

## Equity Effect of Neo-liberalism and Educational Entrepreneurship

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### **Abstract**

*This paper establishes the notion of, for profit, publically funded but privately managed educational entrepreneurship under neo-liberal framework for education sector of Pakistan. The new liberal approach conceptualizes process of deregulation; restructuring, corporatization and privatization in education services delivery by introducing a concept of “educational entrepreneurship” that leverages economic benefits and exists as an agency of permanent change to achieve social benefit in education industry of Pakistan. Argument of liberalization has been fixed in meeting demand for education in time of financial suppression to achieve equity. Analyzing the neoliberal argument in favour of low cost private schools under Punjab Education Foundation Lahore (PEF), paper discusses how PEF ventured private schools have restored two dimensions of educational equity: Fairness and Inclusion that ensure accomplishment of access to education under educational entrepreneurship (application of entrepreneurial skills).*

**Keywords:** Liberalization, Neoliberal, Educational entrepreneurship, Educational equity.

### **1. Introduction**

History has revealed that education has been a contributing factor in the life of peoples. Since centuries societies have been linked with education in one way or the other. Though, in old times, there were not present well established processes and procedures but importance of education in the life of masses was recognized. Societies remained interdependent on the basis of their educational profile. Over time education became a basic necessity. Even in developed societies and modern world role of educated people remained well established. Modern man believes that education has two basic roles to serve. One is to provide basic awareness and second is to provide qualified labor force that can better serve for the progress and prosperity of the country. With the passage of time recognition in favour of education has increased so much that modern world believes that education is the basic right of each child in the world. Education is also considered as a sign of human development because it restores equity in access opportunities. Education liberalization and educational entrepreneurship are also two policy measures to meet demand for educational services.

Education not only means to go school but it is complete change of mind and conduct of life. Education makes one to choose better alternatives and helps to devise problem solving approach. It also prepares one to adopt a change and how to interact and relate to other elements of the society.

Terming education as the fundamental right of every citizen has been reaffirmed in World Education Forum (WEF) held at Dakar, Senegal in 2000. It shows importance of education that world leaders have in place to make education accessible for every child so as one could better compete in life and can attain life skills. Signatories' commitments ensure provision of free primary education of good quality.

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Education has been ranked second in the Millennium Development Goals. Utmost efforts are being carried out at global level to ensure access to education for every child. Primarily responsibility rests with the State through public provision of education, but resource deficiency becomes a bottleneck. Drivers of non state provision of education have historical anchors, too. To supplement this, role of institutional frame work cannot be neglected for removing persistent inequality gap in the education sector.

The importance of education becomes many folds when education economist documents what role it plays on the life of individuals and communities, societies and countries in which they live. The basic role which is being played by the education is creation of human capital because economies make investment to achieve long run steady state growth. Parallel to this, education economists find out market mechanism which works for achieving efficiency, quality and equity so as economy could shifts better education outcomes over labor market. Its efficient allocation will not only place market wages but also rightly determine demand for labor unemployment. Achieving optimality in labor market becomes necessity when global population is approaching to 7 billions and there is severe need to educate those millions that are still out of school. This situation demands special attention of state bodies and international institutions to play their role so as all people can be developed equally.

### **Equity in education**

Equity in education has been a centre of debate between academia and educationists. It is believed that educational equity is an assurance that all students must get impartial treatment and equal access to learning environment, resources and positive social attitude. Thompson (2010) documents that fairness and justice for all people is the heart of equity. Whereas, equal access to instruction, educational facilities and treating each student equally at the time of assessment are core components of educational equity. Anisef (1985) reports two types of access indicators. One is called an extent of access among population (participation ratio, gross enrolment, net enrolment and education attainment ratio) and other is related to background and composition of participants (socioeconomic profile).

OECD (2008) reports that there are two dimensions of educational equity: one is fairness and other is inclusion. Fairness means that there must not be obstacle in the form of personal and social circumstances such as gender, socioeconomic back ground and ethnicity for achieving educational competency. Inclusion on other hand ensures basic minimum educational standard in context of reading, writing and simple arithmetic. But we see there appears considerable association between these two. For example if efforts to ensure school success (education system) bear fruits, social deprivation will decrease in long run. We care about the school's failure; this will help to overcome social deprivation which also causes school failure.

### **Liberalization: Global phenomena**

Recognition of education market is first step in the direction of education liberalization which paves way for education liberalization, not only in local market but also in the global market. Using the argument that persistent inefficiencies could be better addressed by promoting reforms, based on free market principles, leads to modernization in education. Principle of free market works on the principles of demand and supply in the market. It places market value to educational services and decrease distortions from the education market so as better supply and improved access could be restored in education services market.

Under global agreement on trade in services, education and education services are considered as tradable commodity. It has completely revolutionized in education market.

Now teacher training, mentoring, shadow education, on line classes and franchises of education institutes are being traded across countries. This type of education market is one aspect of neo-liberal agenda.

Liberalization process also promotes quasi school market (public framework that urges efficiency in free market along with equity). Introduction of new management system in both public and private schools is a practical example. These interventionist modes of policies favor the neo-liberal argument in education so as efficiency could be achieved. Strictly speaking privatization is involved almost everywhere ranging from educational services to peripheral services. Announcement of educational scholarship by private sector is quite common nowadays.

Neoliberal methodology steps to handle public school privately, closing failing schools, and promotion of school choice, promotion of privately managed but publicly funded charter schools, decreasing the power of teacher unions and better accountability and performance based reward system. This is becoming so popular that today global education market has reached to \$2.5 trillions. (Monthly review, 2011)

The concept of free market does not mean that there is no check and balance system and agents are totally free in its actions. This will be more near to an ideal which cannot exist in the world market. In fact there do exist certain ethics and code of conduct to govern a market mechanism always. But this so-called model of globalization has basis on the policy of capital concentration in the globally strong market players.

### **Educational Entrepreneurship**

Body of literature confirms that concept of entrepreneurial education is not new. History reveals that educational entrepreneurship was present in its different form of informal education industry. An examination of education industry makes public that it (entrepreneurial education) is adopting different shape from its historical antecedents with the passage of time. New educational approaches have made possible expansion of education industry from its typical existence of school, college and Universities. Client serving education ventures with the basic aim to increase learning outcomes are getting an important position in education sector. Such new developments have deep roots in entrepreneurial thinking and educational entrepreneurial behavior.

So it has become quite natural to trace the possibilities of links between the world of education and entrepreneurship. Change in attitude and entrepreneurial skills are two contributing factors that have changed only the buzz nature of entrepreneurship into cross sectional synergies in the form of three facet existence of educational entrepreneurship: private not-for-profit, private for purely profit motives and private but public/government funded that looks marginal profit. In education school system, not for profit educational entrepreneurship are funded and managed by social organizations with sole objectives of maximization of societal benefits. But in government funded for profit, school system monetary interest is linked with quality delivery of education services along with comfortable provision of all necessary infrastructures in schools. Failing to provide any one any time may relinquish school owner from its public financing in the form of student movement into other better school. Such type of education school system works under PEF in which owner uses its entrepreneurial skills to keep to quality teaching which is later assured by independent quality assurance tests. This theme works well in education liberalization and creation of innovation in the school education system for achieving social benefits in which real focus of entrepreneurial skills rest over the reorganization and tapping the opportunities for profit purpose.

## 2. **Literal Debate: Equity and Inequity**

### **Education system and equity**

Education system plays an important role in building one's career. An educated person can better spend and enjoy quality life. But on the other side a person who lacks skills to participate in normal functions of life, charges huge cost to health, education and security system. It may also cause to increase violence in the society. Categorically speaking failure of educational system put long term social and financial cost. This indicates that how important a fair and inclusive education system is to make society more equitable. Failure to this will make system less equitable. Conversely, inequality will increase in the system.

Education level (years of schooling) in a society is also considered as an indicator of socioeconomic development. So, for a country to attain long run and sustainable development, it is necessary to achieve productivity (output per worker per hour) growth by demographic transition, decreased poverty, better health care, increasing 100% basic education and reduction in inequality. Thus decrease in inequality cause to increase in equity. So there is needed to worry about inequality, it will automatically restore equality in the society.

### **Inequality and its historical presence**

Inequality is the degree of disparity present in the system. It identifies gap in the system. Greater the degree of inequality, less homogeneous system will be. Although presence of inequality in the system is quite natural but its extreme forms cause many social woes. Extreme inequality hinders pace of socio-economic development. This slowing down of socio-economic development stirs other forms of disparities that drive societal stratification much higher.

Literature reports that inequality is as old as society. It has been documented in history that inequality dates to Neolithic Revolution or prior to agricultural transition. Some evidences also support that people of modern Palestine were facing institutional inequality in early 7500 BC. Sources of inequality are deep rooted in history. Inequality may be because of many things but research reports that real cause of inequality in the old time was weak political structure. Weber (1946), Lenski (1966), Dahl (2006), report that political power is a key dimension of stratification in society.

### **Inequality and its form**

Justino *et al.* (2003) classifies inequalities into two forms: functional inequality and dysfunctional inequality. Functional inequalities appear in reward allocation, risk taking, skill's levels, competency in entrepreneurship and ability to save, in market economy whereas dysfunctional inequalities appears in society when opportunities are refrained. Political destabilization, social injustice, discrimination and exclusion of some segments of population and injustices are different forms of inequalities that are quite common in society. In fact functional inequalities are directly related to outcome and dysfunction inequalities are related to situations or circumstances and can be termed as inequality in opportunities. Access over opportunities creates political inequality, which on becoming severe gives rise to economic inequality (functional inequality). High level of inequality is more likely to appear in those societies where societal variations are more common. Such variations in society may result in political destabilization, poor economic performance and welfare loss. Looking at these consequences it is more desirable to look at factors that are involved in creating inequality.

### **Income inequality and societal transformation**

Modern view of inequality is multifaceted as world of today is too complex but it is unanimously accepted that income distribution plays a key role in societal division which is specifically related to assets distribution, returns on assets and public policy.

McCarty, *et al.* (2003) mentions that generally there happens to appear two important transformations in society. One is political transformation and other is economic transformation. Since political factors have considerable role in determining economic wellbeing so there is utmost need to keenly observe continuing approach of political economy and the way it causes inequality. It is surprising that literature on political economy reports that process of development is being retarded by degree of inequality present in the economy. It is also noted that inequalities have direct effect on policies as well. It makes to adopt such policies that have adverse effect on the rate of investment on physical and human capital. Resultantly, reduced human capital (skilled labor) in economy slows down process of development and hence economic growth.

Furthermore, such decrease in educational spending (investment) on human capital creates societal segmentation and un-equitable resource distribution. Rate of investment may also diminish due to bias political decisions which later slow down long run process of economic development.

### **Non-income form of inequalities**

Usually inequality is a monetary measure but non income form of inequalities may also exist in health sector, public services and education services. Inequality in education may exist among students in any form. Research confirms that education inequality links to socioeconomic and territorial reasons. Racial, color and language are also not less important in causing inequality. But major determinants of education inequality (non income) assessment are net primary enrollment (NPE), year of schooling and highest education attainment and drop out ratio. This indicates that roots of income inequalities lies in non income inequality. In general, there also appears reverse process as well but still degree of causality is unidentified.

There are two measure of education inequality as reported by World Bank 2011: One is opportunity for education and other is achievement in education. Among these form of inequalities, former is the simple variance (or standard deviation) of test scores. Lack in education opportunities reason income disparity as education is function of earning. A better educated person will be in position to earn more than those who are not qualified or poorly qualified.

Inequality in access to opportunities makes society vulnerable and gives birth to multi-dimensional poverty. With the passage of time, increased polarity makes globe completely unequal. Furthermore it would be difficult for the rich nation to keep on financing the poor. The real myth is that world need to root out real sources of inequality which could only be possible if education inequality be removed so that each child could learn life skills to come out of vicious cycle of poverty.

## **3. Global Financial Climate and Education Financing**

Global financial crises have played havoc in deteriorating socio economic indicators, which resulted in severe unemployment, credit shrinkage and liquidity losses. Resultantly global income has decreased enormously. This financial surveillance has also pressured to international bodies to cut their expenditures to fulfill international obligation and agreed objects, including education. It has also caused to cut in state expenditures for education sector as well. Resultantly state has to reduce financing for education.

International Education (2009) tried to trace out the impact that financial crises had, on education worldwide since 2008. They launched survey globally covering 40 countries covering all regions, believing that these countries have started to realize the impact of financial crises on education sector. IE (2009) concluded that international financial institutes' loans and stimulus packages have decreased enormously. Resultantly hiring freezes, cut in salaries and decrease in non salary benefits, credit for education has decreased. IE witnessed closure of many schools also.

Furthermore we can neglect the effect of natural disaster and ongoing militancy in deteriorating education sector in country. Flood is another factor which has swayed out many schools from the face of earth and left shaky educational structure. Militancy has paralyzed schooling and many schools has been bombed, and many are close due to shortage of teachers. Dawn (2010) reported that failure of public education system could be considered as one of the reasons for growing inequality in society. It has spur inequality in a sector which was already segmented on socioeconomic front.

### **Engagement of private sector**

Shrinkages in national financing for education create excess demand for education which if not addressed, on time and efficiently, will jolt global education which is already facing millions out of schools. State bodies have realized this and have put in place mechanisms to involve private sector by giving them opportunity to contribute in the form of education entrepreneurship. This option will better manage excess demand and will give opportunity to work for attaining internal efficiency at school levels. New low fee private schools, education entrepreneurship, will absorb excess demand and will synergies government efforts for provision of education at low cost.

### **Public private partnership (PPP)**

Decreased state and donor's financing for education stresses the need for greater engagement of private provision of education. Policy option may be termed as public private partnership (PPP) if educational entrepreneurs are being financed by state but managed fully by private sector. Such policy option let the government better allocate public funding. The essence of PPP is that it shifts responsibility from the provision of education to contributing for the cause of education promotion. New state role has been realized in the form of shifting from providing education to financing for education.

Theme of new policy option, public private partnership, aligns to liberal arguments. Agenda places role to the private sector along with responsibility of quality education provision, maintaining school efficiency by enhancing school competition. Increased competition in school education market provides better learning environment and performance based incentives. This opens up new opportunities in private school market.

## **4. Neoliberal Framework**

Neo-liberal framework let education service market to optimize and set in marketization in education sector. In fact, this sort of liberalization demands complete education reforms so that liberalization could give successful results. This is because that neo-liberalism advocates reorganization of economic, social, cultural and political reorganization under the charter of market phenomena and unobstructed wave of competition among rivals.

Education reforms also pick up logic of competition. Under decentralization process in education, functions and resources are transferred to local administrative units with power of autonomy. This model engages private sector, social sector and local administrative units

and parents. This will develop democratization in education which ruff out costly processes and procedures and makes system more cost effective and increase operational efficiency.

It is assumed that liberal argument will stir competition in market and improve educational quality. Guerra et al. (2006) analyzed the case of Latin America and documented observations that free market improves education services. He used Chile as experimental unit for his study. Education liberalization has many facets. It supports the process of deregulation, privatization, commercialization and decentralization.

### **Liberalization and deregulation**

Initial stage of liberalization is deregulation. Doctrine of deregulation favors self interest, competition and consumer preferences which finally lead to achieve optimality. It considers that education is no longer a public good and over time education sector has become a private enterprise which is governed by the private bodies with motive to earn profit. Deregulation means removing the governmental and legal restrictions so that an operational efficiency in field of education can be increased. It delimits the role of government in policy decisions.

### **Liberalization and competition**

Education liberalization enhances competition among schools which keep on involving private entities and agencies to remain struggling for providing new skills and innovative teaching methods and better facilities. Child becomes a marketable commodity and they try to keep good standard of services. Thus restoration of market powers develops an air of competition which increases quality of education in schools. It fulfill the objective that neo-liberal agenda promotes better education services along with success in the attainment of effectiveness of the education programmers and increasing competition so as internal as well as operational efficiency can be achieved .

### **Liberalization and decentralization**

Decentralization in education means redistribution of authority in managing educational services. Technically speaking decentralization mentions “location” of decision making. In fact decentralization is the degree of responsibility that is being shared by the central government to other actors. In education services it is the level at which state allow to private sector for provision of education.

The decentralization process has been classified into administrative decentralization and financial decentralization. Welsh-McGinn (1999) defines administrative decentralization is directly link to educational management which includes operational responsibility of schools management i.e teaching, curriculum, trainings, salaries. While place and power to act against financial claims comes under financial decentralization. It facilitates financing to locally administrative bodies so as they can use them as and when need arises.

Generally administrative decentralization supports quality of education, professional development of teachers and better learning environment. In education sector decentralization has significant contribution in the promotion of quality education not just by timely providing professional training to teacher and but it also rightly fulfill the requirement of new schools, market based incentives and better facilities at school level.

### **Liberalization and privatization**

Deregulation and decentralization paves the way for privatization and commercialization. Privatization is classified into two main categories.

1. For profit purposes
2. For education promotion

Under corporate mind set organization are investing not for the sack of education promotion but for their product promotions. These sort of organizational norms eliminate the boundary between education and advertising and are discouraged by state bodies as they are adverse to state policies. On the other hand, privatizations do supports a mechanism which works for education promotion. This sort of privatization increases access to education, increases competitions and increases quality of education along with innate motive to earn profit.

Wave of privatization makes possible to better organize ill public educational units that are not providing quality education. It also means to partially hand over some responsibilities to private bodies so as in case of private provision of professional development programmes. Such privatization mode contributes in improving quality of education and equitable access.

### **Liberalization and commercialization**

The concept of liberal policy arguments (liberalization) goes further and incorporates commercialization into education model. It attaches price tags and advocates consumer preferences. In special context to education sector, commercialization favors managing for normal profit. Mechanism does support the negation of abnormal profit by abolishing market power. Unique assumption under liberalization is that privatization does not support debase in quality of education. Boyles (1998) recommend that we need to understand socioeconomic environment before we discuss commercialization in education. He states “currently constructed school organization institutionalizes consumer’s materialism and is supported by General Accounting Office who witnesses the presence of commercial activities like advertising all over the schools. GAO (2000) classifies commercialization which is generally seen in schools into product sale, advertising and market survey.

This mode of commercialization negates education promotion and instead it shapes schools near to some advertising agencies. Such unhealthy process of commercialization discourages quality education promotion and missed fundamental objectives of education sector reforms. McCarthy (1995) develops argument that do we want our school to promote materialistic attitude instead of education promotion to support national interests

### **Education sector of Pakistan**

Pakistan is a developing economy and falls in the lower middle income group. It is facing challenges on different front including education. United Nation Human Development report 2004 confirms that Pakistan is included among those countries that spend for education less than 2 % of their GDP. It has also been reported that on average a Pakistani boy receives 5 year of schoolings but a Pakistani girl receives half to boy i-e 2.5 years. And Pakistan has been assigned lowest education index. [hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/](http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2004/)].

In this back drop government of Pakistan has a policy initiative to promote economic development by significant reforms in the education sector to meet needs of 180 millions populations (UN, 2011). In order to actualize this policy proposal, government is wishing participation of everybody. It urges framework for inclusion of resource deficient part of society so as socioeconomic development could be achieved by converting poor (that cannot study) into educated youth.

Such reforms require changes in mode of financing education, adopting improved curriculum, and urge to invest in education for a long period of time. This option also opens ways for private enterprises because significant community participation requires key role for education promotion where still millions are out of schools. A comprehensive mode of reforms in education sector in Pakistan requires that there must be a bottom up approach so as



better output from educational institutes could be achieved. It also recommends that finance must not be blocked in bureaucratic process as well.

Even though government of Pakistan is trying hard to make possible that everyone can equal access to education and be bestowed with quality of education but still it lags behind even in achieving 100% primary enrolment. Many children are out of school even they fall in the school going age. It is feared that government will fall behinds over its internationally agreed goals of Education for All.

There also exist socioeconomic constraints that are responsible for poor enrolments. Furthermore financial pressures don't let parents to continue primary education to their children. Such factors are responsible for increase in drop out ratio. Generally poor families send their children to public schools but quality of education is not good due to decrease in motivational level and lack in professional development of teachers of these schools. Honestly speaking state of education is not good as whole.

Government of Islamic Republic of Pakistan who has plan to reap the benefits of demographic dividend by educating youth for opportunities, initiated education sector reforms programme throughout the country. It took steps to reorient education curricula, improved examination system and standards, and rationalization of fee structure especially at schools levels. Further more government has adopted the neoliberal argument which advises for decentralization of education system at both fronts: decentralization at governance level and financial decentralization, which starts from education deregulation. Commercialization and privatization are also part of government agenda. Herewith government plans to involve communities and adopt a mode of PPP for achieving parity in education sector could be realized.

Along with these lines, public targets in policy documents released by planning commission of Pakistan, to achieve 100% net primary enrolment, 55% secondary enrolment and 10 % tertiary enrolment could be realized. Such government initiatives will help to drop by 12% in primary school dropout rate provided financing for educational expenditures increase up to 4% of GDP. Base line scenario (2010-2011) of new growth strategy framework reports a nominal expenditure of 2% of GDP with 37% drop out ratio.

Under global education initiatives, international bodies like UNESCO has joined hand for launching a programme which gives opportunity of multi-stakeholder partnership by giving potential role to private sector so as objective of Education For All (EFA) could be better addressed. This coalition deems for enhancing capacity by sharing professional excellence, advocacy and staffing of experts (IIEE-new partnerships in education). Research witnessed many form of public private partnership (PPP) in both developed and developing counties in the form of voucher schemes, private management of public schools, delivery of education and ancillary services by private providers (ADB, 2010).

### **Non state multidimensional model**

Government has supplemented its efforts by introduction of non state multidimensional model of education provision. This model facilitated education provision by mix of multi-stakeholder partnership (MSP) and PPP.

### **Education foundations**

Different education foundations are working in Pakistan. Some are working independently and some are working in close cooperation with government of Pakistan. Those foundations that have attachment with government adopts PPP model.

### **Public private partnership (PPP)**

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is being governed and managed by education foundations across the country. In Pakistan where private sector constitutes about 38 percent of total education sector (ASER, 2011), PPP could be a successful tool for achieving quality education by focusing on supply and demand side aspects of providing education to poor. Because forces of supply and demands restore equilibrium in the education market that allocate better prices.

Demand of education services is created by parents and students and supply is created by education service providers, low fee private schools. Demand side increases competition and supply side improves management, class room environment and financing. Burchardt (1997) mentions that by introducing economic benefits (profit) close approximation of market condition could be realized.

### **Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) and PPP Model**

PEF is an autonomous body with vested executive and financial power with the board of directors (BODs) and operates on not for profit basis. Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) is one among many foundations working in Punjab Pakistan, with a mission to support the efforts of the private schools to provide quality education for the poor. PEF opts for both financial and non financial supports to families of the students. Under financial support it provides vouchers that are redeemable under monetary values as agreed between PEF and partner schools. Under non financial supports PEF offers training courses to private school that has educational deficiencies and are present in remote areas. PEF also provide technical support to win educational opportunities at affordable cost.

### **PEF and Foundation Assisted Programmes (FAS)**

PEF has launched its flagship, foundation assisted programme in which financial assistance is being provided to the private schools against enrolment of children in the schools. Primary, middle and secondary level private schools are eligible to be assisted by foundation. Each student is assumed to pass the quality assurance test with 70% marks, to be eligible for financing from PEF, which is up to a maximum of Rs.400 for elementary schools. Secondary schools are also being financed up to Rs. 400 for arts and up to Rs. 500 for science students. These financing remains continue subject to satisfactory performance of schools. This level of satisfactory performance is evaluated and confirmed by percentage of students who qualify in quality assurance test (QAT). Assistance is discontinued if assisted school fails in successive QATs.

QAT is transparent criteria which evaluates school's performance. PEF has independent academic development unit (AUD) whose professionals prepares question papers that are taken to students who sit in test. QAT is outsourced to Agha Khan Board (AKB) for conduction purposes due to their high standards and transparency. After test conduction AKB team provides results to ADU. Results are in the form of percentage of students that qualify QAT. Results are also subcategorized to show the individual standings of each student in each subject.

Each school is also monitored by PEF independent monitoring department to have an eye over school performance and efficiency. The monitoring staff of the PEF keep on visiting schools to find out what are problems and from where each school lags behinds. Monitoring teams also ensures that whether all basic requirements are being fulfilled.

PEF has demonstrated provision of quality education much lower price than the public sector while keeping the internal efficiency. In order to maintain quality education PEF has their independent continuous professional development programmes (CPDP) which arrange trainings for teachers so as better learning outcome could be achieved. Professional

development courses, both to teachers and head teacher of the private schools, focusing over academic requirements are provided. Professional development courses are also managed to improve pedagogical skills of teachers. Some basic level courses are also designed for teachers to improve class room environment, lesson planning, and activity based teaching and child psychology. Some course contents are also designed for improving soft skills in children which can not be dreamt in public schools even here at this stage.

### **PEF-FAS: A step toward education liberalization**

FAS program agenda has met the classical requirements set by education liberalization. It starts from process of deregulation, as government has no intervention in the affairs of school's management. FAS measures programme's effectiveness by quality assurance test (QAT). QAT also measures school efficiency as well. It cost to educate a child in private school is one third as compare to public school. Thus education liberalization achieves targets of quality education cost effectively. In addition FAS has put in place two way monitoring and evaluation system. One is internal programmes monitoring mechanisms and other is revaluation of programme's process and procedures by transparent feedback mechanisms.

### **PEF and education voucher programme**

Education voucher is another programme which is according to neoliberal agenda, managed and governed under Punjab education foundation for educating a child of less privileged areas to ensure education justice. Education justice demands that even poorest of the poor should have quality education. ADB (2010) recommends that this could be viable solution for maintaining synchronized society if we want to escape our future generation from poverty and deprivations. In fact there are two type supports that are provided by PEF to children of marginalized communities. One is the financial support that is available in the form of education voucher if presented to schools, can be redeemable at par value. Other is non financial supports that PEF provides by candid monitoring and continuous evaluation of quality of education using QAT as yardstick. So voucher programme restores in real scenes education justice for that class of the society which cannot send their children to schools.

### **Jencks Voucher Model: a social policy approach**

Areen, A. and C. Jencks (1971) made an education audit under social policy approach for financing education under voucher programme for disadvantages people. He recommends that schools should be regulated for providing quality education to poorest of the poor. Under social policy approach poor families should also be given benefit by issuing another voucher for breaking social barrier among deprived families. Even though this approach increased mobility among societies but it works under restrictive environment making it less appealing among education service providers.

### **Friedman Voucher Model: A Market Based Approach**

On the other side liberal market approach follows Friedman's model (1950) supports the use of education voucher, which favor liberates education through market forces and is more acceptable than Jencks's model. Wikipedia reports that more than 70 % student attend privately run but publicly funded schools. Friedman believes that student's needs could be better addressed via education vouchers. According to Friedman, quality of education, increase in enrolments and right to choose are key characteristics that revamp education sector. He further adds that voucher should be operated in the following environment:

1. Nature of the model is universal
2. Available to all parents

3. Voucher should be redeemable in any school either public or private to cover cost of quality education.

Complete freedom to student in their choice of schools and vice versa.

### **Punjab education foundation: education voucher scheme**

Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) coordinated with Teacher College, Columbia University and open society institute and tailored education voucher scheme (EVS) considering the gross realities for slums or kachi abadies in province of Punjab. Households that are below poverty line are surveyed to identify those children that are out of schools and fall in age bracket 5-13 years. Selected students are considered eligible for education vouchers that are redeemable for a payment of Rs.400 if surfaced at private schools. According to voucher scheme partner schools are held responsible to parents as well as to PEF but scheme gives full liberty to parents for the selection of schools which best suit them. This sort of freedom develops competition among participating schools for maintaining better quality and internal efficiency at school level.

Baksh, A. (2010) reported that 43% of EVS students belong to those families which are destitute poor (laborer) whose parent's monthly income is either Rs.5000 or below. The strength of the programme is that EVS students are performing equally good as non EVS are performing (Salman, 2010).

### **PEF-EVS: A step toward education liberalization**

PEF voucher programme gives an option of choice and leverage, (ADB, 2010), and makes available quality education by involving private sector so as those that are not in position to continue education only because they are poor, could continue their education. Furthermore it gives freedom of choice giving better satisfaction what is not available in public schools. So EVS model drops the boundary constraints present in the public schools systems and make ways toward better choice, increase efficiency, high enrolment and better quality of education to poorest of the poor by developing partnership with private schools in time when there is both administrative and financial decentralization. This in one way empowers poor and makes answerable participating schools in front of both, parents as well as PEF administration. This option aligns with the real theme of neoliberal agenda which acknowledge deregulation, followed by privatization and commercialization, to achieve complete decentralization, which restores market forces and marketization.

## **5. Liberating Education in Pakistan**

Neo-liberal agenda insists upon the reduce role of state in economic and social life. Under the management of PEF, FAS and EVS are practical examples of education liberalization in the field of education. The essence of the programmes is that it has given more power to market mechanisms and given new role to state in social policy framework. However agenda rests responsibility over state, in case market fails to clear automatically and community's role becomes limited due to external factors or internal inefficiency.

In Pakistan, education market is being regulated through state bodies at various levels. Neo-liberal philosophy helps state in managing its reduced role in affairs of individuals and community. In reality private sector was contributing significantly before implementing state policy of nationalization in 1972. This state policy option proves as barrier in flourishing private school market in education services provision. But it was realized later that state alone might not be in a position to provide primary education to all nor it would be possible for state to bear all cost of education programme due to multiple financial constraints. It endorses the role of private sector in education.

Recognition of private sector sets the foundation of liberalization process in education sector. It leads to mushroom growth of low fee private schools from pre-schools to secondary level. Under PEF flagship programmes, FAS and EVS, neo-liberal argument is being implemented in its true spirit. Under neoliberal argument provision of education is “private good”. Whereas advent of information technology contributed in changing education provision from pure “private” status to newly realized “impure private status” because of its replication at very low cost. Decrease in capital requirement dropped barriers and helped in flourishing private sector in Pakistan as well. So liberalization makes possible private provision of education for consumers and information technology made its transition cost effectively.

Voucher study and FAS programmes are the success stories. They have devised new role for the state in the form of coordinator. Both programme contributed their role in strengthening determinants of liberalization which realize in the form of increase competition among schools, access to quality of education, freedom of choice, enhanced role of parents in education school market, and better performance of students.

Both programmes also considerably contributed for enhancing primary school enrolment. Thus neoliberal agenda has not only helped government in time of financial resilience but also supported government in struggle to achieve internally agreed goals, “Education for All. It also contributed in decreasing level of inequality: a way toward equity: fairness, justice and inclusion.

## **6. Educational Entrepreneurship**

The essence of literature made clear demarcation that entrepreneurship is not limited to profit purposes only. In fact entrepreneurship stands on core principles of organization, acting on opportunities, bearing risks and adding values. Entrepreneurs are agents that cause innovation and earn marginal profit out of it. Such entrepreneurial thinking also works well in public funded, privately managed educational enterprises as appear in Punjab Education Foundation (PEF). The spirit of educational entrepreneurship rests in entrepreneurial thinking in pursue of social benefits specifically.

The entrepreneurial spectrum of Punjab Education Foundation stands on three pillars. First pillar relates to initiators of educational venture that transform the vapor of ideas into tangible entity in the form of opening up school in an area where he foresees business opportunity. In case of PEF this is the owner of the school who opens school. Second pillar rests over entrepreneurial thinking that builds up realm of competition and struggle which he actualizes in the form of making collaboration with other school system or venture. It appears in the form of signing an agreement by qualifying quality criteria and benchmarks fixed by PEF under public policy direction of government of Punjab. The third pillar is the recognition of entrepreneurship which by-in support from general public and believes over quality deliverables and expresses supports for public policy against a minimal benefits (in case of PEF funded school it is managements’ revenue that owner gains), to facilities government units for achieving their long standing commitments in the form of agreed goals.

Strictly speaking, educational ventures working under PEF are publically funded, privately managed and publically monitored against quality benchmarks. Teachers are recruited and remunerated by school management. Infrastructure level facilities including land and building are provided by school management. These educational ventures are partner of PEF and make possible public provision of educational facilities in those areas where either government schools don’t exist or too far.

Rather than a temporary agent of change, PEF partner schools operate a permanent necessity and work on following standard principles:

**Principle 01: Responsive**

Education venture working under PEF are completely responsive to the basic educational needs and requirement of community and operate on market fundamentals.

**Principle 02: No Monopolies**

Educational ventures of PEF have successfully broken down any existent monopoly and had set in an air of educational marketization.

**Principle 03: Customer oriented**

PEF educational partners fulfill need of students and parents in the presence of diverse supply of school system in the community.

**Principle 04: Quality Standards**

Educational services under PEF ascertain standard quality criteria in the form of Quality Assurance Tests, independent monitoring.

**Principle 05 Merit Culture**

Merit culture is in place in all those schools are being operated under PEF.

**Principle 06: Transparency**

PEF schools follow transparency and no preferential treatment with any one from school selection, monitoring and observing standard quality criteria.

Observances of above standards in educational ventures operated under PEF or under PEF partnership, make possible provision of quality education for those low income communities where government still cannot approach to open public schools. It successfully makes possible to accommodate all those new entrants (opener of schools in remote communities) in the education industry to achieve long run social benefit so that public goals could be achieved. This works as prong of a model adoptive by governments to alleviate and finally eradicate all form of poverty, to push it where its ugly repercussion would not appear as an obstruction in the pace of development for new generation. If current measures could not root poverty out it might paralyze economic activities in state. Liberalizing in education sector is successfully delivering to up root supply side constraints as well, making state one step ahead to achieve international commitments of Education for All.

**7. Conclusion**

Thus, liberalization and educational entrepreneurship, when applied in its true spirit proves successful and helps to achieve equity in the education school market. It allow market forces to place due value to achieve socially optimal point which otherwise would not be possible. It comments that equity could be determined by better quality of life, increase choice and improved access to education, which results when liberalization in the form of is adopted as policy option. Furthermore, educational entrepreneurship argues education service provider to work with government for meeting the long standing MDGs, enhancing enrolment at primary schools level. It has also been documented that neo-liberalism and educational entrepreneurship has successfully delivered for enhancing the social benefits and clearly negates thoughts, that process of liberalization undermines social values and state services are not transformed into tradable goods.

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