

Peculiarity in Arts: Strong adherence to one's cultural and historical roots helps in the fields of visual merchandising, visual arts, and filmmaking. It is so because this adherence marks the artist's peculiar style, which eventually gets acknowledged at the local, national, and international levels.

Mainstreaming Arts & Media: Technological advancement, intellectualisation of media, and social and moral acceptance of creative arts and entertainment have also resulted in normalising and hence de-stigmatising the entertainment business within which creative arts and media proliferates.

Opportunities due to stardom: The idea of artistic creativity is also intertwined with stardom. If an artist becomes a star, he/she gets endorsements for international products and brands. Henceforth, maintaining the fine line between creative arts and the commercialisation of arts is critical.

Are opportunities class-driven?: Opportunities are often for those who enjoy the privilege of one or the other kind. Access to foreign education and social capital built with the international creative artists and media persons are a few instances of these privileges. The privileges defined along the axis of economic prowess, majoritarian identity, gender, and linguistics play out in accessing opportunities in creative arts and media.

Academia & Arts: Opportunities in both academia and professions of creative arts and media are widespread. The channels, such as broadcasters and executors, via which content could be displayed have vanished, and the content creator can display his/her content on a YouTube channel, for instance. To a larger extent, excessive regulation of content and red tapes are no more hindrances. Hence, creative arts, especially filmmaking, has become more of a democratic, approachable, and affordable space.

The question of structure & design: The industry of creative arts needs structure, integrity, and design. The lack of support from the government for this industry in Pakistan has been the biggest challenge even during the golden era of Urdu film production in Pakistan. Hence, media content primarily with respect to filmmaking requires fresh narrative styles, aesthetics, screenplays, tonality, characterisations, and musicality.

Opportunities Now

Panelists:

Arfa Sayeda Zehra

Professor, FCCU University

Pervez Hoodbhoy

Nuclear Physicist/ Activist

Neda Mulji

Senior Manager, Professional Development at Oxford University Press

Zia Banday

Senior Research Fellow, PIDE

Moderator:**Dr. Durr-e-Nayab**

Director Research, PIDE

To solve the unemployment problem of Pakistan, we need to ask ourselves a question like, why is there a significant difference between Pakistan and its neighbours, particularly India, in terms of industrial development and exports. We need to ask why Pakistan is behind India and why a small country, Israel, has developed while Pakistan has not. The answer lies in ‘thinking’, and thinking comes from education, and even mere education is not enough. Quality education is required to develop a ‘thinking community’.

Education-Society Nexus: The situation on the ground is just the opposite of what is required - Pakistan's educational system has killed curiosity, thinking, and the desire to learn. It has failed to produce good minds. However, educational institutions, schools, colleges, and universities are not solely to be blamed for not bringing up curious-minded students; rather, society is to be blamed for it.

The Question of Religiosity: One of the main causes of brain drain is religious bigotry in Pakistan. The second cause is that merit does not prevail in Pakistan—A system that cannot distinguish between good and bad, cannot further the development of a society.

Taleem, but also Tarbiyat: We need to ask, what are opportunities, and where do they come from? Means are required to create, and the means are possessed by those in power – the politicians etc. *Taleem* (education) and *tarbiyat* (discipline and soft skills) are equally important. Rather one without the other is not possible—our system has failed on both counts.

Nurture Opportunities: Neither opportunities nor unemployment comes out of the blue – we reap what we sow—once we develop a pitch for nurturing opportunities, only then we will manage to reap opportunities otherwise, we will have unemployment—opportunities are available in a society where humans are equal in terms of their rights, where there is justice, and where there is transparency in behaviours.

Brain Drain: We face a brain drain from the country, and this furnishes evidence that sufficient opportunities to let the talent flower do not exist in Pakistan. Because the opportunities to work for self-recognition do not exist in the country—a ripe ground for the opportunities to be created is the one in which the system of merit and equal access prevails. It is these conditions that one should be striving for.

English as gatekeeper: Part of the opportunities that we have in this world and the opportunities that we have within our country come from being able to speak the language of the coloniser, i.e., English.

Opportunities via Universities: Universities are centres of learning and opportunities. There are three aspects of creating opportunities for youth in universities: mentorship, coaching, and research. These are important for personal as well as professional development, and these create opportunities for the youth.

Are there pro-poor opportunities?: People are poor because they are not empowered. Street vending is a pro-poor opportunity but is looked upon as encroachment by the administration. The administration is so averse to street vending that despite the existence of street vending no attempt is made to collect data on it. Around 99 percent of the street vendors are working without a license and this makes them vulnerable to exploitation.

- The Islamabad administration, Ehsaas, and PIDE have worked together and launched a project for the betterment of the street vendors. The Prime Minister of Pakistan later suggested extending it to other parts of the country. So far, the project has covered approximately 375 vendors in Islamabad and about 160 of them have the newly designed efficient carts. The key message from the street vending project is that poverty has nothing to do with money - poverty results from disempowerment.

Disruptions: The Future of Work

Panelists:

Farrah Arif

CEO & Founder, EdTech Worx

Yasir Ashfaq

CEO, Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company.

Faisal Khan

Principal Investigator, NCBC, Precision Medicine Lab.

Hassan Daud Butt

CEO, KP Board of Investment and Trade.

Hira Irshad

CEO & Founder, APPRUS Technology

Moderator:

Dr. Nadeem Ul Haque

Vice Chancellor, PIDE

Curiosity and Creativity: There could not be two opinions that we need creative individuals and that education is the key to creativity. We need to impart an education that fosters curiosity, critical thinking, and hence creativity. A large segment of the population is illiterate, and a lot many do not go to school. To begin, we should focus on imparting education to all and sundry. The next issue to focus upon is, ensuring quality education.

Passion and Creativity are to be supplemented by research: passion and creativity are a must to carve or identify an opportunity and grab it. But carving a new opportunity or identifying an existing one does not happen in a vacuum – strong research is required to explore where opportunities exist and what are the feasible ways to make good use of opportunities.

Applied Research: whatever little bit of research is happening is being undertaken for the sake of personal career development – the focus is on quantity and reinventing the wheel—problem-solving is not the focus of research. To identify opportunities, applied