

National Webinar on Education System of Pakistan

REMOVING PITFALLS: REIMAGINING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF PAKISTAN

By: ISLAMABAD INSTITUTE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION
(IICR)



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WORDS

Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution aims to draw strategically comprehensive analysis on the contemporary conflicts. Moreover we not only aims to draw analysis but also to present foreseeable way-forward to the peaceful end of the conflicts.

I personally believe that it is that time when our country need think-tanks to play actively the role they are destined to. It is time that nation works collectively to overcome national and international hurdles. Yet there is a marathon to run in this regard

Sincerely,

Ms. Sabah Aslam

Founder/Executive Director IICR

IICR



TABLE OF CONTENTS

02 ABOUT IICR

03 CONCEPT NOTE

04 WEBINAR PROCEEDINGS

09 RECOMMENDATIONS

11 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

13 PRESS COVERAGE

ABOUT IICR



Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) is an autonomous, independent research based think tank which believes in ethics of research. Regular research is conducted with the aim of a deep and insight based analysis in order to resolve various issues associated with peace and conflict at the domestic, regional and international level. IICR has a vibrant team of experts, researchers and scholars who have immersed themselves to make the purpose a success.

Mission

Apart IICR believes in conducting in-depth research keeping research ethics into consideration. Our mission is to conduct an independent and unbiased research to propose sound solutions and policy recommendations to deal with humanitarian and security challenges of Pakistan and the region. In addition, we are closely monitoring China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), its progress and its implications for not only Pakistan but for the whole region.

Goals

- a) To conduct in-depth research on issues concerning Pakistan.
- b) To identify key areas of cooperation especially in the field of security.
- c) To document, disseminate and strengthen peace and conflict resolution efforts through analytical discourse.
- d) To identify, articulate and evaluate conflict issues through research and other academic pillars i.e. round-tables, workshops, seminars, and conferences.
- e) To promote post-conflict rehabilitation while initiating and contributing to local, national, and regional peace and conflict transformation initiatives.
- f) To remain committed to promote core social values, as well as public awareness and practice of constructive conflict resolution.
- g) To enhance socio-economic and security environment through informed dialogue, and debate on key issues.
- h) To critically analyse Pakistan's political, socio-economic and foreign policy challenges and to support efforts to integrate the country.
- i) To integrate youth in research work particularly to conflict resolution and making peace efforts.
- j) To secure friendly and cooperative international system, &
- k) To present actual positive image of Pakistan.

Publications

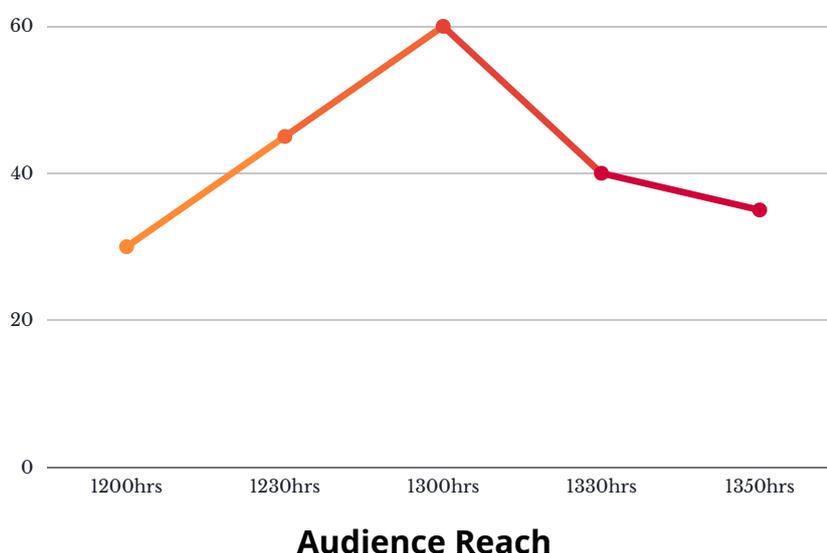
Monographs, Annual Reports, Monthly Briefs, Special Reports, and Weekly Rundown

Concept Note

Progress comes with the growth in knowledge that is why Athens became epitome of knowledge and Sparta became obsolete in terms of transcending knowledge to the civilizations. However, west continued to focus on knowledge-based education whereas South Asia remained in perplexed web for devising an education system which can benefit both the system and the person itself. In this regard Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) is organizing a one-day webinar titled “Removing Pitfalls: Reimagining the Education System of Pakistan”

Webinar Proceedings

WEBINAR WAS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT 1200HRS PST. MS SABAH ASLAM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER ISLAMABAD INSTITUTE OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION(IICR) WELCOMED ALL THE GUESTS AND EMINENT SPEAKERS. AFTER FORMALLY WELCOMING THE DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND PARTICIPANTS SHE THEN GAVE OPENING REMARKS AND MODERATED THE SESSION. THE WEBINAR WAS ATTENDED BY DIVERSE SET OF AUDIENCE.



**Facebook Reach
after session was
posted**
185

**Accumulative reach
on digital
newspapers**
359

**Social Media press
release reach**
518

Webinar: Removing Pitfalls: Reimagining the Education System of Pakistan

29-12-2020

Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution - IICR

Comprehensive Report

On Tuesday, December 29, 2020, Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) organized a webinar on education system of Pakistan, titled “*Removing Pitfalls: Re-imagining the Education System of Pakistan*”. The webinar included eminent speakers which highlighted the existing lacunas in the education system and how it can be improved through various means. The prime aim of the conference was to find why the existing system unfortunately fails to deliver talented professionals who can compete and excel with the growing world, and also fails to polish the intelligent brains. Majority of the population of Pakistan is young and are talented, yet a faulty education system is unable to provide them a platform where they can furnish their potential, and then thrive to serve the nation.

The session was moderated by **Ms. Sabah Aslam**, Founder IICR, while the rest of the roster included, **Dr. Amna Mehmood**, Dean Social Sciences IIUI, **Dr. Tanveer Afzal**, Assistant professor Department of Education AIOU, **Mr. Khurram Ellahi Khan**, PhD Scholar and Motivational Speaker and **Ms. Naureen Ibrahim**, Member National Assembly.

Khurram Ellahi

He presented his views on the existing pitfalls of Pakistan’s education system through the philosophical aspect. According to him a student sitting in a class half-heartedly, not showing interest in a presentation which is being taught, is not to be termed as education. The Greeks first find the answer to the idea of knowledge and education. It is actually the ideology that the mind embraces, and the body tries to act upon. In our scenario, we can say that nearly every student has access to Google, yet we do not ponder upon, explore or quest for knowledge as we are supposed to do. He further added knowledge is purposed to develop a worldview for a human. It is the way through which we can differentiate between truth and falsehood in the least possible time. Currently, our universities are providing everything except for the knowledge in its true sense.

Gaining education is a spiritual process that develops a relation between a teacher and a student, but now students attend the classes just to fulfil the attendance requirement. The natural urge for the knowledge that forced the Aristotle to go to Plato, Mevlana Rumi to Tabrez, Bulley Shah to Anayat that developed a universal course paving way for nourishing science is nowhere to be found in the young minds. Teachers have to focus on the point that in the current AI trend, how they have to play their significant role. We have to develop the passion in the students that makes them revive their perspective and thinking. Quoting a poem of Allama Iqbal, he said that this whole universe is an academic learning system, all that we need is to have the eye to ponder upon. Our teaching system is lacking its effectiveness for a proper functioning education system, it confines rather broadening the vision for student.

Dr. Amina Mehmood (Dean Social Sciences, Islamic International University)

Dr. Amina is delivering her expertise in teaching for 30 years. According to her, our education system is job oriented its ultimate outcome is that the student gets the job in the practical field. However, unaware of diversity and how young minds have various interest the education system is focusing on producing workers rather than inventors. She said that in the past, schools use to arrange activities which brought the skills out of the students, but now there are rarely any school which offers such activities where students can choose extra-curricular activities as per their interest. Moreover, some of the brilliant minds have been drained by this education system as it focuses on grades of the students, and on their interest and the subjects they excel in. Our academic culture is mostly focused on reproducing the same what is written in the books. Students who fail to get good grades are denied admission in their field of interest, so it causes a lot of damage. It is the time to redesign our education policy. In pursuit of good grades our students are losing the ability of creativity in them. Moreover, Heavy backpacks affect the physical and phycological health and learning of student. It is time that we widen the scope of teaching while students abroad are learning multiple subjects ours are stuck to the basics. In order to do that an advanced learning mechanism needs to be built. Students at the primary level must be taught different subjects including sociology, life of heroes, English, Urdu, Islamiat, and Mathematics. International exams prioritize Mathematics to assess the learning of the student and it is quite important. Our students tend to escape learning Mathematics, yet they encounter it as a subject when they get admission in BS degree. Schools in United Kingdom provided a creative learning environment to the students,

that was fruitful for their learning and it made them connect more to nature. Here we are focusing on to produce engineers and doctors and we are not focusing on their training. Our colleges and universities are producing more and more doctors and engineers, that are not competent, and the result is frustration along with hatred towards the system. Henceforth, we should also focus on the paramedics and skilled laborers. In short, interest of the student must be taken into consideration, and their skills must be polished.

Dr. Tanveer Afzal (Assistant Professor, Allama Iqbal Open University)

Dr. Tanveer gave a detailed presentation which holistically defined every aspect in technical manner and with technical solutions. He discussed about how the context of learning affects our leaning style. According to him many students are surfers and scanners rather learners and it's the system to be blamed rather students because they are never introduced to learning mechanism in true sense. It is practically impossible that all students absorb maximum information. From the moment a child is born parents impose their professional desires on to them to be a doctor or engineer. What we fail to understand that this depends upon the attitude an aptitude which that child is bestowed with. Such imposition detracts the child from its inbuilt skills and talent. The goal should be to make every student learn, but unfortunately, our systems concentrates on the students who are going to be doctors and engineers. All the stake holders, parents, teachers, and managers are interested to know how the child might get admission in a medical or engineering college rather actually knowing what the child is capable of doing. In this regard effective learning is important; however, we are focusing on outcome learning rather. Boards examining students also needs to be reconsidered, paper setting is not following the international standards which results in incompetency of the students. Exams mostly follow the memorizing pattern which tests memory rather skill. The teachers are not demanding the creative thinking from students, rather we are satisfied if students score more marks by just reproducing the lesson word by word. Adding more he said that we have to engage students in setting their own goals and make them self-motivated. Teaching techniques such as brainstorming, problem solving method, Cooperative Learning Technique are commonly used in different education systems. The question is, are our teachers using such techniques and the answer is NO! So, we have to find out that why aren't they using such effective methods. One of the reasons is the faulty education system that is destroying us. The learning must be focused on skill, it is a 4-step cycle based upon motivation from past

experiences, analyzing the information, drafting hypothesis and then going for practical application. However, in our system, we are just memorizing, grasping and reproducing it in a three-hour exam. He added that we need to understand that learning is a process, not a product and we cannot quantify learning, yet we are grading assignments and exams. Our system demotivates the learner, if they score low grades, and we consider the marks as the reflection of his ability, and it is not right. So, the solution is to assess the student so to improve the learning process. So, the learning must be top-most priority, and to check whether the person is capable to get admission in medical college or engineering.

Miss. Noreen Ibrahim (Member National Assembly)

MNA Noreen Ibrahim in her talk expressed serious concerns over the education system of Pakistan. She said that we are lacking professional teachers, who can guide and properly educate the student. Lack of education is root of problem. We are not making humans, we are making robots that are just running after degrees, so that they can find a job. With the country facing serious challenges, problems related to education system are not being sorted out. But what matters more than the content is the teacher. Teachers in our system are just following monotonous routine to make students memorize the lessons. Teachers have a huge impact on student, so they play a crucial role, therefore, teachers training is significantly important. So, we hope that we design policy that brings forward assertive teachers.

Recommendations:

Throughout the webinar there was a consensus that the education system of Pakistan needs serious consideration and there is a need of great changes. In this regard one nation curriculum could be one step, a positive one but its not all. Under the light of points which the worthy speakers raised few recommendations could be made.

- One nation curriculum is one thread to the web of issues which are needed to be covered. It indeed is a significant step in order to curb the issues Pakistan is facing, however it should be coupled with other needs as well.
- There should also be devised mechanism which is specifically aimed at teachers training. So far most of the teacher trainings are done by private sectors and foreign organization but the need of the hour is a devised plan by the government.
- As education is the matter of provinces after 18th amendment in the constitution of Pakistan. The government should devise a plan and develop a model for federal than it can establish a board of educationists and experts which can assist provinces in order to draw a plan on similar lines in order to train teachers.
- The government of Pakistan should minimize the role of private educational institutions and raise the standards of governments own educational facilities which can in return make education accessible to all.
- Educational models of other countries are needed to be studied and shall be re-conceptualized under the societal settings of Pakistan rather imposing them as it is in Pakistan.
- School under private associations shall be closely linked and over watched by the government of Pakistan in order to stop private involvement and manipulation with the educational system of Pakistan.
- Another issue which is faced by the population of Pakistan when it comes to education is accessibility, its been 73 years and there are areas where children have to cross miles in order to reach schools. The government needs to build schools which can be easily accessed by natives one of the working models is in working condition where every sector has multiple government educational facilities.

- Knowledge based learning is dire need of current system. Without it we shall not be aiming high that our students can compete with international market. They merely will serve as their labor force to international entrepreneurs .
- In order to have knowledge-based learning, conventional learning processes are needed to be abandoned and new methods shall be adopting this also include new updated contemporary textbooks and new teaching methods.
- There could also be one thing which can be adopted, schools shall be open in learning process rather designating one textbook or subject there should be an updated course outline but not specific textbook which students follow. In this way the learning process would be open, and students can widen their thinking process and think out of that specific course book. It is indeed easy as in this world of technology and internet accessibility, students can access easily to more and diverse knowledge.
- One of the key aspects of education system is examination process. So far, the examination process only assesses the memorization capacity of the student rather actual learning. In some cases, at university level few universities do exercise to assess learning capacity rather memorizing capacity but that is too late to be exercised. The analytical mode of examination shall be in play since the very start of education career of child.
- In order to make everything workable, the first what needs to be done is to build engaging classrooms. Such classrooms not only enhance the student behavior but also speed up the cognitive ability.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

1. What's the solution, what's the way forward? The students are being taught old curriculum; shouldn't it be according to the modern times?

Khurram Ellahi: The Holy Quran beautifully envelops every topic related to science, astronomy, physics, it is that we have to explore, ponder and read to gain knowledge. So, in the current era of AI, this is not a point of argument at all. With Google in our hands we can have a grip on any topic without the independence on any educational institution. We have to come out of our comfort zone to know more about the universe.

Noreen Ibrahim: She said that the content doesn't matter at all, it's about the teacher that has to teach. To compete with the world, we have to develop a passion inside ourselves. So well-educated teachers are important, who give respect, impart quality education, and then earn respect from students.

2. Please differentiate between Madrassah and school education system?

Khurram Ellahi: Modern schools allow you to specialize in any one subject. While Madrassahs require you to learn about every subject. When you read a certain verse from Quran, it is now your responsibility, to discover about that aspect around you. You pledge to Almighty that I am going to search for it. Provided that the teacher guides you completely, Madrassah systems are more comprehensive as compared to modern school systems.

3. From where trained teachers will come?

Dr. Tanveer Afzal: We have to reconsider our policy to employ and recruit teachers. Professional teachers must be hired following a proper system.

Noreen Ibrahim: It is most important to develop a mechanism, to hire teachers according to their aptitude and qualification. And check whether they are fit for the purpose, plus teacher's training is necessary.

4. When we are teaching western curriculum, how can we impart nationalism in the nation?

Khurram Ellahi: Allama Mohammad Iqbal lived in the imperialist era, he read the British philosophers, yet he didn't get their impact. Rather you have to read and go through opponents' context as well so to have more grip on knowledge. Nationalism is not verified by reading others curriculum. Yet no one says that we have to leave our ideology while reading the imperialist context, it is our fear inside that stops us from moving forward.

This webinar concluded after the question answer session, and the speakers were thanked for their active participation and detailed remarks on the topic.

Press Coverage





Speakers For Integrate Technology To Improve Education System


 5 days ago | Tue 29th December 2020 | 06:20 PM



Islamabad Institute of Conflict Resolution (IICR) organized a webinar on education system of Pakistan,

By **Editor News** - December 29, 2020

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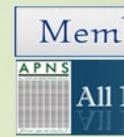


IICR organizes webinar titled
 “Removing Pitfalls: Re-imagining the
 Education System of Pakistan”

December 29, 2020

176 0

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Home > Pakistan > IICR organizes webinar titled "Removing Pitfalls: Re-imagining the Education System of Pakistan"

Pakistan

IICR organizes webinar titled "Removing Pitfalls: Re-imagining the Education System of Pakistan"

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91 0

45 runs
CENTRELINE: South Africa beat Sri Lanka to win the fourth day of their first Test at Sharada Park in Colombo on Tuesday. South Africa 41, 50 and Sri Lanka 100, 100 were bowled out for 100 each. The last session of 45 for Sri Lanka was restricted after off-spinner Shane Madsen hit a quick succession of wickets. Sri Lanka's 44th Test in Sri Lanka was limited to a total of 100 runs. Sri Lanka's 44th Test in Sri Lanka was limited to a total of 100 runs. Sri Lanka's 44th Test in Sri Lanka was limited to a total of 100 runs.

Experts stress on knowledge based learning

DNA
ISLAMABAD: The Training Institute for Curriculum Development (IICR) organized a webinar titled "Removing Pitfalls: Re-imagining the Education System of Pakistan". The webinar was moderated by Mr. Iqbal Khan, Director IICR, while the panelists were Dr. Farid Hossain, Dr. Tahir Anwar, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, IGC, Islamabad; Dr. Farid Hossain, Dr. Tahir Anwar, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, IGC, Islamabad; Dr. Farid Hossain, Dr. Tahir Anwar, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, IGC, Islamabad; Dr. Farid Hossain, Dr. Tahir Anwar, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, IGC, Islamabad.



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