

Annually, billions of rupees are fixed for the educational system in budget, but standard of education, imparted to our young generation, is declining.

Mismanagement and corruption have become a part of our system.

**Memoona Arslan** has lamented over few detriments of educational system in Pakistan

**W** created us from clay and endowed us with all the necessities of life and made us superior over other creatures; empowered us with the intellect and wisdom to explore the realities around us.

Knowledge is the essence of life. By attaining knowledge, man entered into an era of science and technology. No doubt, all of these are Allah's blessing upon the human beings. Our religion also lays emphasis on attaining knowledge. Even we have been asked to attain knowledge: "From mother's lap to the graveyard". Even the first verse delivered to the Holy Prophet (SAW) by Almighty Allah, also stressed on attaining knowledge.

Knowledge is just like a deep sea of information — every one wants to be benefited out of it.

# Learning to be literate

News Education 4.3.23



Illustration by Khalid

Our education system is suffering since the initial days of freedom. The situation has not shown any signs of improvement yet. Anyhow, many educational policies were made and a big amount of money was fixed for education in number of five-year plans. But it was just circumscribed to papers. Our people are still under-privileged of a proper stable and modernized education system.

On the time of independence, there were limited number of schools, colleges and universities. Initially, the situation was controlled and improved but due to lack of resources, the pace of development remained slow. According to an estimation, in first five-year plan, 580 million rupees were promised to be spent on education system but 400 million rupees were spent actually. Now our education system is facing new challenges

and problems. Situation is formidable; the world has entered into an era of computer and information technology while our young generation in the backward areas, is still deprived of colleges and schools.

Lack of resources is one of the biggest problem of our system. Most of our rural areas are not dispensed with high or primary schools. And in the case if schools are found, teachers elude to go to those far off places. Similarly, colleges have been constructed in many villages but due to the absence of teachers, students have to go to the other cities for education. Moreover, these educational institutions lack basic necessities — laboratories, libraries and even a comfortable furniture. Curriculum or syllabus for our students is old-fashioned and does not execute the requirements of the time. Our young generation is studying the

same old syllabus which their grandparents have studied many decades ago. Courses for graduation and post-graduation are not adequate for that level.

The medium of instruction in our system is also an important problem. In most of the government schools, the medium of instruction is Urdu and English is not taught properly as a language. Consequently, on higher level students suffer where medium of instruction is English.

Corruption is a factor — attenuating the basis of our education system. Cheating and corruption in examinations is frequent. Many deserving students cannot show good results despite being having the capabilities and most of the incompetent ones show extraordinary performances by using unfair means. But no one is there to ask them. Results and performances are unpredictable.

Privatization in education departments, has brought many negative changes in our system. Private institutions of commerce, business administration and computer sciences, are found on every road and in every street. There is no check and balance on these institutions. Incapable teaching staffs are selling the degrees and producing ineligible graduates there — a burden on our economy.

The trend of private institutions should not be allowed anymore. Sub-standard institutions should be banned. Fake affiliations of these institutions with foreign universities should be checked. They should not be recognized by the government.

Ways have been mutating in selection of fields. In the 80s, our young generation was interested in professional education while after a decade, business administration was the first choice of students. And, now people are mad after computer sciences. Most of the students opt their subjects regardless of their capabilities and interests. There should be a separate department for the guidance and counselling of students to help them in choosing the careers according to their capabilities. Attitude tests should be stated as in other countries.

Research work is not admired in our system. That's why, there are less job opportunities in social sciences. Students avoid to opt these subjects. Research work should be given emphasis. It can bring a revolutionary change in the system.

Scientific knowledge and research work is a major tool in the way of development. In the European countries, people interested in research work are awarded stipends and extra facilities. Students - teacher relationship is an important

factor — contributing a lot in a good educational system. Behaviour of teachers is not friendly in our institutions. They are less competent and avoid to guide the students.

In professional colleges, syllabus is satisfactory but examination system is not sufficing. Most of the students in medical colleges and engineering universities, are not satisfied with the examination system. When one of the doctors was asked about their examination system, it was told by Dr. Zeeshan who has done his MBBS from KE recently: "Multiple choice questions should be adopted in our examinations and they should be practical and clinical."

One of the major drawbacks of our education system is lack of credible poly-technic institutions. Any student who cannot get admission in universities and professional colleges, should not be shy to opt these institution. So, there is a need to establish credible poly-technic institutions.

Our Masters degree is considered equivalent to the graduation of other countries. In the United Kingdom and the USA, graduation is done in sixteen years while in Pakistan, MA is done in sixteen years. So the students who want to go abroad for higher education, are considered graduates and not post-graduates. A planning is required to make our graduates equivalent to the graduates of other countries.

Despite all the drawbacks of our education system, it is producing competent and intelligent graduates who are proving their worth even abroad. But these students are not given reward of their hard work. Most of the students deserving scholarships, are deprived of it and non-deserving are sent abroad on scholarships. On the other hand, many people reluctant to stay in the country, are not given jobs. Their unemployment influences them to leave the country. It results in the brain drain, and many of the intellectuals produced by our system, are not utilized properly.