

WHETHER it is a private concern or a public organization, resource human

Human resource development in Pakistan

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development has become an important part of its long-term planning. Evidence can be seen from the special attention, developed countries have put on their HR development and experienced significant progress and development in all socio-economic areas.

Human resources development is essential for both individual success and also overall national prosperity and development. Pakistan, though being rich in natural resources with a reasonable population, still has not relived itself of its poverty shackles. Only because it suffers from a serious lack of skilled human resources.

Incessant deterioration and decay of government institutions, has also played havoc with the quality-training opportunities to local development practitioners. In this scenario, the development of human resources for community based and participatory rural and urban development is an urgent and dire need.

There is now a need of strengthening the capacity and capability both of the individuals and institutions with a view to make them capable to compete in the global economy. In this regard, the first priority should be given to standardized universal education, with particular attention to overcoming

existing disparities in educational and training opportunities, and achievements between males and females. A modern syllabus should be immediately introduced.

The average literacy rate in Pakistan is a poor 35.7 per cent, as compared to India's 49.9 per cent. World Bank figures show that Pakistan's literacy rate is even lower than some of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

The most distressing aspect is the state of education among women. On the whole, their literacy rate is not even half compared to men. But the gap further widens in rural areas where the female literacy, at 5.5 per cent, is just about one-fifth of rural male literacy. The literacy rate of 5.5 per cent is also the lowest in the world for any section of people.

Other averages, like those of enrolment and drop out rates, further enforce the dismal state of female education in Pakistan. Primary enrolment rate for girls is 15 per cent below the total enrolment rates, and eight per cent below secondary enrolment. Girls moving from primary to secondary schools in 1987 were nine per cent less than boys,

implying a higher percentage of drop out for girls. A prime factor behind this is lower school availability and accessibility for girls. The distance to a school may not be the most critical factor for boys. But for girls, and especially those in the rural areas, it makes all the difference between a literate and a non-literate status.

In a way these distressing literacy rates are not very surprising. Education has never been a priority issue with Pakistan's planners, as is evident from the extremely low amount allocated for this sector in the budget. It was as low as 1.4 per cent of GNP in the early '70s, and remained around 1.5 per cent between 1975 and 1985. Since then it has increased to 2.3 per cent, but is still nowhere near the requirement.

Like other developing countries, Pakistan also suffers from poverty. About 60 per cent of the population lacks access to potable water and also 61 per cent people don't have sanitation facilities. There is a dire need to deal with this issue and chalk out a collective strategy in order to control and eventually wipeout poverty from society. Because,

owing to the long spell of poverty, people are constantly deprived of primary requirements of life, such as education and health facilities, which are the key instruments for HR development.

As long as we do not have skilled and knowledge-based human resources, there will be no sustainable socio-economic development in the country. There is a dire need of time to focus on human development by adopting a comprehensive short, as well as long term HRD programmes in order to impart quality scientific education, constant training, skills development, team building, community mobilization, awareness and development, sensitization, organizational development, and updating human resources planning and policies.

Without having qualified and well-skilled manpower, it is impossible to compete in the fast growing global economy. It is ultimately the HR development, which leads to institutional strengthening and capacity development at the national and as well as sub-regional level. So, a sound strategy should have to be designed to improve the basic skills needed for manpower working in public sector and private sector institutions in this competitive

environment. It is a recognized fact that the ability of a country to have sustainable development is determined by the capacity and capability of its people. Human beings have had a key role for sustainable development.

The majority of our population, which lives in the countryside and is poor, and also devoid of the advanced knowledge facilities, they have been totally cut off from the mainstream socio-economic development activities of the country. Therefore, it is the utmost demand of time that institutions should be established and managed for the development of human resources at the community, district, provincial and national levels.

The following measures need to be taken for the skill development of the human resources.

* The entire education system should be revamped at the primary to university level, to prepare students with a focus on both conceptual and practical knowledge. Vocational education and training has always been neglected in the country, a comprehensive and practical industry-oriented vocational education and training strategy should be evolved for the working class.

* Science and technology

based approach is needed for sustainable human resources development in the country. Short as well as long-term skill development programmes must be launched in order to introduce skillful manpower.

* To ensure the community participation in all socio-economic developmental programmes, with a view to developing in them, skills and leadership qualities to handle development activities in life. It is noted that we have never had a trust in our people, that has resulted in the failure of our national development programmes. It is therefore time to make efforts for community empowerment, in order to develop in them, confidence and also capacity building.

* To ensure the role of women in the development phase, including support for gender-specific initiatives.

* Make HRD a priority in national development efforts.

* To have constant training in professional management areas.

* To improve the knowledge, skills and perspectives senior administrators in managerial leadership. * To ensure quality education, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, social protection and other activities which directly address social development.