

General Elections 2008

Policy Commitments of Political Parties

Education

Access to quality education is among the basic needs of every citizen, irrespective of race, gender, class, or religion. Statistics indicate that majority of the population in Pakistan is lagging behind in educational attainment due to poor accessibility and quality of education services. Pakistan has a literacy rate of 56% only with huge disparities along the lines of gender, status and region. For example, literacy rates vary from 77.8% among the urban male population of Karachi to 1.96% among the female population of Dera Bugti. This is indicative of the absence of a national response to education- related issues despite the clear articulation of the responsibility of the State under Article 37(b) of the 1973 Constitution.

According to Pakistan Social Living and Measurement Standards Survey 2004-05, the Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is 86% at Primary level, 46% at Middle level and 44% at Secondary level. Whereas, the dropout rate at the primary level of children aged 10-18 has decreased 5 percent in recent years. Low public spending is among the major reasons for poor educational indicators. According to Education Census 2005, total public sector spending on education (by federal, provincial and district government) was just 2.21% of GDP in 2005-06.

The table provided below identifies some of the major challenges in education, policy actions needed to address these challenge, and commitment of political parties whether they will implement the policy actions, if voted to power, after forthcoming general elections.

	Challenge	Policy Action Needed	Political Party's Response
1	Under MTF, the government has committed to achieve 70% literacy rate till 2010. With current literacy rate as 56%, a 4.6% increase per annum is required to achieve this target.	Will your political party take steps to ensure that this target is achieved within first three years of the government?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
2	Given the financial hardships and cultural barriers, either children do not go for education or students, particularly girls, drop out before completing their schooling.	Will your political party take steps to ensure universal free and compulsory education up to class X by 2015?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
3	The dropout rate is quite high, as 87% students leave the school without completing their secondary school education.	Will your party take initiatives to reduce drop out rate at the middle level from 87% to at least 40%?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
4	There is a general consensus that quality of teachers is very poor and public sector does not have the wherewithal to train these teachers. This is evident from the fact that teacher training institutions, in most cases, do not have a permanent budget line for teacher training.	Will your political party take steps to ensure that all teacher training institutions in Pakistan have a permanent budget line for teacher training?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
5	According to Economic Survey of Pakistan 2006-07, the expenditure on education sector is 2.42% of GDP, which is far below the	Will your party increase the budgetary allocations for education sector to 4% of GDP?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

	Challenge	Policy Action Needed	Political Party's Response
	minimum standard of 4% of GDP.		Other response: _____ _____
6	Government has not been able to consume all the funds allocated for education. The spending has been dismally low at the rate of 33%.	Will your political party take steps to improve coordination between Ministry of Finance and Education and the efficiency of education departments?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
7	Pakistan does not have a dedicated cadre/pool of personnel trained in Education Management. This adversely affects the quality and delivery of educational services.	Will your political party introduce a dedicated cadre/pool of education managers?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
8	There is no quality assurance framework or standards available for educational achievements. This compromises the accountability and performance evaluation of different actors in the education system.	Will your political party ensure that quality assurance framework and minimum standards are in place and working?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____
9	Private sector in education is playing an important role. It makes up 29% of the total education institutions and caters to 33% of the total enrolment. However, citizens have concerns about their quality, services and value for money.	Will your political party establish regulatory bodies to regulate the private sector education service providers?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Other response: _____ _____ _____