

Results of Politics on Academia in Universities of Pakistan

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A B S T R A C T-- *Politics in education is controversial issue in Pakistan. In history under military rulers, political activities of teachers unions and student's unions were kept banned but it couldn't be implemented in democratic era. Democracy without education is hypocrisy rather than an instrument for social change. Functions of education and democracy both are to motivate, improve and develop society. Teachers' role in politics may be investigated properly. This study was aimed to determine the teachers' interest and involvement in politics, its effects at higher level of education in Pakistan and to find out solution of the problem. 200 teachers from 5 federal universities were taken as sample. The results emerged that majority of male teachers supported that politically well-aware students of can play positive role in the improvement of the society. Majority of female teachers pleaded for academic excellence. Study recommends realistic and beneficial political activities to be encouraged by teachers in universities.*

Keywords--*Politics, Teacher Unions, Democracy, Education, Hypocrisy.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Politics is a supra system of the society. Education is a sub-system. Whenever a society feels that according to the need of the time a social, economic or technological change is required its politicians seek the help of experts of these fields. Education is considered a main instrument for change. Education policies and plans are formulated by the experts but the political heads of the committees approve them. They also monitor the implementation of these policies and plans. After some time, they are evaluated and if need arises re-planning process is started.

If the supra system is shaky ineffective and corrupt then its reflection can be seen in education system. In developing countries education has failed to decrease injustice and inequalities in the society due to inefficient, ineffective and corrupt political systems. Interference of immature, inadequate, inappropriate and incapacitated political set up in the education system is bringing negative results in the society. Improvement in political system depends on education and improvement in education system depends on political system. They are interdependent. Hence both are interlinked and need promotion at the same time.

Keeping in view the interdependency of both the existing study is focused. Through education system we can prepare the people who have the leadership quality. Higher education system of any country plays an important role to produce potential members of the society who can run the society successfully. So our educational institution at higher level can become learning academies as well through which teachers, administration, organizers community members can promote leadership qualities among the youngsters. Teachers as nation

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builders mainly have the significant role that can develop the personality of their students as the leaders of tomorrow through teaching learning process. To what extent our teachers at higher level perform their role as leader maker? How much they are involved in positive politics? To what extent they have a freedom to prorogate the political ideas during their teaching learning process? So the main concern of this study is to explore the role of politics in education.

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Politics is a supra system while education is sub-system of the society. Both are interlinked and interdependent. If the supra system is shaky, ineffective and corrupted then its reflection can be seen in education system. Respectively improvement requires for both. Question arises; how does politics affect the higher education in Pakistan? For answering this existing study was intended to examine the positive and negative involvement of politicians in education particularly in universities.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

These objectives were focused during the study:

1. To determine the teachers' interest and level of involvement in politics.
2. To examine the effects of politics at higher level of education in Pakistan.
3. To find out proper solution of the problem.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education is considered as a global issue in world politics. Integration of education with politics and its political impact will be explored in following paragraphs.

Education system had played vital function for enhancing the societal, fiscal, scientific and technological growth of the state. It is considered as the basic need of every society. Therefore, standard of education particularly tertiary level directly links with human development because higher education develops the human skills which directly affect the socio-economic development of any society. (Mohanthly, 2000). Higher education delivered to masses through colleges and universities. Today, tertiary education is accepted like investment that is essential about financial and societal upgrading of the nation (Engwall, 2014). According to Skaggs (2014), it is the main purpose of the universities to provide individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary for performing responsibilities in different professions

The situation of universities in Pakistan is very serious. It is not because of people are inherently lacked appropriate talent or moral values in comparison to the people of any other nation of the world but because of long lasting colonial period and for time imitation of other nation's education system and politically created imbalance that has blemished the several qualities of higher education and higher education contains the shocking position about the improper development of human capabilities (Erdkunde, 2015). University level education had a modest start in the history of Pakistan. At the time of independence Pakistan had only one institution for Higher Education University of the Punjab, Lahore (Khawaja, 1996). Later on, Karachi University was established in 1950. The increase in the number of universities followed in subsequent years. Lahore University of Management Sciences

(LUMS) was the first private university in Pakistan, established in 1984, followed by Agha Khan University in 1985. University Grants Commission (UGC) has been established in 1947 and later on revised in 1974, which accredited the higher education institutions in Pakistan. In 2002, “University Grants Commission (UGC)” came in its modern form as “Higher Education Commission (HEC)”. HEC while performing tasks like primary funding, managing, regulating and accrediting efforts in higher education, is an autonomous, independent constitutionally established institution of Pakistan. HEC performed significant responsibility for increasing standard of tertiary education in Pakistan.

For improving and enhancing the quality of higher education, Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has established “Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs)” initially at ten different public sector universities in 2006. Later on, in 2007-08, further twenty QECs were established in different public sector universities for the improvement of their standards regarding academics, teaching and learning. The establishment of QECs in the remaining institution both in public and private sectors is in progress (HEC, 2010). As a result of these efforts, the government has reported positive and satisfactory picture of the higher education but ground realities based on the conclusions of different researches are totally others. These researches criticize the quality of higher education in Pakistan. It clearly highlights that the quality of education in higher education institutions is quite a new subject because universities only subject to financial audit annually but very less talk about the academic audit. But, it now has been realized these vital factors such as worth of learners, faculty, content, infrastructure and research of universities contribute for shaping and determine the excellence of universities in Pakistan.

In our society, role played time to time by political parties needs no discussion. From the very beginning of the history of the Pakistan, people in these parties exercises the powers and turned the situations in their favor. Individuals related to educational institutions (Schools, Colleges and Universities) such as students, faculty members and people in administration were often remained in action with different political groups. They all joined these groups by keeping in view different viewpoint. This association with political parties spilt the individuals in to numerous groups and the political leaders exert external pressure to affect the decisions of Universities (Almond and Coleman in Okunamiri, 2005).

This idea was further supported by Nwankwo, (2014), as it was revealed that the politicians influence educational system according to their political policies by interacting with and turning the educational policies in their own favor. These practices further provide basis for political pressure on the communications and declarations of higher education institutions (HEIs). This so-called affiliation of working personals with the political parties give rise to various student’s associations formed within educational institutions. But several authors opposed this idea of political affiliations at the educational institutions. This influence definitely depends on country and time (Kogan, 1984; Karol & Ginsburg, 1980; Nnoli, 2003; Scribner, Aleman, & Maxcy 2003). Mostly politicians from under developed nations use the students and staff members of the universities to for their own interests and enjoying their authority by employing their political agenda in institutions. Overall political workers try their best to apprehend the underlying thought of the educationist because they want to enjoy authority over minds, talents progressive opinion over people (Ogbonnaya, 2009). Pakistan is also facing almost the similar condition as different politicians and influential people exercise their power in universities for controlling and streamlining the actions. Resultantly they involve in the appointments administrative and academic employees of universities (Both

faculty and staff). Therefore universities are badly affected by the political interference and this interference directly affects the academic and administrative performance of university staff. Ultimately universities earn the negative fame among the national and international scenario.

Across the world teachers of universities are considered as innovators of the societies who prepare the nations for competing the global challenges and obtaining the required targets of higher education. Being human resources university teachers also play significant role for attaining the enhanced institutional achievement. Both teaching and research has been considered as the professional career demands for the university teachers. Oshagbemi (2000) revealed that the basic functions of university faculty are classified as teaching, research and management. Therefore, it is huge responsibility rest with the institutions to provide opportunity in sufficient amount. University hires new faculty members for ensuring the demands of high quality achievement and research activities of students in universities.

If we go through the scenario followed in different countries other than advanced countries which are making strenuous efforts for making the performance of the higher education institutions, where most of the times new appointees are fresh ones. Therefore, higher education institutions at the time of shortage of experienced faculty, these universities require more selections of faculty members for enhancing the output of concerned institutions.

In Pakistan it is totally different scenario in term of teacher's selection, promotion and service. There is proper procedure available to be followed at the time of selection and promotion of faculty members. But, in actual practice, most of the selection and promotion are made according to the will of politicians working behind the boards in universities. Because in Pakistan, Governor of the particular province is considered as the chancellor of the all universities working in public sector in that province. Overall selection of vice chancellors is finalized through political interference. It provides window for the political figures to exercise their pressure and turn the decisions of universities according to their own interest. It definitely shattered the interest and motivation of the people who actually eligible for particular position but pushed aside as a result of injustice and disliking behavior of the selection board. On the other hand persons selected by politicians fail to provide services necessary to improve the academic and research demands of the students.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was survey and only universities of capital territory were delimited to conduct this survey. Hence population of this study comprised on all faculty members of five federal universities. Further twenty teachers from each university were selected randomly as sample of study. Total sample of the study was hundred teachers of these universities. While focusing the main constructs of objectives of study such as teachers' interest and involvement in politics, effects of politics on education were focused during the development of questionnaire. This questionnaire was developed on three point scale. Researcher herself collected the data. Mean score was used for analyzing the data.

5.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Keeping in view the results of table No 1 following findings were drawn:

1. Majority of respondents opined that politics is a supra system of any society as the mean score came out to be 2.9.
2. The mean score of item No.2 (2.99) highlights that educational policies and plans are decided by the politicians.
3. Every person has own philosophy, teacher is not only a person but a super being of the society, who is the best channel to transmit the ideology of any society. Regarding this item majority opined that every teacher has some ideology of life and mean score came out, 2.71.
4. Although every teacher has some ideology. But in our society majority of the teachers can not propagate their ideas freely, as mean score (1.53) depicted.
5. Mean score (2.26) reveals that sometimes teachers discuss the burning political issues among the faculty.
6. Majority of respondents opined that they do not discuss political problems in classrooms. So the mean score calculated as 1.95.
7. The mean score of this item as 2.79 depicted that every political party of the country has the students' wing.
8. The analysis of this item showed that active participation of students is harmful, as mean score came out 2.51.
9. Majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement, as our educational system entails welfare, security and prosperity of the society. Hence mean score was calculated, 1.59.
10. The mean score of this item is 1.39, which depicts that our matured politicians do not lead the society to development.
11. Majority of the respondents opined that awareness of the politics is necessary for students, as these are the tomorrow's leaders. Hence mean score came out, 2.88.
12. The mean score of this item is 1.65, which revealed that majority of the respondents stated that our desires are not properly translated and materialized through our existing education system.
13. When we say students are tomorrow's leaders, then definitely their teachers will be called leaders makers. Regarding this when the respondents were asked about the teacher's role as politicians. Hence mean score came out 1.33.
14. The mean score of this item is 2.75, which depicts that male teachers discuss politics more than females in institutions.
15. Majority of the respondents opined that politicians use students force for their own purposes. For this statement mean score came out 1.72.
16. Respondent at large scale agreed that teachers were influenced by the party preferences. Mean score 2.8 also indicated that party preference mostly affect the teachers at university level.
17. As political affects the universities particularly in the selection and promotions of university staff from higher to lower level. Even selection of vice chancellor is purely decided by political interference in Pakistan. Therefore, majority of the teachers were of the opinion that politicians particularly ministers of sitting government affected the selection and promotions of universities staff. It was proved by 2.94 mean score also.

18. While focusing the effects of politics on teachers and majority of agreed that they had been suffered too much due to the political pressure as mean score came out 2.85.

19. Majority of the teachers agreed that political interference affected the performance of university staff. As it was proved by 2.86 mean score.

20. Teachers at large scale were of the opinion that academic freedom of teachers can increase the quality of education in universities. Hence Mean score came out 2.9.

IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Our society is developing as well as inflexible. People want freedom of speech and social justice but the governments are under the control of elites and almost corrupt. People hesitate to tell truth. Results of the study are not so clear due to oppression and hypocrisy. It is doubtless that every educated person feels effects of political decisions more than illiterate one. The general trends of the results manifest serious involvement of educated and being educated persons in the politics.

Keeping in view the analysis of the study it is concluded that politics is the supra system of society which affects the other sub-systems. Education is one of those systems which is directly affected by the politics but it can also affect politics as well. In our country all educational policies and plans decided by the politicians. To some extent our teachers are involved in decision making process.

It is also concluded that like all teachers of every nation, Pakistani teachers have also their ideology. But unluckily most of them feel hesitation to propagate their ideas freely. Although teachers are known as social change agent but through this study we can easily conclude that our teachers are kept under pressure by the political system. They are not allowed to discuss critical problems in classrooms as well. Focusing this situation how can we expect from our teachers to bring change in society and to prepare today's nations as tomorrow's leaders.

As politicians are the leaders of the society who can run the country according to their party motto. For keeping themselves' successfully they mostly use the students particularly at higher level of education. So it is concluded that every political party has students wing in higher level educational institutions. Majority of the politicians used the students for their own purposes. This is the reason that students who are involved in politics, they mostly become the cause of indiscipline activities in the institutions. Due to these activities active participation of students in politics is discouraged. If they involve themselves all the time in politics then they will definitely neglect their main purpose of life as excellent in academic achievement. The main reason of this behavior is only our matured politicians who don't lead them towards the positive development. They are also not sincere with the development of the society.

It is ideally said that politics is the improvement while education is the motivation but the prevailing situation of our society is totally different. Due to negative involvement of politics in education, this education system is unable to entail welfare, security and prosperity in society, further our desires are not also translated and transformed properly through education.

It is also concluded that teachers with having different attributes, can play their role as politicians as Paulo Friar said "teacher/instructor is politician. So if they perform their role as politicians that they will be able to

prepare the students as the leaders of nation. For transmitting the leadership qualities among the student's teachers must have these qualities. For this purpose, awareness of politics is necessary for teachers and students as well.

Though political system is supra system but it has negative effects on higher education. As higher education develops the human skills for society but teachers as developers at higher level are badly affected by the political interference in terms of their selection, promotion and academic freedom. Excessive political interference compels them to go against the merit policies which cause the ineffective performance of eligible and ineligible persons at institutions level.

For improving the quality education teachers may be involved in educational policy decisions, they may be given freedom of thought and speech, politicians may be banned for misusing the power of teachers and students and undue political interference which violates the law and merit policy may be strictly punished.

Overall it is concluded that implied politics is necessary for the development of country. Good principles and good practice of politics may be conveyed through the teachers for the betterment of society. Education as is called motivation which propagates the good values and these good values are the part of politics.

Hence these implications were also derived through this study as in Pakistan politicians are not true democrats. They are mostly ill-educated. They are interested in their material gains. Therefore, they try to get inducted their substandard kith and kin in universities. They do not appreciate innovative and latest technological programs. They also create hurdles in effective academic evaluation of the students and the staff.

Though existing study comprised on universities of Pakistan but the valid and reliable data collection from reasonable number of universities representing the whole country and from politicians was difficult. For female researcher it becomes cumbersome to visit them again and again for getting their responses. Time and travelling also limit the scope of the study. Therefore, study was delimited only on five federal universities and its findings cannot be generalized. But for future researches sample may be extended. In future studies may also be conducted to examine the qualifications of the politicians. On the other side universities may conduct study to formulate the training programs for politicians. A study that in the administrative structure of the universities only highly educated politicians may contribute to prepare the next generation for fifth generation and hybrid war. Role of media in spreading the awareness about institutional merit policies may also be studied.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations are drawn:

1. Teachers may be involved in decision making process regarding educational policies and plans.
2. Teachers may be given the freedom of speech and freedom of thought as well.
3. Politicians may avoid for misusing the power of youth only for seeking their own purposes.
4. Active participation of students in negative politics may be discouraged by the teachers and the leaders.
5. Teachers may develop the leadership qualities consciously among the students through their teaching learning process.

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