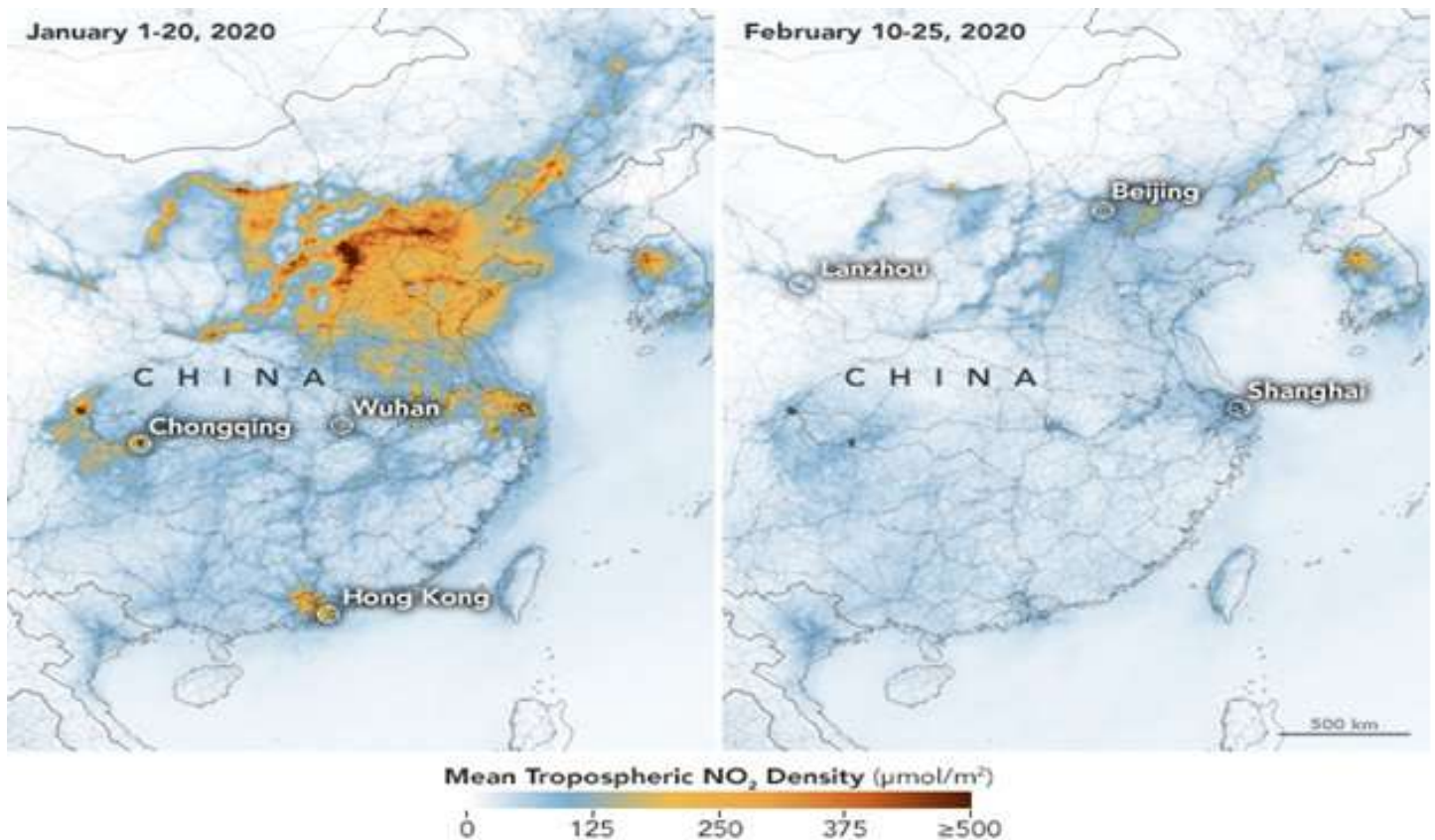
Zara Naveed | 2019



The unprecedented crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic has had detrimental consequences. With economies crumbling, the oil crisis, inflation, and the fatalities that keep increasing, the Covid-19 brought an unexpected nightmare. Although the virus has left people devastated and stranded away from their homes or confined within them, the pandemic has proven to be miraculous for the environment. According to UN Secretary General António Guterres, 2020 was supposed to be a pivotal year for efforts addressing climate change. However, due to the pandemic, the COP26 summit that was to be held in Glasgow has been postponed. Looking back at the pre-COVID-19 situation, pollution had become a potential risk factor that could lead to the deaths of millions. Yet the idea

of climate change was subordinate to other priorities, regardless of its consequences. However, current discourse has partly been about how the tragic global situation due to COVID-19 can be a driving force in the global efforts to reduce climate change.

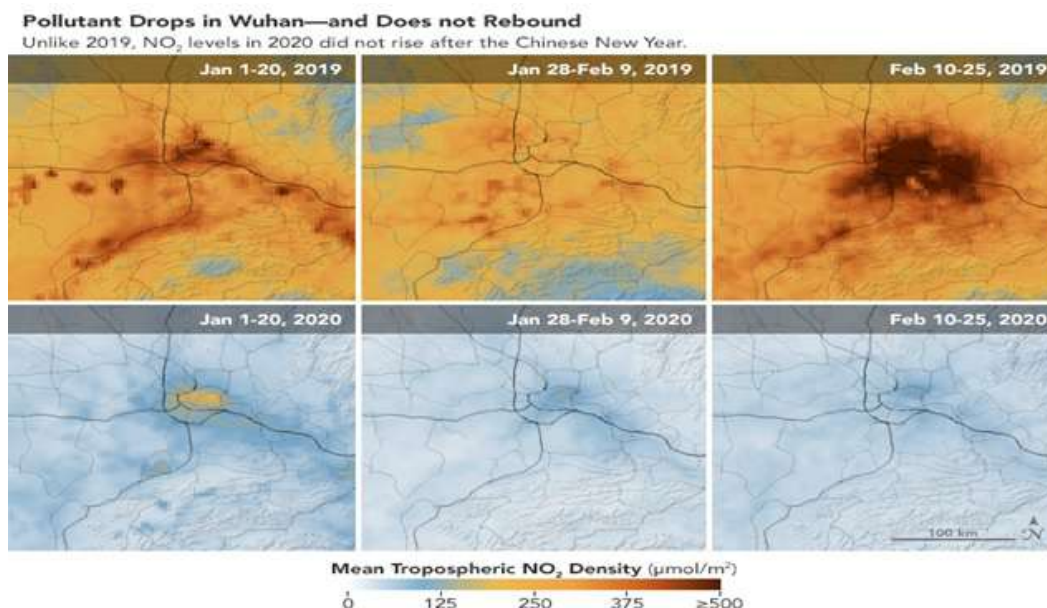
The highly contagious nature of the virus was accompanied by an almost complete shutdown of global systems and lockdowns throughout the world. The feeling of uncertainty in terms of the duration and enormity of this pandemic has led to drastic measures including prolonged suspensions of industries and closure of educational institutes for several months. Seemingly a direct result of the change in human lifestyles, the satellite measurements provided by NASA showed a significant reduction in the overall



levels of pollution throughout the world. Pollution in several cities is less than half of what it used to be in the past year due to a drastic decrease in road traffic, shipping, air traffic, and industries. Due to the prolonged lockdown and the ambiguity in terms of the duration of the pandemic, the majority of the companies, corporations and businesses have opted for a work from home model. Educational institutes have opted for distant learning as an alternative to ensure continuation of the academic year. These measures have significantly reduced the number of motor vehicles operating and burning fuel on a daily basis.

Distance-learning has been effective because the contemporary world is a global village. Everyone is connected with each other through

gases are motivated by economic aspects, cultural expectations, and personal decisions. The efficient and creative use of accumulated psychological and sociological research on how individuals think and make decisions can facilitate and help in altering human activities in order to mitigate environmental impact. There is a need to design environmentally-friendly lifestyle models that deal with current attitudes, intentions, human beliefs, thought processes and motives. In the current scenario distance-learning will last until the virus subsides. The effects of this lockdown will be short term and as the lockdown eases the life will continue to be as it was, unless we treat the global lockdown as a trial and error period for which aspects of digital, paperless, and



social media; this has made remote learning efficient and convenient. The fear of losing human capital has ensured the continuation of remote learning for longer periods of time. Several benefits associated with distance learning include learning within the comfort of your home and reduction in emissions. The traveling required for students to commute to school every day wastes gas and natural resources. A study carried out in West Georgia revealed that “for every 100 students who did not travel to school, carbon dioxide emissions reduced up to 100 tons for every semester” (Campbell and Campbell, 2011).

Anthropogenic activities that result in the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse

remote-learning are effective.

It is important to focus on how we can promote environmentally friendly education. Home schooling has been around for a while however few people opt for this option. An effective way to promote online learning would be by making it an option in schools and universities. Students should have the choice to take classes from home. This method will benefit those who face transport issues, students residing in remote areas, and the students who may be sick but still want to attend their classes. Even if 20% of the students decide to opt for this; there will be a substantial decrease in the overall carbon emission. However a smooth and efficient method of remote learning should be ensured to guarantee proper learning.

Social Aims of Education

Osama Ijaz | 2018



The most important responsibility of society is to protect its culture. There are various ways employed for protection of culture and societal norms but the most effective way of protecting culture is education. Through education, the teachings of society's culture, values and norms are transferred to the future generations. If, during the education of the upcoming generation, transfer of culture is set aside, it will be disastrous for cultural sustainability in a society. It is only through the medium of education that the culture of a society ensures its survival. This brings us to the notion that education is merely not a tool for enlightening individuals; it also carries with itself some important aims which ensure the growth of society and nurturing of values and norms among the individuals residing in the society. Let's discuss these aims of education one by one in a brief yet thoughtful manner.

Cultural Transfer

Culture is the foundation stone of society. Any society or group is identified through its culture. If culture vanishes, so does that society. That is why each community struggles to keep ensuring the survival of their culture. For this to happen, cultural transfer is really important. In this process, the central role is played by education. Through education, not only do individuals learn the values and norms but also get to understand their importance in daily life. Telling lies, exploiting someone, dishonesty and moral corruption are some of greater sins committed by humans. Opposite to this, telling the truth, giving the right to its true owner and showing honesty are very great moral values that should be adopted by every human being. An individual learns these values and gives respect to them only by acquiring education. For ensuring

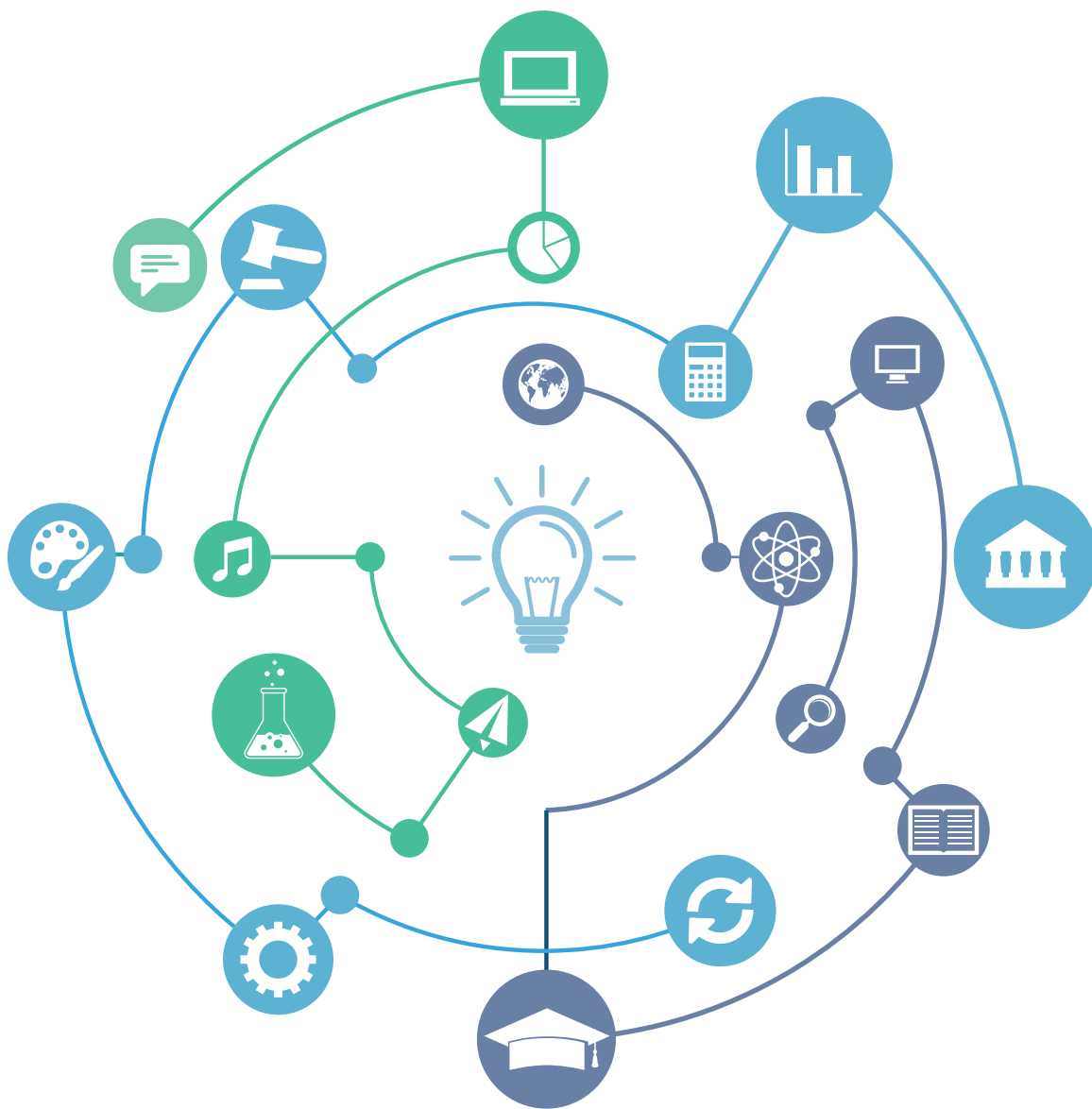
cultural transfer, it is necessary that the strong connection exists between the society and the educational institutes, a society believes firmly in adopting these good values which are being taught to the newer generation and the teachers are also sincere in teaching these values. To ensure the transfer of good cultural values, this strong relation needs to strengthen between society and educational institutes.

Social Order

Social order implies ensuring law and order in a society. Law and order will prevail in society when the individuals will follow all rules and regulations; there shall be no incidents of robberies, and no sort of violent behavior will be tolerated. Only then the growth and progress of society can be ensured. When lawlessness is common, each individual is only concerned with saving his/her life and property. This creates a situation where development becomes stagnant. To ensure law and order in society, education can play a vital role. The children who go to schools/colleges regularly obey all rules and laws which maintain social order in society and discourage rule breaking. Educated people are bound by rules of society and try to become shining examples for all people which initiate a wave of other people following them in observing all rules. Education guides individuals about their roles and responsibilities which they will deliver accordingly for the betterment of each individual in a society. This all leads to peace and harmony among individuals.

Developing a concern for Social Responsibility

Education not only guides people regarding their roles and responsibilities but also teaches them to deliver on these with utmost truth and



honesty. This develops a responsible attitude in individuals. This responsible attitude of individuals is displayed in the form of actions that they take e.g. helping people, speaking truth in face of tyranny and oppression, being honest and sincere towards country, giving respect to elders, being a leading example in igniting social change in society, observing tolerant behavior towards different religions and ethnic identities and many other actions. If a person is educated properly and given a compelling guidance, the concern for social responsibility will automatically develop from within them and become helpful to fellow citizens.

Training for Employment

In actuality, the main aim of education is to make a person skilled and beneficial for society. Alongside cultural transfer and developing civic

responsibility, a person can become beneficial for the society when he/she acquires skills and training to earn a respectable livelihood. Those individuals who are constant law breakers and indulge in anti-societal activities are compelled to do so because they are depressed, both mentally and financially. That is why the aim of education is enabling young people to acquire a decent earning opportunity. It is the responsibility of the higher authorities to turn their attention towards generating employment opportunities through education by means of introducing technical training subjects in schools and providing necessary support for young boys and girls to learn skills in small businesses like farming, making garments and handicrafts. This will enable young individuals to establish their small businesses and thus playing a role to become beneficial and responsible citizens of society.

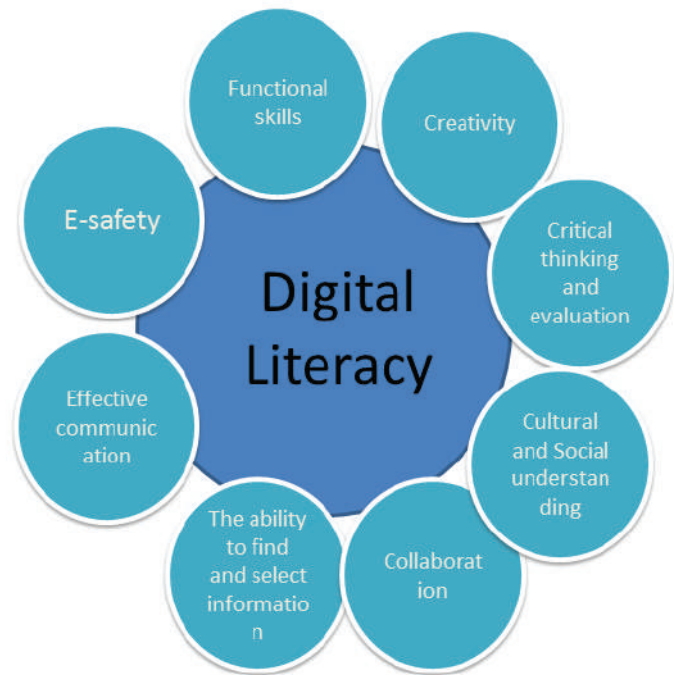
Expanding Literacy

Nuha Saad | 2019



At this point in time primary education and basic literacy are considered universal human rights that countless amounts of government funding and foreign aid are channeled towards. However, the effectiveness of the education provided is not gauged, and in some countries, such as Pakistan, the definition of literacy itself is lacking. Initially, knowing to read or write one's own name was enough to classify them as a literate person. The definition has grown; reading and understanding a few lines of basic text is the current criterion. However, in a world where education itself has transformed due to internet access, this definition of literacy is beyond insufficient. In fact, I believe that knowing how to read and write text of even moderate difficulty levels is no longer a reasonable benchmark for literacy in the world as we know it, where a large proportion of the population has access to the internet and various social media platforms through their cell phones.

Since there is no mechanism to prevent people lacking a certain level of comprehension of written language from being exposed to the internet, it is very important to restructure our standards of literacy to ensure safe internet usage. The term digital literacy, however, is complex and multi-faceted, and many scholars are weary of using it, even while endorsing many aspects of it. There is no doubt about the fact that incorporating ideas of digital literacy into the idea of literacy as a whole, will cause literacy numbers to plummet, and for a developing country like Pakistan, where numbers are already low, this is undesirable. However, it is not sensible to orchestrate progress by employing outdated definitions of parameters, and in a world where internet access is fast becoming a basic right, it is imperative that the education system caters to the digital aspect of knowledge.



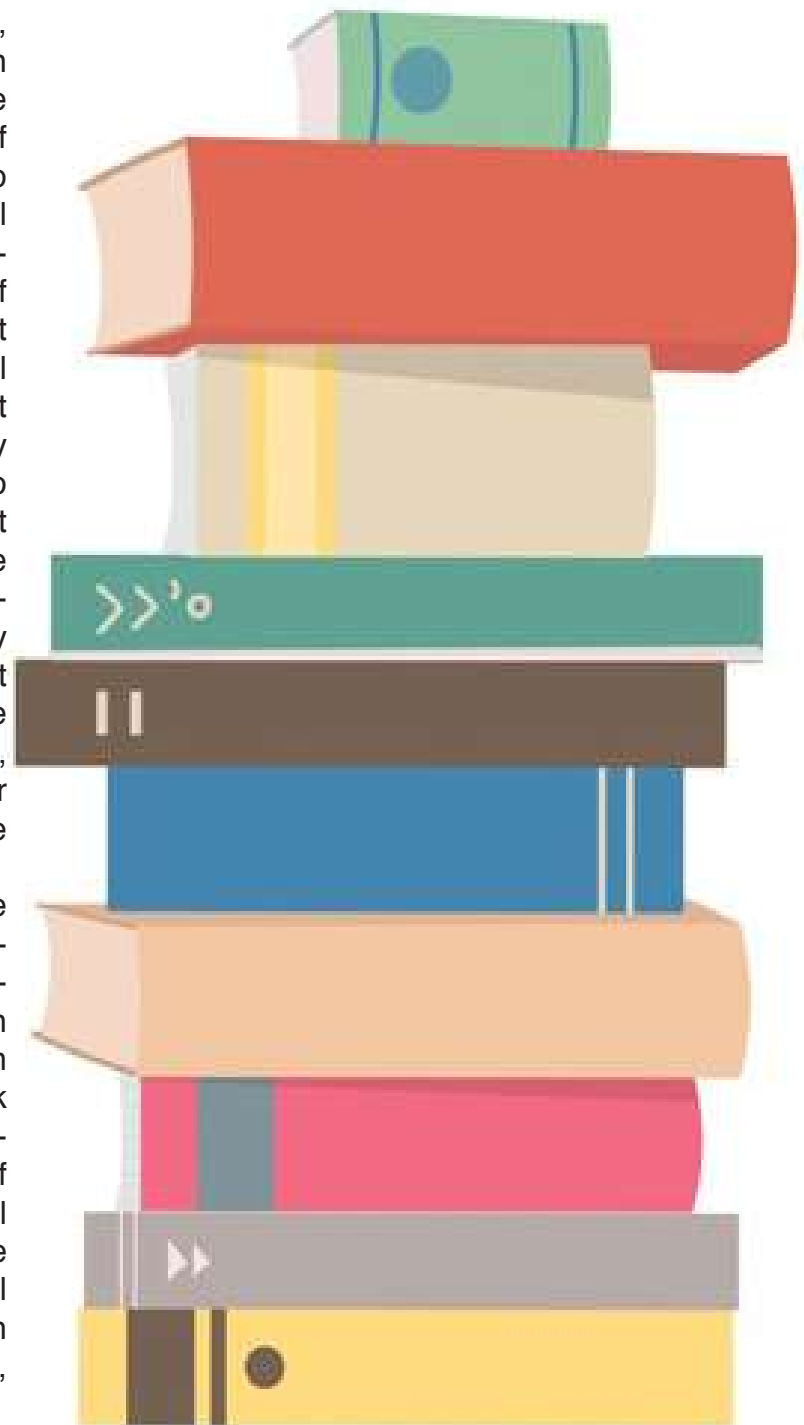
Digital literacy as a concept is vast, encompassing the basic tenets of literacy (reading and writing), with a lot more appended to them. It includes using information and communication tools and technologies effectively, as well as the cognitive and comprehensive abilities to navigate the world wide web, to find, consume, evaluate, create, and share content. Although this is a tall order from any education mechanism, let alone one in a developing country, it is an extremely necessary one in an era where communication channels and social media are being strategically used to mine data, propagate misinformation, and engineer perceptions; both by state actors from across the world, and non-state actors. Some are hired "trolls" or cyber/ irregular warriors, while some are just ill-informed people with internet access. The world has seen the impact that this digital environment has, seeping into cultures, into political

wills, and even into perceptions of government and electoral campaigns.

Although the idea of digital literacy itself is daunting, what is even more daunting is that there are two categories of adults in the workforce, in academia, and in overall society. The categories are termed “digital natives” and “digital immigrants”. Digital immigrants are those people who grew up unaccustomed to modern day technology and hence, are not entirely comfortable in their usage of it. Digital natives are those who grew up with a decent amount of exposure to technology and the internet, as it evolved around them. A third category is of course, children, who will grow up to find themselves in an even more intensely digital society than we are currently living in. Although the essence of the digital literacy that needs to be imparted to these categories is the same; ethics of digital citizenship, fact-checking, digital rights and security, as well as safe navigation, the modes of transfer of this education will need to be different for each category. The easiest to impart it to will be students, but the ones who need it the most urgently are adults. Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult to devise an effective mechanism to teach even conventionally literate adult internet users the basics of internet safety and the dangers of false information (or the now-buzzword, fake news), let alone ones that are barely literate and yet have access to the internet. It would require intense logistical efforts to provide this knowledge even to those working in offices, let alone those that are unemployed or employed informally. These concerns are some of the biggest hurdles for digital literacy.

Although digital literacy and its importance have been at the forefront of the media and information discourse lately (ICMC 2020 was a conference organized by the ministry of information that discussed it in depth), the issue has been further highlighted as imperative by the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19). The resulting global pandemic has not only shifted a lot of office and educational operations into the digital sphere, it has created a lot of panic, causing the rampant sharing of misinformation on social media. These posts range from information on causes, precautions, statistics, and even cures, and did a lot of harm, especially in the first few

months of the pandemic. The world at this moment is completely upturned. Whatever the post-corona world will be, it is important that governments all over the world walk into it acknowledging digital literacy as key, with plans to increase their populations’ literacy rates according to updated definitions.



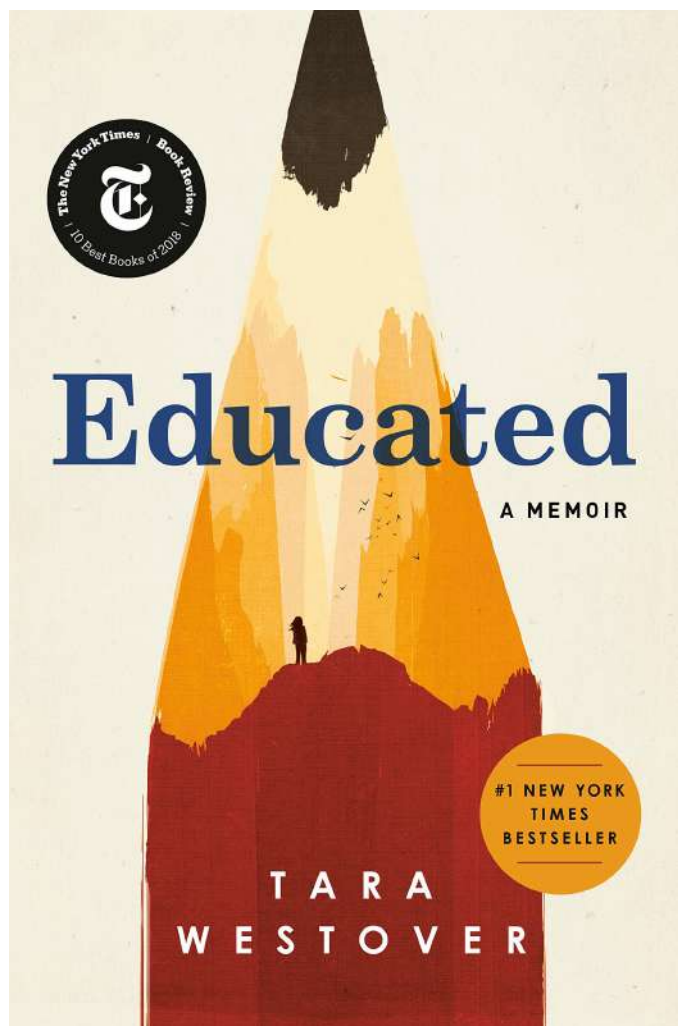
Educated, by Tara Westover (2018)

Maheen Zahra

Reading *Educated* is like watching two film reels – both equally captivating – run simultaneously. One reel recounts Tara Westover’s enthralling journey, from growing up in a Mormon family strictly against formal education, to earning a doctorate from Cambridge University. At the same time, a second reel forces a completely different perspective on one’s own education journey, pushing for introspection and gratitude for things as simple as the ability to recite the alphabet.

Westover was born in Idaho, one of seven siblings, to Mormon parents who followed a survivalist lifestyle. Such a lifestyle meant that they were distrustful of formal education, doctors and pharmaceutical interventions, and the government. In

Book Review



essence, then, Westover grew up in a bubble carefully sealed off from the outside world, oblivious to history, politics, and science. Nevertheless, Westover fought her way out of the bubble by studying secretly, thanks to her older brother Tyler. She managed to give her high school exams, and eventually got accepted to Brigham Young University (a Mormon-owned university). Westover recounts receiving aghast stares from students in the University’s lecture hall, as she raised her hand to ask the professor what “Holocaust” meant. While the occupants of the hall may have concluded that Westover was a denier of the Jewish Holocaust, the reality in that moment is that the bubble she grew up in kept her ignorant of world history. This moment also signifies the assumptions with which we encounter others – in this instance, the professor had assumed that the Holocaust was common knowledge – and the snap judgements with which we attribute characteristics to others without necessarily empathizing first.

As the memoir continues, Westover’s experience of an education is palpable, thanks to the detail she offers in her writing. The world stretches before her, and one cannot help but quietly rally for her. In one poignant moment, she recounts how, “by the end of the semester the world felt big, and it was hard to imagine returning to the mountain, to a kitchen, or even to a piano in the room next to the kitchen” (p. 240). This points to the experience of returning home, of having transformed and yet occupying a persistent sameness.

Impostor syndrome – the feeling that one is merely intruding in an institute considered prestigious – is something that Westover is no stranger to. She recounts in detail how her initial experience in Cambridge was characterized by impostor syndrome, how she felt she had to conform in order to belong there. To this part of her life, she shares the advice shared by her mentor, Dr. Kerry: “It has never occurred to you...that you might have as much right to be here as anyone” (p. 254). This way of seeing then encourages her to continue pursuing education even as the odds stack against her.

Westover’s memoir is an eye-opener. The reader’s thoughts continue flitting between incredulity: ‘surely this cannot happen to anyone,’ to insight: ‘my former assumption was based on a narrow worldview’. The book leaves its readers with a newfound realization of the privilege that education is. Going back to our real world, this realization can help inform the development interventions in the education sector, making the design more empathetic than ever.

I would highly recommend this page-turner. Not only will you learn about grit and determination, but on each page, in the white space between lines, you will find yourself.

South-South Cooperation & Chinese Foreign Aid, by Meibo Huang, Xiuli Xu and Xiaojing Mao (2019)

Khadija Javed, Zara Naveed, Dr. Umer Khayyam

South-South Cooperation and Chinese Foreign Aid comprehensively analyses China's successful participation in trilateral cooperation with several institutions i.e. United Nations, trilateral cooperation as elaborated in the book has been effective in bridge linking South-South Cooperation (SSC). The book provides a broad overview of China's technical, economic and social assistance to several countries, and encompasses the efforts made by China without any political conditions needed to be satisfied by the recipient countries. It provides an insight by discussing the several ways through which China has been able to boost development and bring countries out of the economic turmoil. It covers all aspects through a detailed description of China's efforts to assist other countries.

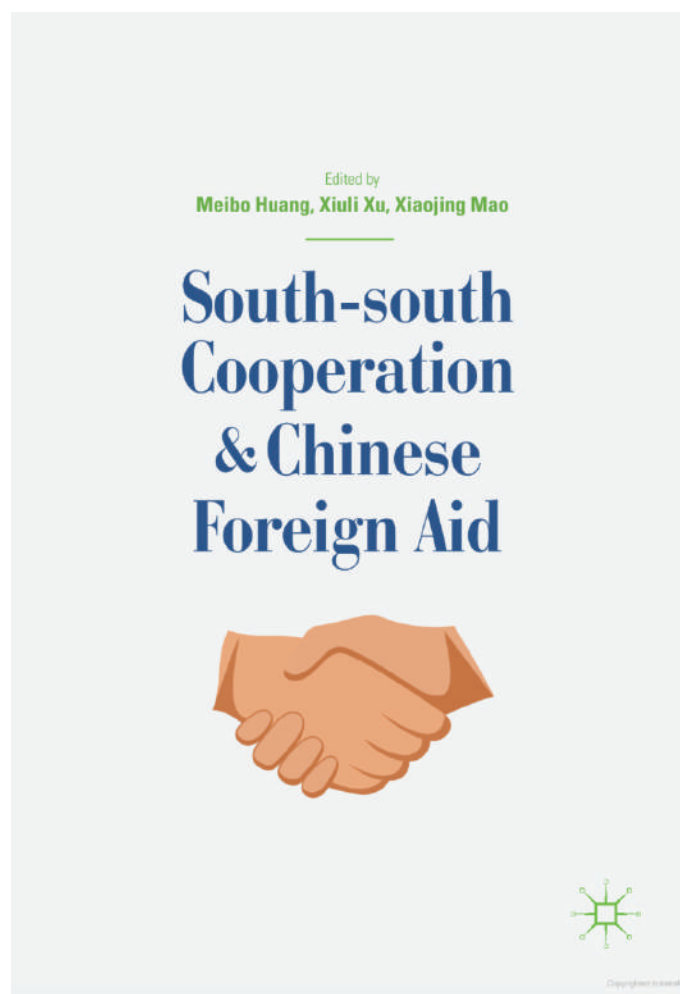
Fifteen cases of Foreign Aid by China under category of grants in reference to SSC have been cited by the authors. These case studies can be broadly divided into four categories; projects entirely undertaken by China (for instance: construction of General Hospital in Madagascar, Juncao Technical Cooperation, building of Agricultural Technology Demonstration Center in Tanzania etc.), emergency humanitarian aid offered by China (for example: aid given in Myanmar floods, aid to fight Ebola etc.), technical cooperation by China (e.g. restoration of relics at Angkor, cooperation with Uganda under food security framework etc.) and human resource development cooperation by China (such as agricultural trilateral cooperation and China-Tanzania Joint Learning Center).

Generally, SSC functions on the basis of ten principles that are in place to ensure non-interference so that sovereignty of recipient countries is kept intact and cooperation results in a win-win situation for all without attaching any 'strings' to the aid provided. China abides by these principles. China's Foreign Aid is different in essence from North-South Cooperation as China itself is developing country and yet a provider for SSC, secondly the authors clearly display how unlike the former form of assistance, the "aid" by later is accompanied with "cooperation" as well. Authors have coped to highlight managerial issues in China's Foreign Aid that need to be addressed or further improved in future. Broadly mentioning, these gaps include: limited role of NGOs, improvement in foreign aid management system, devising laws for foreign aid, reforming aid

management institutions, betterment of monitoring and evaluation of foreign aid projects and strengthening of international coordination.

The book conceptually clarifies and tries to encompass the reader's attention by explaining China's investment in least developed countries (e.g. African countries) in order to boost economic growth and increase agricultural productivity in agrarian countries. Correspondingly each chapter gives a subjective description of the development schemes initiated in a specific country and elaborates the sustainability and efficiency of that project. Each chapter aims to provide an understanding of the essence of mutual trust and cooperation embedded in the projects initiated by China with the intention of improving the economic growth. Although the book initially substantiates China's 'no strings attached' policy when it comes to foreign aid, however this is later contradicted in the book as it asserts, the recipient countries must provide some level of investment

Book Review



to improve its level of participation. Even the opinion of the locals was not precisely coherent with China's claims of 'aid without conditions'. Work of Martorano, Metzger, & Sanfilippo, (2020) provides a more realistic picture while giving a comprehensive outlook through highlighting both the positive and negative outcomes of China's development projects¹. These deficiencies in the book under consideration, prove and further exacerbate its biases and subjectivity.

Writing style comprises extensive effort to paint only positive picture of China, although alternative aspects to China's Foreign Aid do exist such as that relating China's behavior in this regard similar to that of western imperialists, one such proof is the fact that China made specific aid pledges in exchange for cheap energy deals². It is thereby giving rise to certain discrepancies and self-contradictions in the book. For example, in Chapter 2, it has been said that the Tanzania-Zambia Railway (TAZARA) project was criticized for lack of involvement of the locals as the labor was brought from China. In the later chapter it has been claimed that around 700 locals were hired as labor in TAZARA. Similarly, the book fails to mention how TAZARA was not as successful as it was envisioned to be, since the country developed alternative routes and ways to transport mined copper. The book, although published recently fails to acknowledge TAZARA as a failure.

The book would have been a better representative of South-South Cooperation if it was also inclusive of projects under interest free loans and concessional loans falling under Foreign Aid by China. Secondly both sides of coin should have been highlighted but the authors only point to goodwill of China via sharing details of its diverse projects including humanitarian services, infrastructure development, ensuring food security, facilitating agricultural progress, supporting industries etc.; neglecting the very basic intent of all these interventions which was image building and enhancing acceptability of Chinese people among the recipients of aid. In short, the fact that China has been building its 'Soft Power' through its aid has been ignored completely³.

Another exciting aspect of foreign aid by China is the fact that Foreign Aid Division of China comes under its Ministry of Commerce, which supports the allegation against China that its Foreign Aid is directed at securing supply of raw materials for its expanding economy, expanding its global political influence and making a place of its own in emerging markets of Africa. This is because the recipients (mostly the African countries) are highly central to recent foreign policies of China⁴. However, the authors choose to completely disregard the subsidiary benefits that China gains through its continued Foreign Aid to Africa with apparently no 'strings attached'. Also

failing to mention how all these Foreign Aid funded projects are directed at resource-rich-finance-poor countries of South.

Unlike rest of the chapters, Chapter 14 of the book was found to be more systematic; here the author not only discussed the efforts for sustainable development by China in Mozambique but also for the first time incorporated the perspective of the beneficiaries of these projects. Initially the chapter elaborated the efforts of China to increase agricultural productivity and improve food security with the help and investment of both the public and private sectors. The later part of the chapter mainly focused on the views of the locals regarding the projects and how they were able to benefit from them. Surprisingly majority of the beneficiaries were not happy with the projects, the debate was mainly focused on the fact that majority of the people were not able to derive benefits from the projects due to the expenses and the narrow selection criteria. On this subject matter, Isaksson & Kotsadam, (2018) offer the local perspective by debating about the tendency of Chinese firms to violate the international labor standards in Africa and the inclination of these firms not to adhere to the national labor laws⁵. This is experienced by the laborers participating in these development schemes. A perspective that is rather orphaned in this book; hence denoting its failure in provision of a much needed impartial view.

In a nutshell the book comprehensively mentions the efforts made by China and highlights the projects initiated with the intention of boosting economic growth in the recipient countries. According to this book, China's development aid has proven to be effective in several countries. Yet there remain certain drawbacks and shortcomings which the book is silent about. The required objectivity can be inculcated by including the engagement of the locals and their perception regarding the development projects. Although book has vaguely described the indigenous experiences of a handful cases especially in Mozambique, however the rest of the chapters lack this aspect. In conclusion the book provides a more of a subjective opinion and cannot be recommended to readers seeking an unbiased opinion on the matter.

Notes

¹ Martorano, B., Metzger, L., & Sanfilippo, M. (2020). *Chinese development assistance and household welfare in Sub-Saharan Africa*. *World Development*, 129, 104909

² Tan-Mullins, M., Mohan, G., & Power, M. (2010). *Redefining 'aid' in the China-Africa context*. *Development and Change*, 41(5), 857-881

³ Fijalkowski, L. (2011). *China's 'soft power' in Africa?* *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 29(2), 223-232.

⁴ Large, D. (2008). *Beyond 'dragon in the bush': the study of China-Africa relations*. *African affairs*, 107(426), 45-61.

⁵ Isaksson, A.-S., & Kotsadam, A. (2018). *Racing to the bottom? Chinese development projects and trade union involvement in Africa*. *World Development*, 106, 284-298.



Our Alumni Community



Namrah Ali

Social Work and Community development

Thesis title: “Factors Impacting Physical Health Of Women: Empirical Evidence From The Slum Areas Of Rawalpindi”

Current place of work: Currently working as Young Development Fellow at Ministry of Planning, Development and Reform. Also working as Visiting Faculty of Government and Public Policy department at NUST.



Nayyar Abbas

Peace and Conflict Studies

Thesis title: “Horizontal Inequalities, Sectarian Identities and Violent Conflict: The Case Study of Gilgit-Baltistan”

Currently I am preparing for Competitive Exams (CSS). However, I have plans to go for a PhD, once I am done with my CSS exams.

Development Studies at NUST began recently and my batch, 2k17, was the second batch in this department, and despite being in its embryonic stage, development studies faculty has vehemently rendered the best subject knowledge and research. My motivation behind choosing Development Studies at NUST was my own interest in the subject of DS. It is a multidimensional subject that helps students to acquire an accumulative knowledge of a variety of subjects at a time. One of the greatest things about this course was that some students had entirely different majors in previous degrees and this diversity in the class has increased learning.

Vice President of NUST's largest society namely NUST Community Service Club (NCSC). This further enhanced my interest towards Social Work and Community Development. I was lucky enough to find this field and be part of something I had looked forward to. I was part of the second batch of Development Studies at S3H. Alhamdulillah, aced the degree with a lot of learning and good memories.

Alumni Profile

Sobia Siddique

Social Work and Community Development

Thesis title: Impact of Premarital Rejections on the Development of Young Adults in Pakistan

I came from a Natural Sciences background and was the only one in my entire class who did Bachelors in Mathematics and wanted to pursue Masters in Development Studies. During the period of my Bachelors degree, I was deeply attracted towards Community Service Projects and served as the



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