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On Deconstructing National Education Policy Framework, 2018 of Pakistan

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C O N T E N T S

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1. INTRODUCTION

Deconstruction is the process through which assumptions of truth underlying a specific text which has been produced in a specific context is unravelled (Paltridge & Phakiti, 2015).[1] The process of deconstruction gives a breathing space to deconstruct the stability of meanings which are constructed politically or culturally. The process of deconstruction recognises the oppressed, undermined, and subjugated and challenges the traditional, conventional, and objective. The approach to analyse textual data using this approach is structural and the tools employed can be manifest content analysis, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, and semiotic analysis (Bold, 2012).[2] These tools are used to analyse discursive objects which can be written, archival, or gestural to explain the meanings of a social practice, phenomenon, space or formation. Language as a structure[3] helps in explaining these variant social contexts.

The reason for conducting the current research is to understand the meanings underlying the National Education Policy Framework 2018 by using the approach of deconstruction. This approach has enabled us to understand:

  (i) The lexical terms and phrases of the policy document.
 (ii) The frequency with which lexical terms and phrases have been written.
(iii) Important agenda items of Pakistani educational policies of previous governments and in particular of the current government and decipher meanings from agenda items and analyse the same by articulating textual units from policy documents with the social and discursive practices (discussed in-detail in the paper).

The paper starts with briefly setting the methodological and analytical frameworks for the current study followed by the comprehensive review of educational policies of Pakistan with a focus on the National Education Policy Framework 2018. In the subsequent section National Education Policy Framework 2018 has been analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis. In the last section reflexive policy outcomes have been mentioned.

2. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on interpretivist epistemological and constructivist ontological orientations, the researchers have used qualitative research strategy for the current study. Qualitative research strategy also helped in defining a flexible methodological framework based on: (i) in-depth analysis, (ii) an interpretivist position, and (iii) an inductive approach for the generation of theory. For this reason we have used the tool of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as the tool of analysis using deconstruction as the approach.

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[1]Paltridge, Brian, & Phakito, Aek (2015*). Research methods in applied linguistics*. Bloomsbury.
[2]Bold, Christine (2012). *Using narrative in research*. SAGE.
[3]Consisting of words, phrases, sentences, gestures, facial expressions, bodily movements etc., and all these culminating in to establishing semantics and syntax.

Emerged from the school of thought of critical linguistics, CDA highlights power and ideology, and aims at bringing forth the social meanings which are expressed in discourse by analysing the linguistic structures in the wider social contexts. CDA is influenced by the Marxist theory of ideology according to which ideas are strongly tied to the 'material practices embedded in social institutions' (Fairclough, 1992).[4] Foucauldian theory of ideology also influences CDA by giving suppressed and subjugated discourses centre-stage as opposed to the majoritarian and universalising dominant discourses.

Fairclough's focus is on 'language in its social context' and relationship between language and power. In Fairclough's approach discourse is viewed as "a form of social practice" which highlights that it has a performative role. He also views language as a part of society which underlines that there is a dialectical articulation between language and society where language is viewed as a part of society. Fairclough asserts that linguistic structures and phenomena are social which means that in addition to interactions being socially determined and constructed, language which plays a communicative role between social actors in social contexts is part of social processes. This implies that discourse is the process of text production, interpretation and consumption, and that language helps in that discourse production. Fairclough details that intertextual analysis articulates language with variant social contexts and texts with variant discourses. He devises three-dimensional analytical framework to explain this point. The three dimensions as defined by Fairclough are textual analysis, discursive analysis and social analysis which are discussed in the following text.

3. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Fairclough (2013)[5] schematises three interrelated dimensions of discourse and explains the social, discursive, and textual analysis of any text. In ***social analysis*** the focus is on the variant socio-cultural practices which give an insight into the social contexts in which those practices are situated. Also, social analysis helps in providing and building a broader contextual relevance. In *discursive analysis* the focus is on the way text is produced, consumed and interpreted, its relationship with similar and different texts, and its mode of communication and dissemination. In *textual analysis* the focus is on the ways text helps in explaining social realities. A textual analysis focuses on both *interdiscursivity* and *intertextuality. Interdiscursivity* is related with the ways through which a text subscribes to one or more discourses whereas *Intertextuality* is related with the ways through which other texts are used in the construction of a given text. Intertextuality as a conceptual term means that texts are contingent on other texts in its production, consumption and interpretation. According to Fairclough (2013) other texts are incorporated into a given text through the application of devices such as quotation marks and/or reporting clauses. Besides, he also concentrates on the conceptual linkages between discourse, power and ideology, and how and why language is considered as power to explain dominant discourses and ideologies.

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[4] Fairclough, Norman (1992). *Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis.* SAGE.

[5] Fairclough, N. (2013). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language.* Routledge

Fig. 1. Fairclough's Model of CDA[6]
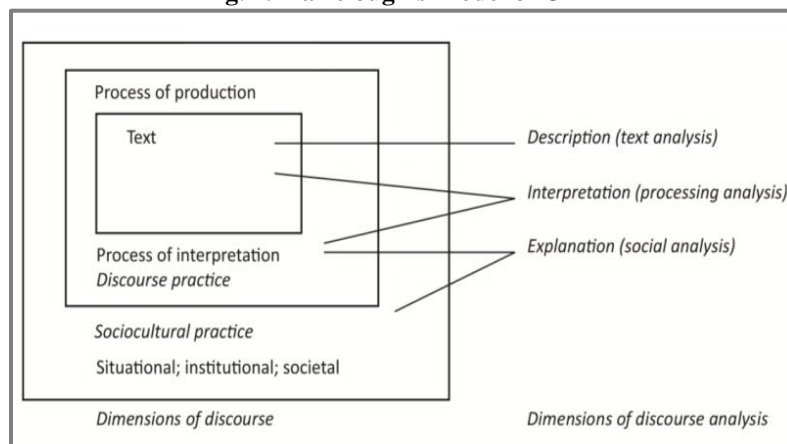
We have borrowed Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse analysis for the current research. The three dimensions of the model are: text, discursive practices and social-cultural practices. These dimensions articulate with one another. The textual dimension explains the internal textual relations, while the social-cultural dimension deals with the external socio-cultural context of power structures. The dimension of discursive practices comes in the middle where it connects the text with the external social relations through the producer and consumers of the text. For the current study, these three dimensions have been focused and corresponding to these dimensions the three types of analysis have been done (textual, social and discursive) as discussed in the preceding text.

For the current research the process of doing CDA entailed following steps:

(1) In-depth reading and detailed understanding of National Education Policy Framework 2018.
(2) Selecting textual units (words, phrases, paragraphs etc.) which are of relevance in the light of study's research objective and analysing those textual units in the light of study's research objectives.
(3) (Re)-constructing social realities based on the deconstruction of educational document.
(4) Review of Pakistani Educational Policies.
(5) In the following are stated education policies of Pakistan which have been reviewed for the purpose of current research.
(6) Proceedings of the Pakistan educational conference (held at Karachi, from 27th November to 1st December 1947).
(7) Second Education Conference 1951.
(8) Report on the commission on national education, 1959.
(9) Report on the progress of education in Pakistan, 1966-67.
(10) The new education policy of the Government of Pakistan, 1970.
(11) Education Policy, 1972-80.

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[6] Ibid.

(12)   National education policy and implementation programme, 1979.
(13)   National education policy, 1992.
(14)   National education policy, 1998-2010.
(15)   National education policy, 2009.

3.1. Proceedings of the Pakistan Educational Conference (held at Karachi, from 27th November to 1st December 1947)

This conference was the first initiative to framing policy agenda for education in Pakistan. The conference started on 27th November, 1947 and continued for five days. The conference also stressed on the importance of provision of technical and scientific education especially in the context of competing globalising world. The proceedings were decisive in saying that education will be guided by Islamic ideology. It also alluded to prescribing value to education by providing technical and vocational training. It established the fact that government will be responsible to provide free and compulsory primary education which will be gradually extended to VII class after next five years. In addition to these points the document also stressed on the importance of providing physical education and training to the students.

One of the recurrent themes of first policy document is also to build up the notion of social and cultural pluralism which can be reflected by words such as *social democracy*, *social justice*, and *tolerance* used in the document. The articulation of education with Islamic philosophy has also been highlighted which is argued to be built upon the notions of universal brotherhood of man, self-sacrifice, and human kindness. The document speaks of against provincial and ethnic divides. It is assertive on building a Pakistani citizenship than provincial citizenship as the latter is believed to severe ethnic divides. In addition to these provincial divides, 'religious' differences may also spark prejudices against any minority sect or group. Hence differences which may ignite communal unrest and violence have been outlined in the document.

The word ideology has been used consistently throughout the document but not as a majoritarian concept; rather it has been used to describe Pakistan as a socio-cultural space based on pluralism and egalitarianism signifying the normative role education can play in building communal tolerance and spirit of brotherhood. In the initial pages of the document, western education has been criticised as being Eurocentric but in the subsequent pages it speaks of cementing alliances with UNESCO. Such dualities can be read at many places in the document. The document's tone is also idealistic. The document aims to build Pakistani education system and use it as a source for creating pluralistic spaces but does not respond to the questions of how it will be done and what concrete steps will be required to achieve this end?

3.2. Second Education Conference 1951

Like the previous conference, this conference also looked out for to include Islamic ideology in the field of education. The existing education system was criticised as the extension of colonial legacy. Considering financial and infrastructural constrictions faced by government, private sector was viewed as a suitable avenue through which citizens can be educated. This conference also highlighted the paucity of qualified teachers at all levels. One assertive decision taken in the conference was to assign Urdu

language the status of national as well as official language. The conference also proposed using mother tongue as medium of instruction at primary level, and using Urdu as a medium of instruction at secondary level. However, it made Urdu a compulsory subject at primary as well as secondary level.

3.3. Report on the Commission on National Education, 1959

This detailed report highlighted education as an integral component of human capital. The report also envisaged that at the global level a positive relationship between education and industrial production has been noticed. In the light of this positive relationship, the document suggested to look out for ways to steer education for technological development and industrial production. This report also signified relevant administrative issues such as accommodation of faculty and students, utilisation of space and infrastructural equipment, educational administration, lack of educational planning and research, and the recruitment and training of education cadre. The report suggested that at secondary level, sixty percent of the education expenditure should be borne by the parents and also recommended to raise the fees in the field of Higher Education. The role of government in popularising education to improve the economic conditions was also endorsed. The idea that education would be provided as a "free service" without burdening parents with fees is also detailed at length in the document. Financial constraints have been recognised as major setback for developing educational infrastructure. In this regard, the document recommends that grants and foreign aid along with contributions from industry and governmental loans will be required. It clearly highlights that 7 percent of the revenue collected by the Central Government will be spent on education sector.

3.4. Report on the Progress of Education in Pakistan, 1966-67

This report talked through the issues related to students' unrest and focused on the issues that surfaced in the implementation of the Report of Commission on National Education in 1959. The report also took a defensive stance on the establishment of the elite education institutes as being the necessary evil. The report also recognised that large amounts of public money are spent on the establishment of elite public institutions. The commission stated these schools as necessary establishments because better students who will be positioned to secure white collar jobs, security forces and civil services will be the result of such schools.

3.5. The New Education Policy of the Government of Pakistan, 1970

This policy which was adopted by the Cabinet on March 26, 1970 could not be implemented, as right after its announcement the unrest in former East Pakistan started. The policy was important on many fronts. Firstly, it explicitly acknowledged that delays in facilitating education to students and parents not only cause frustration among them but also result in loss of human resource. Secondly, this policy declared education as the most significant factor for infusing Islamic values, in meeting the economic needs, in bringing about social change as well development on both the individual and community levels. The document also envisioned education in creating social and cultural harmony.

This policy also raised concerns over Pakistan being one of the countries where rates of illiteracy were the highest in the world. The document like previous few policy documents suggested provision of universal elementary education, offering free of cost education up to class V and encouraging girls' enrolment by establishing more schools for girls. Again, the need for providing vocational and technical skills education was emphasised upon to create employability. The document is more clear with respect to taking policy decisions, for instance a 50:50 balance in the disciplines of Arts and Science at both college and university levels was taken. For government sector teachers, incentivisation through pay packages and output-oriented promotions were decided as opposed to seniority based on the number of years in service. In order to keep check and balance of private education institutions, the policy suggested firstly framing and then institutionalising rules and regulations so that private institutions come under the tutelage of uniform national system. It also held a stern stance in making private sector accountable to provincial governments with respect to their policies on medium of instruction, examination, curriculum development, fee policy, admission policy and staff hiring and promotions. The policy also declared Islamiat as the compulsory subject till class X and also called for establishing the departments of Islamic Studies at the university level. It also ensured of extending financial help to the needy students.

Regarding medium of instruction the policy talked about that it should facilitate the students learning and comprehension capabilities, that it should communicate perceptively, and that it should encourage creative and critical thinking. This was also the first policy which in its document asserted the use of English language as the medium of instruction as unjust given the axis along which the importance of medium of instruction and its communicative prowess is delineated. It also stated that the excessive use of English is also problematic as it promotes rote learning and results in lack of critical and creative thinking for many students. English as a medium of instruction was also associated with its status as the official language for which it takes a critical stance and calls for formalisation of a commission to suggest national language as the official language and compels to conduct research on the repercussions of using English as the medium of instruction.

3.6. Education Policy, 1972-80

This policy is important for it clearly states its objectives in relation to promoting national cohesion as well as cultural harmony. It also is inclusive in its tone by specifying that education for the women, physically handicapped and economically underprivileged people is important. It also talks us through the importance of encouraging alliances of students, teachers and parents for the improving the welfare and sense of responsibility among students and teachers. By conceptualising two-phased approach the policy suggested that education will be declared free and compulsory up to VII class and then IX and X classes were targeted for which efforts will be channelised to ensure provision of free education for the aforesaid classes along with providing free books and stationery at these school levels.

The policy aims to provide educational facilities to rural areas especially to rural women. It also announced establishment of National Literacy Corps for recruiting the unemployed people from civil service and ex-servicemen so that primary education can

be universalised. In addition to emphasising the role of technical education and vocational trainings, the policy calls for encouraging students to learn the skills that could benefit local communities. It accepts the differentials of enrolment rate in the science and arts subjects which was to reduce to assure more equal enrolments. Open Public University was ideated so that students who belong to remote areas can use different forms of mass media such as radio, television, and films to disseminate information and educate students. Perhaps the most important announcement made in this policy was to nationalise all privately managed colleges in a span of two years starting from October 1972. The policy also stated that government funded institutions such as Aitchison do not cater to the capable poor students hence widening socio-economic inequalities. Again securing finance for financing scholarships for capable needy students was emphasised upon. The document, though positing at critical features, stayed silent about the medium of instruction and languages in education.

3.7. National Education Policy and Implementation Programmes, 1979

The main objective of this policy was to institute an Islamic identity through promotion of Islam for which education plays a contributing role. The policy also aimed to provide an equal space for minorities' education based on their religious ethos for which to attain, minimum level of functional literacy to all the citizens irrespective of their ethnicity, caste, religious faith or creed is assured. The policy proposed of using mosques, buildings and factories for setting up part-time schools. A significant feature of the policy is about designing curriculum for female students derived from the Muslim ethos, in addition to developing separate institutions for them.

The policy document also proposed to change education system to three-tier (elementary, secondary and higher education). This restructuring decision was taken in the light of financial constraints faced by the government. For faculty development, Academy of Education Planning and Management (AEPM) was also proposed. The policy criticised the previous policy for its decision of nationalisation of private schools. It planned to open up private schools in rural areas where tax-free education will be imparted to the poor. The policy also cemented using Urdu as medium of instruction to promote *patriotism*, *unity of ideas*, and *brotherhood*. It recognises the importance of English language to obtain modern knowledge. It also calls for translating technical courses into Urdu for easier comprehension for the people at large.

3.8. National Education Policy, 1992

The policy noted that attempts made by previous governments to Islamise education have failed to meet the intended goals. This policy envisioned providing Islamic education that would enable students to understand Quran and 'appreciate' its worldview in the 'context of new scientific and technological advancements'. It argued that education should not be seen as a sector but as an integral element of human development plan which should aim at forming an 'intellectually healthy Muslim nation'. It suggested the private sector's investment should be encouraged in the field of education and especially government should try to facilitate their involvement in providing education to adults. It envisioned a more active role to be played by the private sector/finance in education sector and called for removing the apprehensions that

investors had. It also allowed the development of textbooks by private sector. It aimed at reducing inequalities in education by creating more schools and vocational training centres in rural areas. It also aimed at achieving efficient and effective education system for higher education by enhancing the existing capabilities and assuming more entrepreneurial role. It also called for depoliticising the universities and aimed at regulating and monitoring the conduct of students to create an enabling environment that facilitated learning at the campuses. One of the objectives of this policy was to eliminate the ethnic biases, prejudices, sectarianism and discourage consumerism.

The policy announced setting up of National Testing Service to ensure standardisation and ensure that sections and admissions are being done on merit. This policy noted that efforts to develop human capital had not been given priority in the previous policies. This policy claimed to adopt a flexible policy on the issue of medium of instruction. The decision about medium of instruction was to be taken by the provinces and which could be provincial language, national language or English.

3.9. National Education Policy, 1998-2010

National Education Policy of 1998-2010 reverberated that Pakistan is an ideological state. The policy also noted that Pakistan is not a secular country although it has failed to detach its education system from colonial legacy or secular ideations of education. It also emphasised that the country's survival is contingent on following the ideological principles which the country has always been hinged upon. It also viewed that the sole objective of education is to create Islamic society. In this light it was premised that teachings pertaining to Islam should be included in all the subjects. The support for this assertion can be found in the policy document when it exemplifies that secular countries with strong Marxist political tonalities also include their ideologies in all of their academic disciplines. So, why not same move can be done for Pakistan? Similar to the last policy documents, this policy is also critical of nationalisation of education system.

This policy is aware of the concerns about inequalities created between middle and urban elite classes through pluralistic educational systems and the curriculum taught therein. Still it encourages credit extensions to the private sector and devising preferential policies such as tax rebates. This policy also stresses on incentivising the private sector in building schools in rural areas for which land will be provided and one-third of cost on the construction will also be borne by the government.

3.10. National Education Policy, 2009

In this policy document, education is conceived as a means to achieve certain goals such as socio-economic development. Revamping education system for the socio-political uplift and to meet the ideological needs of the citizens and society is also important in this regard. The role of education is not only envisioned to make a local citizen but a global citizen. The role of private sector education is acknowledged and eulogised. The policy document also takes a reflexive position explaining the factors which have caused lack of implementation of educational policies in Pakistan. Among these factors are outlined inconsistent policies, administrative lags, lack of planning and design, and interest and participation.

The policy also seems to be well-aware of elitist factions existing in both public and private schools. For ensuring transparency and accountability in the private schools, the policy aims to develop regulatory systems. About languages, the document speaks of English as an international and Urdu as an identity-marker. It recommends English to be the medium of instruction for Science and Math from IV class and onwards as for securing white collar job in public or private sector proficiency in English is needed. Since English speaking students have an edge over non-English speaking students which in turn create elites and non-elite classes, hence the role of English cannot be ignored for which providing opportunities to learn English to students from remote areas or from less privileged areas is mandatory.

4. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING POLICIES

In Pakistan the responsibility of education is divided between the federal government and four provincial governments namely Punjab, Sindh, Balochsitan and KP. Federal government, specifically, is more important in taking decisions with respect to financing and curriculum development. Before going into the details of what existing policies entail, a few observations regarding the same have been stated in the following text.

4.1. Problematising the Concept of Literacy

The concept of literacy is not uniform in Pakistan and is hugely influenced by the official definition by different reigning governments. For instance, during General Zia Ul Haq's regime (1977-1988) the official definition of literate person was one who could sign his/her name. Later on, a literate person was the one who could read a vernacular newspaper. The definitions and the measures based on those definitions have been changed as per pre-set criteria. For this reason the value of literacy rates has been looked at skeptically with a view that these have been solely made-up for the consumption of donor agencies and do not represent the grounded realities. Naseem (2010)[7] also states this point vividly that literacy and population growth rates have been conveniently inflated or watered down as per the demands of the donor agencies and Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs).

4.2. Pluralistic Educational System

In addition to the skepticism about literacy rates, the physical and social infrastructure in the educational system of Pakistan is also perpetuating inequalities. Education system in Pakistan is organised around four stages: (i) Primary (years 1-5), (ii) Secondary (years 6-10), (iii) Higher secondary/college (years 11-12), and (iv) Degree/university (years 13-16+). Institutionally, Pakistan's educational system is also multi-tiered; one of which is visible in the form of public-private dichotomy or the partnership between the two. Within each tier there are further divisions. In case of public sector institutions there are multiple tiers of public schools within which at the top are the urban-based public schools imparting better-quality education. Securing admission in

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[7] Naseem, M. Ayaz. (2010). *Education and gendered citizenship in Pakistan*. Palgrave Macmillan.

these institutions is also very difficult as these are very prestigious. These include the Model Schools (for example Islamabad college for girls, Islamabad college for boys, and various model schools run by the federal government, and the divisional public schools), schools run by the armed forces of Pakistan (Army public schools, Air Force, Navy or Garrison schools) and schools-cum colleges that prepare cadets for armed forces academics such as Hasan Abdal, Burhall, Cadet College, etc. The second tier includes the urban-based government schools run and managed by the provincial governments.

The quality of education imparted in these schools lacks standardisation. Some of them are better managed while others lack quality. The third tier includes all government schools that are functional in the rural and semirural areas of Pakistan. The schools under this tier lack quality, infrastructure, and staff. Public schools at all levels are mostly segregated.

Private schools can also be classified into three tiers with topping the tier are the foreign schools such as American and international schools in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. The second-tiered schools include Aitcheson College which is very competitive and difficult to get into. The fee structure is very high as compared to the public schools. In the third category, private schools such as Beacon House School system and the City School network are included which are spread all over Pakistan, have higher fee structures and fall between the elite and the public schools. These schools also prepare their students for the O- and A-level examinations conducted by the University of London. Another classification of schools also includes those catering to the lower-middle and lower classes offering admission at low fees. The quality of education in these schools is not comparable with the private-sector schools but still better than the government-run schools. More recently, the NGO- and Civil Society-funded schools have also emerged such as SOS Village and Orangi Pilot Project Schools.

Naseem (2010) argues that educational infrastructure and the pluralistic educational systems in Pakistan reproduce class inequalities which become even more severe and crystallised with respect to gender, socio-economic and discursive inequalities. For instance, the students from richer families secure admission in private schools and those from poor backgrounds in those public schools which lack quality of education and physical infrastructure. Similarly, girls from the upper classes are more agentic and have relatively more access to education than those from the lower classes. Similarly, the girls from the rural areas are the most affected when it comes to educational attainment due to issues of access and mobility.

4.3. The Policy Discourse

Educational policy discourse in Pakistan is embedded in the colonial and the Orientalist discourses and is also shaped by the global processes of modernisation and developmentalism. According to colonial and orientalist discourses education is a colonial remnant and it can visibly be deciphered from the initial policy documents where the focus is on the quantity over quality. The rhetoric of emphasising on quantity is driven from the underlying assumption that once the pool of critical mass of literate and educated people will be prepared, the society will largely benefit as a result of actualisation of trickle-down effect. It was also stated in the initial policy documents that once reached at a point of educational sustenance with respect to quantity, quality will

organically follow with both quality and quantity being in complete harmony with each other and aligned with the societal ethos of the new State. In addition to drawing heavily from the colonial educational discourses, the post-independence educational discourse in Pakistan also aims to create two classes namely administrators (civil bureaucrats, precisely) and labour pool that could follow the former and both synchronised with each other to meet the demand of global world order based on the politico-economic structure of capitalism. In the meanwhile the religious ethos is also visible throughout the policy discourse.

The report on the commission of national education, 1959 was commissioned by a powerful group of representatives comprising industrialists, businessmen, senior bureaucrats, Army personnel, and consultants from foreign universities such as Cambridge, Indiana and Columbia and think tanks such as Ford Foundation. The scholarly critique alludes that the document conceives citizen both as a worker and a patriot. So, the curriculum needs to be framed with the aim of providing the basic knowledge and imparting skills in reading, writing and basic arithmetic. While doing so, the intent should also be to inculcate a sense of patriotism. Azeem points out this feature from the report as:

> "*the basic skills in reading and writing and arithmetic, a liking for working with one's own hands and a huge sense of patriotism*" (GoP, 1959: 115)

In addition, the report also articulated the relationship between discipline and surveillance by first defining what a citizen is, then by specifying what economic forms of work country needed, the kind of work citizen would do as needed by the country, and the classification of workers into executive class, supervisory personnel and skilled clerical workers. It also specified the spaces which the citizens should confine themselves to (spaces of elementary schooling for the unskilled class, professional colleges for engineers and executives, and part-time apprenticeship organisations for skilled clerks and technicians). Hence the hierarchical division of educational space was envisaged where particular forms of educational institutions were designed to produce specific types of educated subjects such as skilled/unskilled workers, polytechnics, supervisors and executives.

Saigol (1995) in Naseem (2010) argues that the state through educational system thrived to manufacture a patriotic citizen than a democratic citizen as the former is easier to control and discipline. The emphasis on vocational and technical training is to produce de-politicised workers for economic growth and on spiritual and civic education whose function is to imbue nationalistic and patriotic values which were purposively made part of the curricula as well. The emphasis on vocational and technical trainings was for men only and women were excluded from that category. The policy documents by specifying types of education for different genders typified the gender roles and public-private compartmentalisation where women were expected to restrict themselves to supporting positions in private domains and men taking more stronger positions outside the sphere the domesticity in the public domain. The educational system, therefore, strengthen the public-private dichotomy with respect to gender relations as constructed in the society.

The 1959 commission report also clearly suggests restricting students from taking any political positions or setting any political agendas. So, their positioning was already framed of passive subjects who have de-politicised identities in quest for

building intellectual capital only not political capital. The space which they would confine themselves to was also pre-decided for them by the State as clearly stated in the report. Till date the framing of de-politicised student identities exist at educational institutions of Pakistan; banning of student unions according to the order of the Supreme Court since martial law imposed in General Zia ul Haq's regime is manifestation of one such agenda. Another recurrent theme from the policy documents is the synonymy of religion and nationalism. As stated in the explication of individual policies above, in 1959 policy document, Islamiat was made a compulsory course till class VII, 1972 policy declared it compulsory course till class X and all policy documents post-1977 extended it as compulsory course till classes XI and XII and then at professional colleges as well.

The textual and pictographic materials exposited in these policies not only expect obeisance to God but also to ruler or head of the household and also popularise the notions of nation-hood, patriotism, and virtues of war. Hence being patriotic and nationalistic was equal to being religious and vice versa. The 1972 education policy's conceptualisation of citizen was heavily drawn from the experiences of economic modernisation and declared him being 'innovative, creative and dynamic'. The document views education as having an instrumental value which is used to achieve other ends (employment and economic growth). Zulfiqar Ali Bhtto's education policy authorised that boys will wear uniforms in the schools; *shalwar kamiz* which was declared the *awami* (national) dress. This manifested another marker for nationalistic identity and citizenship identity. Women were again excluded from this visual display of nationalism and citizenry identity-formation.

The 1980s and 1990s policies heavily drew from the politico-economic development of that time. For instance the policy documents constituted a citizen, who migrated to Golf region, worked there, got rich and came back with money and social status. The identity of Golf returned person was religious, nationalistic and conservative. Another feature most prominent in the 1970s policies was religiopoly, for instance the 1979 education policy pursued construction of five thousand *madrassahs* (religious seminaries) and five thousand *mohalla* schools for girls only. The more recent policies also recognise *madrassahs* as another tier of education and state that *deeni madaris* (plural for *madrassahs*) are independent institutions organised under five *wafaqs*. Religiopoly dimension of educational policies envisioned to create a homogeneous society where only majoritarian religious identity was manifested as the identity marker whereas all other differences marked by ethnicity, gender, and linguistic identities were ignored.

5. NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY FRAMEWORK 2018[8]

Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training framed a policy framework in 2018 titled National Education Policy Framework 2018 as part of 100 days plan of the current government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. In the following text the document has been deconstructed textually and pictorially with the intension of analysing the document's components using analytical tool of CDA.

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[8] http://aserpakistan.org/document/2018/National_Eductaion_Policy_Framework_2018_Final.pdf

5.1. Components of Policy Framework Document

The National Education Policy Framework 2018 as adopted by the current government is a 14 page document which briefly touches upon some important challenges currently being faced by the country's education system and specifies a few policy solutions. The document's cover page is bi-colored in dark- and light-green. The page is divided into two halves with Pakistan's state symbols positioned at the center of first light-green colored half page. The other half has written text (bold and capitalised) stating "National Education Policy Framework 2018", followed by horizontally-positioned photographic collage of Pakistani children of different ethnicities (three girls and two boys). Towards the end of the cover page is a scroll on which in a much lesser font size has been stated (again bold and capitalised), 'Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, Islamabad". Pakistan's state symbols have been drawn in dark green color and the text is in white color. The colors of Pakistan's national flag have been used in the cover page to expound the nationalist fervor. The symbols can be understood by deconstructing the Coat of Arms which for Pakistan was adopted in 1954. It has used the same colors of Pakistan's national flag. It features the star and crescent of Pakistani flag. A shield depicting four major crops of Pakistan namely jute, cotton, wheat and tea which is surrounded by jasmine flowers are also significant components of this pictographic explication. Below the shield and star-crescent motif is a scroll saying "*Iman*, *Ittehad* and *Nazam*" (Faith, Unity and Discipline). Pictorially the cover page has been exposited in the following.

Fig. 2. Cover Page of National Education Policy Framework 2018
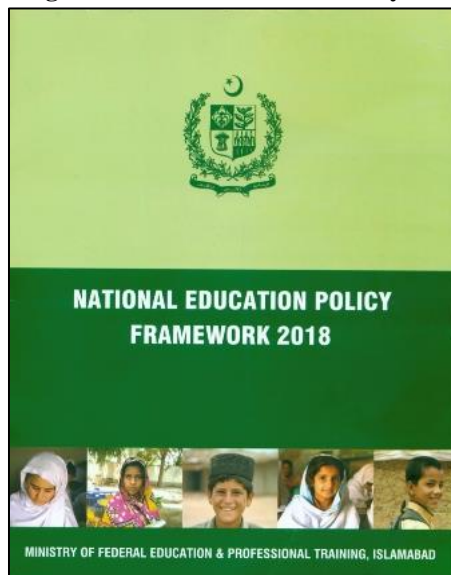
The document makes use of tabular and pictorial expositions relevant to different themes such as Net Enrolment Rate (NER) at the primary level (Grade 1-5) and Public Expenditure on Education as a percentage of GDP, and National Educational Priorities, to name a few. The policy framework document covers two important thematic areas

with respect to education policy framework in Pakistan namely; The Challenge, and Education Priorities and the Way Forward. Under Education Priorities, four priorities have been specified as Priority 1 through 4 with themes specified for each priority. The subheadings for each priority has been stated in a horizontal scroll colored light-green and text written in black whereas the main two themes of challenges and education priorities have been stated in bold, capital fashion and white color.

The document identifies ten challenges faced by the Pakistan's education system which can be spelled out as structural issues, infrastructural issues, low values of educational indices, gate-keeping role of English language as the medium of instruction, Out of School Children (OOSC), lack of standardisation and uniformity of educational systems and curriculum taught therein, and lack of quality education. The educational priorities around which evidence-based policies can be framed include: (i) Decrease OOSC and increase school participation, (ii) Uniform education system, (iii) Quality, and (iv) Skills-Enhance access to and relevance of skills training.

5.2. Use of Pictorials

The document makes use of three pictographic graphs (two on page no. 2 and one on page no. 3) as shown in the following.

Fig. 3. Net Enrolment Rate (NER) - Grade 1-5[9]
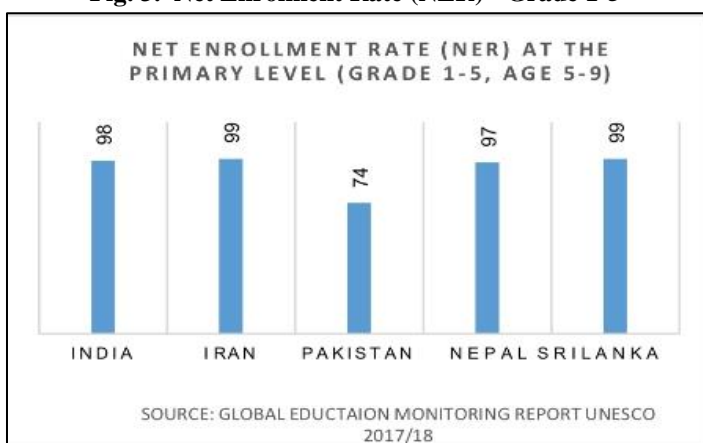
The first graphical explication has been added in the document to augment that Pakistan is among the E9 countries which have the lowest NER and highest OOSP. E9 countries include Brazil, China, Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan. The graph as shown above has been taken from the Global Education Monitoring Report published by UNESCO for 2017/18 and it shows that among India, Iran, Nepal and Sri Lanka, Pakistan had the lowest NER at primary level for years 5-9. Hence, it provides enough numerical data of literacy for Pakistan to align its educational policy about setting targets through which NER can be increased through reducing OOSC.

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[9] https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/Monrovia_2018.pdf

Fig . 4. Public Expenditure on Education as a Percentage of GDP
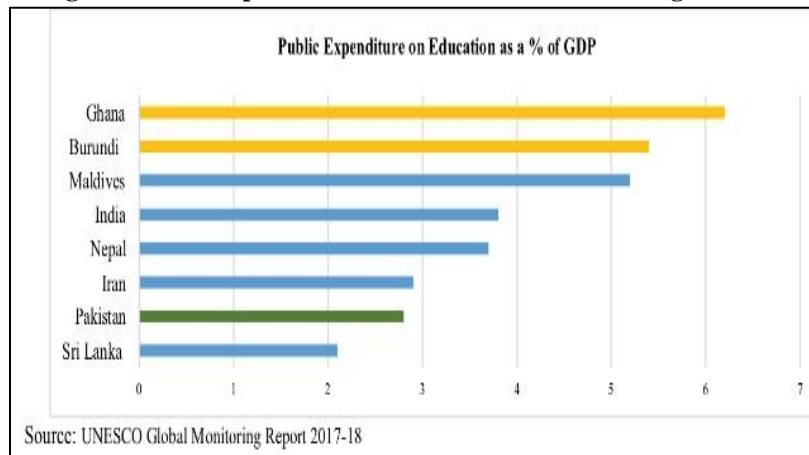
Going by the similar argument it can be stated that the policy framework has used the same report to highlight that among Ghana, Burundi, Maldives, India, Nepal, and Iran, Pakistan's expenditure on education is the lowest again signally Pakistan that educational expenditure on improving quality of education and its uniformity and standardisation should be the country's policy mandate.

Fig. 5. Primary Net Enrolment Rates (NERs)
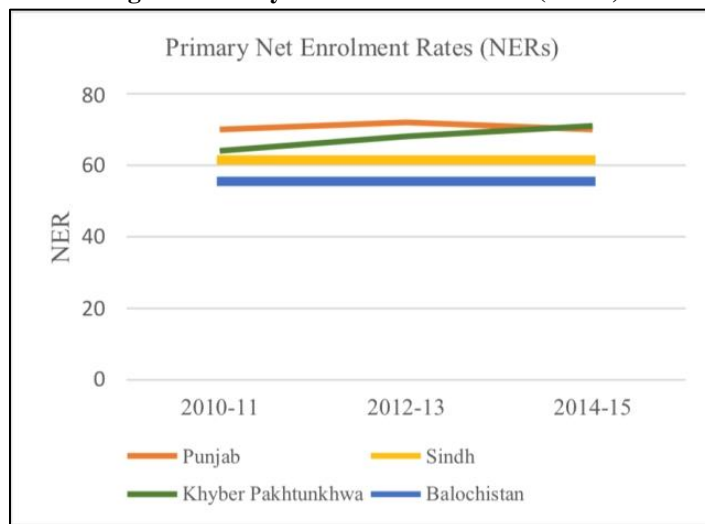
The policy framework document borrows the data from Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey 2010-2015 to understand the importance of geographic disaggregation of data which reveals differentials in the Primary Net Enrolment Rates (NERs) with respect to provincial divides with Primary NERs being the lowest for Balochistan. Again the document uses this data to augment policies on spatial inequalities in enrolment and on reducing OOSC.

Fig. 6. OOSC with Respect To Levels of Education[10]

Number of Education Institutions and Out of School Children by level and OOSC

| 150,571 Primary Schools | 49,00 Middle Schools | 31,500 High Schools | 5 M OOSC in Primary | 6.5 M OOSC In Middle | 11 M OOSC In High |
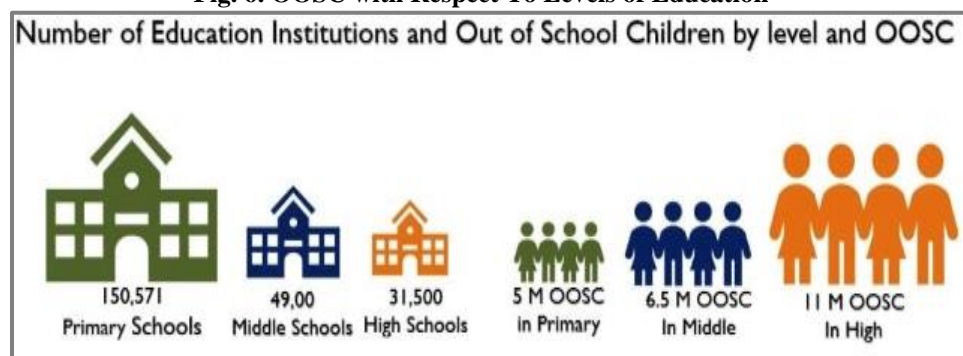
In addition the document also uses illustration such as in Figure no. 6 it has been depicted that since OOSC is highest at the middle and higher levels, so the focus of policy framework should be on increasing the number of middle and high schools and to ensure taking measures that those enrolled should not leave the schools.

Fig. 5. Table Showing Summary of Educational Challenges as Identified by Current Government[11]

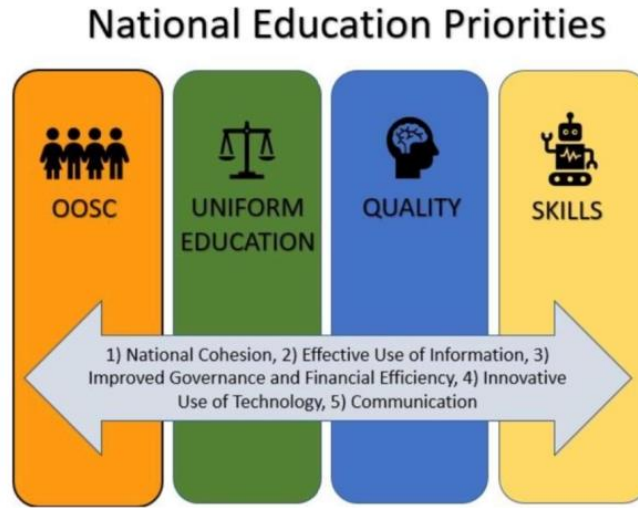**Summary of Education Challenges**

Out of School Children	Uniform Education System	Quality	Skills and Higher Education
Low and inequitable access and participation High levels of poverty in certain disadvantaged areas resulting in high OOSC Limited investments in early childhood education resulting in high dropout in early grades Low Quality of Non-Formal and Accelerated Learning Programs	Lack of coordination in policy formulation and implementation across the country Lack of coherence and coordination in curriculum frameworks, textbooks and exam systems Discrepancies in systems of schooling, i.e. across public, private and madrassa education system Variation in management of school systems	Low student learning outcomes Poor teacher quality and accountability Lack of school leadership-School Principals/Head Teachers Poor school environment multi-grade teaching, limited facilities in schools and poor infrastructure Inadequate use of student learning outcome data to inform policy making	Low and inequitable access and participation Poor quality and relevance of teaching and research conditions. Weak linkages with Industry Inadequate sector governance and management

Divided into two rows and four columns with each column representing a different educational challenge, the document also includes illustrative figures. Based on these challenges, the educational priorities have been outlined which have been illustrated in the following figure.
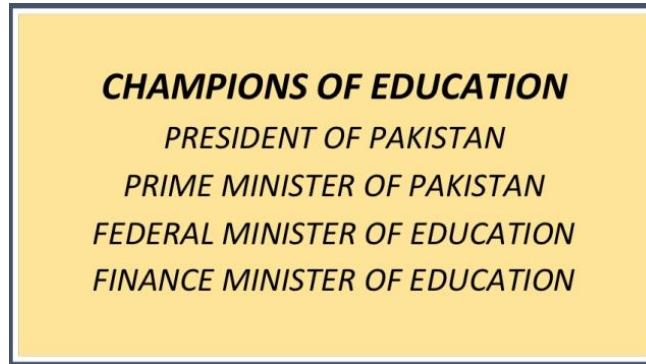
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[10] http://aserpakistan.org/document/2018/National_Eductaion_Policy_Framework_2018_Final.pdf

[11] http://aserpakistan.org/document/2018/National_Eductaion_Policy_Framework_2018_Final.pdf

Fig. 8. National Education Policies Derived from Educational Challenges[12]

National Education Priorities

OOSC | UNIFORM EDUCATION | QUALITY | SKILLS

1) National Cohesion, 2) Effective Use of Information, 3) Improved Governance and Financial Efficiency, 4) Innovative Use of Technology, 5) Communication

Fig. 9. Champions of Education as Explained in the Policy Framework, 2018[13]

CHAMPIONS OF EDUCATION
PRESIDENT OF PAKISTAN
PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN
FEDERAL MINISTER OF EDUCATION
FINANCE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

Through Figure 9 the documents highlights that there are four champions of education and it is mandatory for the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training to work in harmony with these champions to "*raise awareness about quality of education, motivate communities to support education of their children especially in remote and rural areas and generate energy and political will for challenging reforms*."

5.3. Textual, Social and Discursive Analysis

For the textual analysis we have counted all the words and phrases of the policy framework document and come up with the following recurrent words with Education appearing with the highest frequency of occurrence (109) and Urdu with the least (1). The details are explained in the following table.

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[12] Ibid

[13] *Ibid.*

Sr. No.	Word/s	Frequency of Occurrence
1	Education	109
2	Schooling and/or School/s	81
3	System	48
4	Pakistan	44
5	Quality	36
6	Skill/Skilled	33
7	Learning	27
8	National	27
9	Public	23
10	Outcome	17
11	Priority	17
12	Teaching	15
13	Private	14
14	Access	14
15	Training	14
16	Language/s	13
17	Challenge	12
18	Economic	10
19	Development	10
20	Policy	10
21	Uniform/Uniformity	10
22	Curriculum	10
23	Government	9
24	Poor	9
25	Management	9
26	Enroll/Enrolled/Enrolment	9
27	Framework/s	8
28	English	8
29	Reform/s	8
30	Technology	7
31	Social	6
32	Political	6
33	Power/powerful/powered	6
34	Rural	6
35	Infrastructure	6
36	Madrassah	6
37	Knowledge	5
38	Budget	5
39	Equitable	5
40	Participation	4
41	Resource/s	4
42	Disparity	4
43	Efficiency	4
44	Effectiveness	3
45	Job	3
46	Governance	3
47	Pakistani	3
48	Human Resource	2
49	Poverty	2
50	Equal	2
51	Inequitable	2
52	Human Capital	2
53	Community	2
54	Evidence	2
55	Urdu	1

Since the document is about education policy, hence the frequency of occurrence for word 'Education' is the highest. The subtext and context of 'Education' change throughout the document. In some places the term is used as instrument using which an objective can be achieved, for example:

Education is a Major Contributor to the Social and Economic Development of any Country. (National Education Policy Framework of Pakistan 2018).

Here final target to meet is the social and economic development and education is a means to an end. In the document one recurrent term used is 'Education System' which implies the conceptualisation, organisation and implementation of rules and regulations abiding discursive landscape of a country. In the context of the policy framework document, these systems include private, public and *madrassah* with each having its own management, curriculum, and modus-operandi. 'Education challenges' is another term which appears many a time in the document signifying the lack of quality, infrastructure and uniformity as the challenges faced by the Pakistan education system. 'Education skill' is another term used to emphasise upon practical knowledge by learning and applying theoretical knowledge in practical scenarios. 'Education outcomes' is again usually instrumentally as to whether (or not) educational attainment is translating into economic growth or employability. 'Education reforms' signifies all the policy solutions which can be prescribed based on the issues identified in the policy framework.

Pakistan has been written 47 times and Pakistani 3 times. The word children has been added with Pakistani as 'Pakistani children' and appears twice in the document whereas Pakistanis refers to the people of Pakistan who are addressed as human capital; in order to augment this point excerpt from PM's speech has also been quoted[14]. The word quality has been used with adjectives such as poor, low, and high to expound the state of current education system and ways for improvement. It has also been used normatively with terms such as Access and Equity signifying that quality of education can be improved with access of better ICT (in former case) and with active communication campaign (in latter case). The terms Public and Private have been written for more than ten times in the document to highlight the pluralistic educational systems in the country and the inequalities this dichotomy produces in the society. Public buildings, public schools and public sector are the lexicons related to the broader construct of public education system. Similar phrases have been used with the term 'Private' as well. The term 'Language' appears thirteen times, English eight times and Urdu one time. English language has been used to signify the importance of English for socio-economic status as students fluent in it have better prospects of job and higher education. It has also been stated critically as English plays out a marker of creating inequality between public and private sector schools.

The terms Political and Social have been each used for six times with 'political will' written for five out of six times, showing that without political support educational reforms are not possible. The term social shows that quality education ensures better social opportunities for people to prosper. Social variations reflect context-specific policy interventions because of heterogeneous populations residing in the country. Education is

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[14] Pakistanis are the most precious asset we have.

viewed as 'power' (the term repeated six times) because of its propensity toward creativity and innovation. The terms 'Power/powered/powerful' have been written under the heading of Innovative Use of Technology to emphasise on the usage of computers, internet, and recent technologies for learning and impartation of knowledge in the classroom. Madrassah appears six times representing the fourth tier of educational system in Pakistan where reforms on curriculum and infrastructural levels are required.

The term 'Disparity' appears four times in the document reflecting disparities in access to education and skills that exist due to spatial differences. Infrastructure here refers to the physical system and equipment required for the efficient functionality of educational system. Knowledge as 'Content Knowledge' has been used thrice in the document to stress that the knowledge imparted to the students should be content-driven for which usage of technology and its equitable access to both teachers and students is a must. Community mobilisation reflects the use of social capital using which community can share, disseminate, impart and collectively learn knowledge. Similarly once disseminated and decentralised, the information will bring community to action (implying community action in the policy framework document).

Speaking of discursive analysis of the policy framework document, the nationalistic identity is reverberated again by asserting that the role of education is not only to manufacture citizens who can do well for themselves but also for their country. So the notion of democratic citizen is still not incorporated in the current policy document. The important feature is that in addition to his responsibility towards country, he will also be responsible as a global citizen. The explanation for who global citizen is, why is it envisaged in the policy framework to construct such a citizen and what role education can play in this regard are left unanswered. The document, though, recognises the pluralistic educational systems as prevalent in the country does not clearly lay out an operable plan using which policy for educational reforms in these systems can be designed and implemented. Considering the concomitant existence of public, private and *madrassah* education systems, aiming for uniform and ensuring quality education for all students is difficult to achieve. Like previous policy documents, this document also specifies productive human resources as literate and skilled. The document also outlines heterogeneities existing along the axis of disparities which have been identified in the form of gender, economics, and geography. Given these differences, devising a uniform educational policy which will cater to the needs of all the students is an uphill task. Secondly, with such differences at the backdrop, and differential OOSC across provinces, uniform educational policy seems implausible. The policies within main uniform policy entail; (i) standardisation of curriculum and textbooks, (ii) standardisation of teaching, (iii) proficiency in speaking different languages, and (iv) regular review of learning outcomes across all different education systems. For the implementation of such policies, operable framework is needed which is not specified in the document.

The document also identifies the differences in the achievement levels of students from different educational systems, so uniform policy calls for standardised skill levels of the teachers. The current document, like previous documents, eulogises the State narrative of guaranteeing free and compulsory elementary education for all children (years 5-16). The Article 25-A has been referred to in the document which was inserted in the Constitution of Pakistan. The document also brings in the context of global

economy and technological advancement due to which workforce has to adapt and learn accordingly. Hence those left-behind in the global economic competition are mandatorily to follow up. The document again popularises the idea of pro-technology workforce and anti-technology workforce; hence this framework adds another layer of citizenship criteria. The document also recognises dichotomised social groups such as advantaged/disadvantaged, majority/minority, girls/boys, and able/disabled and a need for devising inclusive educational policy and recognition of the citizenry rights of the poor. On one hand the document speaks of building a policy framework that caters to the heterogeneous social groups and that also sets goals for national unity implying incongruent target setting.

The quest to meet the targets set forth by the sustainable development goals (SDG 4 as stated in the document) connotes the developmentalist discourse which for developing countries has become mandatory to follow in order to meet citizenship criteria. The document is explicit in stating alliances between different ministries of Pakistan to ensure smooth enframing and institutionalising of education policy and it operationalisation. Such alliances help strengthen state narrative which can be depicted by figure no. 9 as well. Under priorities section the operable solutions are left open-ended and equivocal. For instance in order to ensure decrease in OOSC and increase in school participation, a wide variety of interventions are guaranteed but those have not been clearly chalked out for various regions and stakeholders involved. Similarly while talking about the importance of non-formal educational programmes community mobilisation has been stated a way out but how will it translate into increasing OOSC in schools and what concrete interventions will be followed are yet to be devised. The lexicons of 'equitable', 'level playing field', and 'equal opportunity' have been stated under educational priority titled Uniform Education System but how will uniform policy agenda translate into creating a level-playing field for all and create equal opportunities has not been detailed in the policy framework. The intension for skills impartation is grounded on moving economy forward not for personal development or empowerment. Hence the glorification of de-politicised identity is visible in the current policy document as well.

6. CONCLUSION

The concluding points are stated as:

- The attempt in this paper was to deconstruct the national education policy framework 2018. The document speaks of challenges faced by Pakistan education system. It also signifies education priorities which will be set forth for effective functioning of country's education system.
- The document claims to have constructed realities about discursive landscape of Pakistan by highlighting challenges such as low OOSC, low skill levels of students, low social capital and human resources, dearth of infrastructure, and existence of multiple education systems creating inequality in educational attainment. While doing so, the document claims to have provided indigenous policy solutions to the indigenous issues by providing certain frameworks which have been detailed for each education criteria (skills, quality, increase OOSC, and uniform education).

- The checklists of both identified issues and policy framework solutions which have been claimed to be indigenous are not entirely reflective of Pakistani society rather guided by national and international politics. Secondly, in order to ensure citizenry rights, the educational discourse has been coalesced with the discourses of globalisation, equality, human rights, and freedom of choice to broaden the ambit of what education is and what it can achieve. This intersectionality with other discourses is again guided by the dominant buzzwords of international development which reflects the interdiscursivity of Pakistani educational discourse with those of international developmentalism.

- The document's inconsistent and rushed tone leaves a number of important things unanswered; (i) how uniformity in education system across Pakistan will be made functional? (ii) the geographic, gendered and ethnic disparities which have been caused and widened by the pluralistic or multiple education systems have been discussed at length but how such disparities will be addressed through policy framework?, and (iii) how economic resources will be disaggregated across the country to ensure equitable distribution of the same and indiscriminate provision of educational opportunities?

- In the wake of current education system and country being in need of new educational policy, if national education policy framework is to be converted into a full-fledged policy then the aforesaid questions may be important for consideration.