Critical Analysis of Education Policies in Pakistan: A Sustainable Development Perspective

Faheem Khushik, Arnaud Diemer[i]

University Clermont Ferrand, CERDI (Center of Studies and Research on Interntional Development), France
18th Constitutional amendment bill passed by National Assembly in April 2010

Abstract: This article explores, from a sustainable development perspective, the vision and priority areas which have been focused on in all the major educational policy documents of Pakistan from1947 to 2017. Firstly, the study presents some results from a literature review of the links between education and development. We analyse different Pakistan national education policy documents from 1947 to 2017, and discuss thepost-2009 scenarios (after the 2010, 18th Constitutional Amendment[ii], education became the responsibility of provinces). Secondly, the study focuses on the results of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–14) in Pakistan. If education for sustainable development means allowing every human being to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to shape their own sustainable future, it also means including key sustainable development issues (climate change, energy, food security, biodiversity, peace, tolerance, etc.) into the teaching and learning methods to change behaviours. Education for Sustainable Development could be a key driver for Higher education.

Key words: Education, Pakistan, Policies, UNESCO, Sustainable Development

INTRODUCTION

Investment in education is often seen as a key element of the economic development process (Strumilin, 1929; Walsh, 1935; Schultz, 1961; Psacharopoulos, Woodhall, 1985). Since the early 1960s, the World Bankhas committed developing countries to building human capital in order to reduce poverty and improve health, gender equality, democracy, and political stability. Most of the time, the link between education and development is directly connected to the relationship between school and the labor market (Psacharopoulos, 1988). As education is promoted, the illiteracy rate and the unemployment rate reduce. In Pakistan, several studies have been undertaken to analyse the country's education policy documents, five-year plans, reforms, projects and programmes (Ali, 2017; Ashraf, Hafiza, 2016; Ahsan, 2003).Many policy aims and objectives were focused on 'character building' of the nation from an Islamic ideology perspective. However, an economically poor country like Pakistan needs to improve its human resources in order to develop a productive labour force and to identify sustainable solutions for its economy and environment.

Since the 1990s, education has been associated with the concept of *sustainable development*. The term sustainable development was first used in 1980 in the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, 1980), and introduced in 1992 at the Rio Earth Summit. This was the result of the growing awareness of the global links between increasing environmental problems, socioeconomic issues to do with poverty and inequality, and concerns about a healthy future for humanity. It is now a prominent paradigm of development (Diemer, 2017). Sustainable development links environmental and socioeconomic issues (Hopwood, Mellor, O'Brien, 2005). Even if hundreds of definitions of sustainable development exist (Dale, 2001), the official definition is in the Brundtl and Commission report (1987). The definition suggested in this report is widely accepted: "Sustainable development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Education for sustainable development (ESD), promoted by UNESCO (2005-2014), supports the idea that there is a form of education dedicated to Sustainable Development. In its international plan for the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005), UNESCO took the view that education for sustainable development should "integrate into the teaching and learning process the key themes of sustainable development, such as climate change, prevention of natural risks, biodiversity, poverty reduction or sustainable consumption. It involves the adoption of participatory pedagogical methods aimed at motivating and empowering learners to change their behaviour and become actors of sustainable development. This is why education for Sustainable Development promotes the acquisition of skills that enable learners to develop their critical thinking skills, imagine prospective scenarios and make joint decisions". Education is not merely concerned with implementing knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behaviour change, so on, it proposes also to transform individuals into responsible citizens. This role falls particularly into the realm of Primary and Higher education. Primary education lays vital foundations, and Higher education is the essential preparation to best ensure that human capital may contribute usefully to a nation.

In Pakistan, education occupies an important place in the constitution. In 2010, the Assembly of Pakistan (House of Representatives) passed the 18th amendment to rephrase article 37-B of the 1973 constitution. In the 1973 constitution: "State shall be responsible for eradication of

illiteracy and provision of free and compulsory education up to secondary level, within minimum possible time"(Article 37-B, 1973 Constitution of Pakistan)*.* The constitution of Pakistan in pursuance of the right to education in Article 25A:"The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law"(N. A. o. Pakistan, 2012).In the past few decades, education in Pakistan has been improved continuously, even if some indicators show a mixed situation. The adult literacy rate is 58%(UNDP, 2016). The gross net enrolment rate of primary level (age 5 to 10, male and female)is 91%(Statistics, 2014-15), keeping children in school is a challenge at the secondary level. On the Human Development Index, Pakistan is ranked at 147, with a value of 0.0550 points(UNDP, 2016). Pakistan with a population of 180 million people has a population growth rate of 2.4%. The size of the population is one of the major problem of Pakistan and because of its population size it faces a long list of other challenges in striving to develop its human resources for a better quality of life. Potentially an unexploited population may be a liability on the state because of it sunder utilization. Under-development is the direct cause and effect of educational and environmental challenges. A bigger population also increases the already high illiteracy rate.

Since the founding of Pakistan, both civilian and military regimes have undertaken initiatives for preparing educational policies. Several studies (Academy of Educational Planning and Management, AEPAM) have been under taken to analyse policies, plans, projects, and programs to measure achievement and educational outcomes. Countries' commitments to deal with the increase in global challenges for the economy, poverty, environment, global warming, climate change, social issues, or terrorism are inter-related. Global efforts are being taken under the Education for Sustainable Development umbrella to induce social change.

This paper reviews how Pakistan's educational policies play a vital role in producing responsible global citizens. A policy document is a written framework to guide the different stakeholders to harmonize their understanding of the desired outcomes for any project or program. In this exploratory research, our primary question is - what are the key priority areas of Pakistan's previous education policies in the context of Sustainable Development? The two following sections identify the educational challenges for Pakistan. We focus on the education/development relationship to identify the key drivers to the transition towards sustainable development, then, we present the history of Pakistan's education policies and link them to the UNESCO Decade for Education of Sustainable Development

Education in a developing country, case study of Pakistan:

For developing countries, education is increasingly the cornerstone of public policies. Although this quest for a better future is subject to the whims of the structural adjustment policies of international institutions, the burden of public debt, or economic conditions, many countries have engaged in national programmes to eradicate poverty and illiteracy. This part of the study seeks to recall the links between education and development in the literature. We

also present the position of international institutions, which are often instigators of rupture or change in public policies in developing countries. Finally, we highlight how the concept of sustainable development is likely to bring about some changes in the perception of education.

Education and Development, a literature review:

There is a lot of literature available on education policy. However, there is a clear need for research into there lationship between education and sustainable development policies. Different approaches, contexts, levels, and perspectives have been adopted to analyze education policy linked to sustainable development, why is it a priority, and how has it became a focus for each and every government all over the world. Sustainable development has gradually increased in importance at the global level demanding positive outcomes from education to curtail future needs of states to improve quality of life and sustainability of the nation. The education policy preparation process is mostly considered as a politically influenced process (Lee, 1995). An important factor for determining the outcome of education is the policy formulation context, because education policy does not exist in a vacuum (Skolnik, 2010). It is influenced by the contemporary context of cultural and global challenges faced by human beings as a whole. Policy is drawn from the nature, context, and culture of the country in question. Economic, political, cultural, historical, regional and global contexts influence the process of policy preparation. There are both micro and macro level factors which influence education policy. Here we look at Pakistan's education policy at the micro level to address global sustainable development challenges in the Pakistan context, to analyze Pakistan's education policy from a sustainable development perspective.

Education development is a dynamic and continuous process to deal with contemporary and future challenges. Education and Development have a pivotal and complex relationship with each other. There are many schools of thought which argue that education is a tool for development. In this paper by development we mean an education which by its content, method, and pedagogy is framed by the policy for the development of the people. Also, this paper defines development as a quality of life from a learning outcome point of view. On the one hand education propagates development, which increases purchasing power and quality of life, which ultimately demands more consumption of resources and a bigger environmental footprint. On the other hand, education is considered as an instrument to produce sensible citizens who can wisely decide their environmental footprints.

The primary purpose of education policy is to develop the knowledge economy [iii] in order to compete in the contemporary world (Braban, Harmsen, 2016), and this is true for Pakistan's education policy. Education investment by governments is also a method of analysis to evaluate the importance of education. Investing in human capital is another tool to explain education policy [iv] (Dissou, Didic, Yakautsava, 2016). Education facilitates individuals' and societies' efforts to make better use of their resources and to understand their potential (Malik, 2015). By doing this, nations can create a harmony between economic and natural

resources and meet the potential of any nation to make a contribution towards a sustainable world.

In the debate about educational policy and its implementation many scholars have discussed its different phases. According to Pressman and (Wildavsky, 1984), the key to effective implementation lies in the ability to devise a system in which the causal links between setting goals and the successive actions designed to achieve them are clear and robust. Historically, many approaches have been adopted to analyse policies. The top-down theorists' approach to policy analysis has suggested a framework to understand policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. This was initially inspired by the implementation-gap model. Later 'top-down' theorists devised a list of 6 necessary and sufficient conditions for effective policy implementation (Sabatier, 1979), indicating that if these conditions were realized, policy should be implemented as intended:

- Clear and logically consistent objectives.
- Adequate causal theory (i.e. a valid theory as to how particular actions would lead to the desired outcomes)
- An implementation process structured to enhance compliance by implementers (e.g. appropriate incentives and sanctions to influence subordinates in the required way).
- Committed, skillful, implementation officials.
- Support from interest groups and legislature.
- No changes in socio-economic conditions that undermine political support or the causal theory underlying the policy.

On the other hand, there have been some critic soft op-down approaches who suggested the opposite approach, that of 'bottom-up'. Education policy analysis can be reviewed from two distinctive stand points:' analysis of' and 'analysis for'. They have different methods for analyzing education policy. According to Taylor, the connection between national and global agendas creates tensions. This connection has been much discussed and criticized. National governments have been criticized for following international agendas at the cost of independent and sovereign policy. Critics argue that under this global pressure no-one can formulate an independent, local, needs-based policy. Therefore there is an argument that "the educational policies of Pakistan, respond more to the globalization process - rather than national needs" (Aamir Saeed, 2015). Local needs could be synchronized with global challenges in order to deal with the future problems people will face resulting from human activity. However, the policy document content tells a different story, because almost 80% of educational policies do not address the global agenda. Critics of the Pakistan national educational policies have derived 'anti-national' objectives from policy documents. However, it is only recently that policies genuinely address some of the international development agendas such as Universal Primary Education.

For the common cause of sustainable development and its relationship with education, there are many proponents of the global agenda of education for sustainable development to ensure a safe future for future generations (Ramdoo, Rumjaun, Bhai, 2017). For this purpose, the term

Globalization may be referred to as a 'global common cause'. Although, the term "Globalization" is used for different connotations and contexts - here it is used to mean the global to local links between the concept of globalization and education. Its meaning, nature, and impact are contested in the educational research community. Globalization is used amongst the educational community to determine the relationship between the common global objectives and the systematic concepts of sustainable development. Keeping the above different ideas in mind, we can analyze the relationship between education and development in Pakistan's education system. This is outlined in the sections below.

International Development Agencies Perspective:

If the link between education and development has some theoretical basis, an important challenge concerns the adjustment structural policies (Belassa, 1982) recommended by international organizations. The fundamental role of education in social and economic development has been recognized by many international institutions such as UNDP, World Bank, OECD, etc. Education, as an essential lever of development, is seen as a means of achieving social welfare, sustainable development, and good governance. Education is seen as the key to eradicating poverty, and to facilitating access to decent work and higher incomes. It translates into productivity gains which fuel economic growth. Faced with concerns about social injustice, unequal participation in development, and local and international conflict, growing attention is being paid to the central role of education in the promotion of peace and social cohesion. Sustainable Development Education is critical to ensure the acquisition of skills which will enable future generation to meet the challenges of contemporary global issues such as climate change, scarcity of natural resources, population growth, etc.

The World Bank has decades of experience working on education around the globe. It advocates a range of strategies for education. It has developed comprehensive education policies for every region of the world, and specific developing countries, to enhance educational outcomes. Empirical evidence is available to show the advantages and disadvantages of World Bank education policy. A mix of arguments is available to discuss its importance at global and local level. The World Bank education policy is important because the World Bank has become the single largest source of development capital in the field of international education (Heyneman, 2003). In this paper both Primary and Higher education are considered because both have a vital importance for, and relationship to, sustainable development. Primary education is the foundation to build a future generation with all the basic characteristics of sustainable development and prepare future school-leavers to become leaders.

International agencies, for example UNESCO, OECD, and the World Bank lead the ESD advocacy campaigns, policy, programming, implementation, and funding globally to promote agreement on the global challenges to sustainability of people and the planet.

Pakistan is one of the Top 10 Aid, loan, and grant recipients from World Bank, IMF, USAID, and other aid international

organizations. A big part of its budget is used in repayment of loans and Defense. The graph below gives a picture of the

literacy rate and expenditure on education.

Educational expenditure and enrollment

- School enrollment, private (% of total primary)
- Government expenditure on education, total (% of GDP)
- Government expenditure on education, total (% of government expenditure)
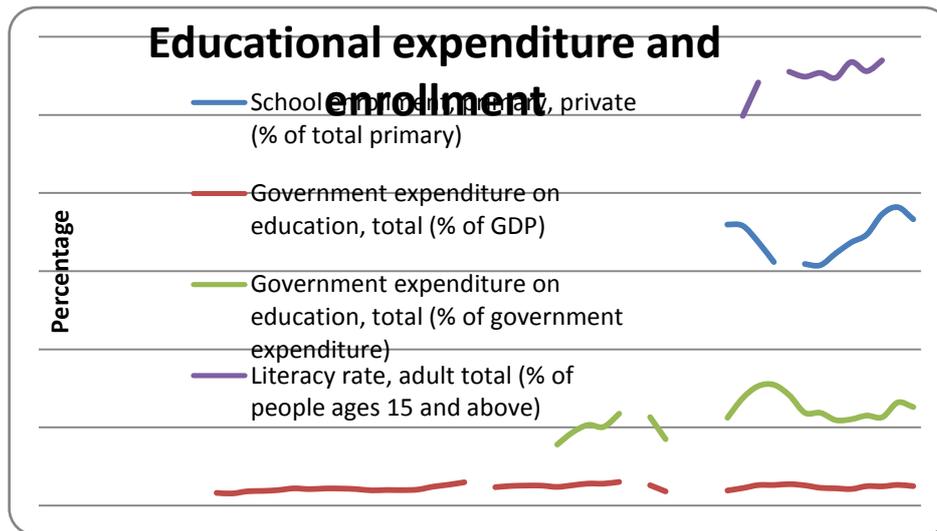- Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above)

Percentage

Figure 1 Source: World Bank data

The purpose of presenting the enrollment, literacy rate, and expenditure above is to give an overview of educational priority in terms of expenditure and literacy. These basic facts from World Bank data illustrate the fact that government of Pakistan expenditure is not meeting the requirement to at least achieve literacy. In this situation Education for Sustainable Development is a big question mark. This scenario is a similar situation to that of 2015 for achieving MDG's. The World Bank, through its educational strategy focuses on increasing access, improving quality, creating equality equity, discourage ingdisparity, inclusion, learning outcomes, and lifelong learning.

The World Bank strategy is to ensure access to, and a high-quality education for, the lifelong learning objective SDG-4 and the "learning for all" World Bank aim. In its framework for education 2030, the World Bank drafted a strategy for countries to implement for achieving SDG-4 targets.

In the next section there is a discussion of education policy - Pakistan's educational policy of 2009 focuses on almost the same objectives as the World Bank framework, although previous policies had prioritized some of its objectives but did not cover the main goal.

Sustainable Development and education policies:

It is can be seen in the sustainable development literature that the ideas of sustainable development emerged when the world saw it was faced with rapid change at the local and global level of environment, culture, natural resources, climate and related issues. For the protection and maintenance of diversity, and for the planet's long term survival, scientists started to debate and to discuss sustainable development. Much of the research and identification of the subsequent pathways has been done over the last four decades. Debate on this essential topic is still ongoing, and more feasible and comprehensive solutions and recommendations are being explored. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the latest global agenda for addressing sustainable development for the earth's population and the earth itself.

The brief definition of sustainable development by the World Commission on Environment and Development implies that human needs are basic and essential. Furthermore, economic development accompanied by equality of sharing of resources with poor nations should be maintained, and ensuring equality should be encouraged by effective citizen participation. Until recently, the literature reviews (e.g Kates, Parris and Leiserowitz, 2005) have pointed out the unclear points of the standard definition of sustainable development (Sahin, 2016). Governments, non-governmental organizations, and international agencies quickly got used to the term "sustainable development". Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) which took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the terms "sustainability" and "sustainable development" have been used interchangeably (McKeown, 2002)

Defining sustainable development remains controversial and complex. Many attempts have been made to explain and interpret it comprehensively in different ways and for different contexts –in order to ease the arguments between academia and other stakeholders, so that it can be an accepted and feasible solution for a majority of the partners. Jickling (1994)considered that sustainable development education requires an adequate conceptualization of sustainable development. The conceptual framework of sustainable development should be clear and easy to understand for all. Jukker (2000) argued that "*our approach to sustainable development education must be complex, transdisciplinary, and broad*". Sustainable human societies are characterized by social justice, economic equality, and enhanced human capabilities. Filho (2011)proposed a definition of applied sustainable development "*An action-oriented and project-based approach, which uses principles of sustainable development and applies them to real contexts and to real situations, yielding the benefits which can be expected when methods, approaches, processes and principles of sustainable development are put into practice*". The basic premise of sustainable development is

that human and natural systems are dynamically interdependent and cannot be considered in isolation when trying to resolve critical issues(Ann Dale, 2005). Lenglet (2014)argued that "*Sustainable development can be understood and acted upon through an appreciation of the dynamic, complex and systemic relationship between the planetary ecological substrate and human societies in their social, economic and cultural make-up*". A sustainable society is one that can persist over generations, one that is far-seeing enough, flexible enough, and wise enough, not to undermine either its physical or social systems of support[v].

At the same time, some have argued that sustainable development is an oxymoron which itself contains a controversial connotation. On the one hand, we want development, but on the other we want a sustainable future without exploiting resources for development. Serge Latouche (2003), a pioneer of de growth, insisted on the fact that sustainable development is "*still a conceptual tinkering aimed at changing words if not to change things, but this time, we are dealing with a verbal monstrousness because of the mystifying antinomy of the expression*". An argument supported by many authors is that sustainability and development are contradictory concepts, and that 'sustainable development' is just economic growth dressed up in the language of deliberate obfuscation, used knowingly, or not, by those who care nothing for the earth in order to fool us into thinking that they are taking its concerns seriously (Harding, 2006). Thus, the usual definition confuses sustainable growth - an oxymoron, and sustainable development - a possibility: "*Ambiguities notwithstanding, the concept of sustainability has become the keystone of the global dialogue about the human future. But what exactly do we intend to sustain, and what will that require of us?*" (Orr, 2006).

Another important argument from neoclassical economists is to try to define development from an objective point of view in that "it is an increase in social welfare". For them, the key question is to measure social welfare in terms of economic output, and point out that economic growth does not necessarily increase social welfare. For them this proves that there is no contradiction between sustainability and development.

There is another school of thought about Sustainable Development which states that "*it is a process of social change*". "A holistic or systemic view of sustainable development sees it as a process of change guided by a number of values or principles"(Daniella Tilbury, 2002). Therefore an argument from Lele (1991) that "Sustainable Development is understood as a form of societal change that is in addition to traditional developmental objectives". Following this idea, sustainable development can be more logically linked with the education system to bring change in society via education.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development considers that sustainable development consists of reconciling the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of development in a global and long-term perspective. It considers human well-being in a broad sense, takes into account the long-term consequences of today's activities, and implies the full participation of civil society to find viable solutions. 6 major thematic areas are on the agenda: sustainable consumption and production, climate change and sustainable development, sustainable foreign trade and investment, subsidy reform and sustainable development, education for sustainable development (ESD), environment and health. The OECD and UNESCO were (are ??) the two international institutions involved in ESD programs and practices.

Higher Education and Sustainable Development:

The education system is the instrument which a society uses to equip its people to lead productive public lives, and to live personal lives according to their talent and interests. Higher education faces the same challenges as Primary education. Higher education plays a vital role in high level progress in any nation through its research and innovation. "*An important function of higher education is research through which it contributes to the innovation process, economic growth, sustainable development and social cohesion*"(Ministry of Education,2009, Pakistan).In early Pakistan policy documents, Higher education was firstly taken as an instrument to provide factory workers to enable more production for economic growth of the country. The initial 4 educational policy documents propose this as one of the objectives for higher education. Also Higher education was to do research and innovation to support those economic units in using state-of-the-art technology to enhance productivity. Economic growth was the central issue in Higher education, rather than general progress in all disciplines to meet all the needs of society. Later, the Pakistan 2009 education policy discussed some of the challenges and highlighted a strategic vision for education. Since the founding of the nation, Higher education has faced many challenges to develop productive graduates who can not only contribute to the economy, but also act as responsible citizens. Challenges hamper the achievement of set objectives. Some key challenges were funding, teacher quality, development of best practice curricula, infrastructure, up-to-date technology, and equipment. Actions were suggested in the 2009 document to cater for these challenges. Many of these actions have been achieved, but the expected results are still awaited. Future educational policies need a strategy to transform the educational system from not just a knowledge economy but also beyond it. Higher education for sustainable development can be considered to be more than creating the knowledge economy, it is also to orient graduates to think critically for future decisions by being a local as well as global responsible citizen of planet earth by protecting people and the planet. It should operate to create a sustainable society via long-term learning outcomes.

In all the educational policy documents of Pakistan, Higher education still faces similar challenges. Currently, it is merely addressing the demands of the market to produce skilled, knowledgeable, and visionary graduates. It has not advanced in terms of research, innovation, and technological growth and this is perceived as hampering economic growth. Every document produced addresses the importance, nature, challenges, and potential of sustainable development education and demonstrates commitment by proposing solutions, but the set outcomes have not been fully realized yet.

Education policies in Pakistan: historical pathways and challenges:

Education policy is a priority agenda for every nation state across the globe. Local, national, regional, and global awareness and focus on education is increasing among nations. Educational outcomes are demanding more attention from every segment of society to create a sustainable future for future generations. Many policies have been devised for educational advancement since 1947 by every ruling civilian and military regime in Pakistan. Reviews, monitoring processes during implementation, evaluation studies, and 'lessons learnt' exercises have been undertaken to evaluate policy success and failure against set objectives.

In order to analyze education policy formulation processes in Pakistan, it is important to understand their defined objectives and how these policies are intended to support the achievement of those objectives (Aamir Saeed, 2015). This article is a modest effort to review policies and analyze the set objectives.

A major national event, the First Pakistan Educational Conference, was organized in November 1947, less than4 months after independence. This indicated the importance of education for the newly-born state. However, these initial months were very difficult for the leadership, who were simultaneously managing multiple challenges - dealing with millions of migrants and refugees, and the problems of resettlement as well as poor infrastructure, security, and violence. Trauma affected the nation, as well as the questions of the taking over of power and governance. Despite this, high level forums were organized in the early months to discuss the urgent issue of education.

The educational advancement initiatives of Pakistan can be divided into 4periods. The first is from the 1947 Pakistan education conference until 1970, the second is from1970 to 1990, the third is from 1990 to 2009, and the last is post 2009. These periods are characterized by their different policy agendas created to achieve set objectives.

From the policy documents from 1947to2009 the Pakistan national education policy, content and context seems to have had similar objectives and challenges. However, the periods can be distinguished by their separate approaches. Early policies were designed in terms of an 'agenda approach', but in the period from 2009onwards,a 'policy sectoral approach' was adopted.

First period: 1947 to 1970

Within the first 4 months of the nation coming into being, the political leadership organized an important high-level event to discuss the future nation of Pakistan. The first forum organized, the Pakistan Educational Conference, was held in November 1947. It was held in Karachi, chaired by Mr Fazul Rahman, Minister for the Interior, Broadcasting, and Education. Political leaders, academic experts and educators were invited from East Pakistan [vi] and West Pakistan.

The event focused on setting broad goals, emphasizing moral values driven by Islamic ideology – because the leadership of that time considered this newly-born state to be a separate state for Muslims. Its basic objectives for education, can be seen to be the same as today,70 years later. But not one of these objectives had been achieved by 2017. Pakistan's education policy failure is one of the classic examples of not being able to achieve set objectives even after seven decades of independence.

During the conference committees were formed to discuss different domains of education. These were focused on compulsory Primary education, spiritual, vocational, technical and Higher education. The conference expressed concerns about the poor infrastructure of schools. In order to achieve equitable treatment in marginalized segments of society, new initiatives were suggested for developing separate schools for girls, and incentives were devised in the form of scholarships for remote area students. It was recommended to the conference that the educational ideology should be based on the Islamic concept of the brotherhood of man, social democracy, and social justice. Students should be compelled to learn fundamental religious principles. Teacher training was also part of the policy for educational development. To enhance skilled teaching, human resource policy stressed the development of short term courses to improve teaching skills. Physical education was also discussed to create a healthy generation. Daily, routine physical activity was proposed, and scouting, rifle clubs, and mountaineering were also given special emphasis. Interestingly, from the beginning the integration of Madarsah (religious schools) into main stream education was stressed in line with the existing educational system. After the division of the Indian sub-continent into India and Pakistan, huge migrations from the different are as created an imbalance in education. The literacy rate was lower in the areas which became Pakistan and therefore it was proposed in the 1947 conference that in order to enhance literacy, new means should be adopted for adult literacy.

Another conference was held in 1952, as a follow up meeting, to discuss the 6year education development plan. It was followed by a special National Commission set up in 1959. A series of special plans to deal with the increasingly complex situation of education were prepared in the years from 1955 to 1970: The first Five Year Development Plan was prepared for 1955-1960, the second for 1960-65, and the third for 1965-70.

Initial policies and plans were focused on the morality and values development of the nation. So much so, that morality and values development were set as goals of the policy. However, that was the moment when the country was struggling for economic growth. For this purpose the country required skilled technical human capital. Nation building was driven by Islamic ideology. Urdu was introduced as the national language in areas where the diverse geographical ethnic groups did not speak it. East Pakistan expressed concerns about the areas where Bangla (Bangli Language) was the dominant and common language. Primary level schooling (grade 1 to 5) was introduced as compulsory and free, and due to financial issues, local communities were asked to share in kind to donate land, labour and construction of school infrastructure. Revision of targets was a requirement that is

common to all the education policy documents. The conference of 1951 set a target to achieve 100% universal primary education by 1971, unfortunately that target remains unfulfilled. The targets changed from one policy to another, demonstrating the inconsistent approach with in the education policy arena.

The initial discussions proposed a strategy to deal with inequality by appointing female teachers in separate girls' school starting with Primary and gradually increasing to Middle schools, in order to increase access and the retention rate of girl students at the Primary level, a goal which to this dayremains unfulfilled. Girls may study in co-education with boys in Primary level from grade one to five, but girl students are required to be separated in Middle and High schools.

Stipends and facilities were provided to impoverished area students and lower castes. These students study in public school facilities. Scholarships for castes continue to give them equal opportunities in terms of access to public or private schools for fulfillment of their basic right to education in the country.

The 1959 National Commission on Education was asked to prepare a new education policy document keeping in mind the previous initiatives and policies and programmes (President General Mohammad Ayub Khan was president at that time).

Education that meets the needs of the nation, said Ayub Khan in his inaugural speech to the participants of this conference announcing the new policy. Apparently, the needs of the nations were very similar to those of the 1960's. However, in some respects its agenda was different from today.

The 1959 report stressed the need to develop an education system which creates a skilled labor force to exploit natural resources for economic development. Interestingly, in this document (chapter five, point five) it unwittingly and simultaneously established the aims of producing productive, intelligent, constructive, and capable individuals. This is very much in keeping with one of UNESCO's broad aims. Keeping in mind the latest international developments of universal compulsory education, the conference report proposed this aim from Primary school level to Middle school level, and the first 5 years of Primary education was made compulsory. However, planners faced the same challenges as today in relation to the retention rate of the enrolled students.

The main objectives of the 1959 document were related to character building of the next generation. 3 aspects of a child's personality development were focused on: moral, physical, and mental. Interestingly, this is very similar to the SDGs which aim to develop knowledge and skills to equip children to deal with the demands of life. Civic sense and becoming individual, responsible citizens was also a focus area. The reforms were also key a domain in which to discuss quality education. Today the issues remain the same as70 years ago: -teacher training, teaching methods, class-room aid, infrastructure, textbooks, equipment, finance,

administrative problems, corruption, and political interference. Science and social studies were 2 main domains of curriculum in this policy document to develop necessary basic skills and knowledge in pupils in order to achieve the above objectives. Teachers relied too much on textbooks which were prepared at the national level. Good teaching practice demanded that teachers explore local materials for use in their teaching methods to create clearer understanding in their pupils.

Second period: 1970 to 1990

The 1970 educational policy document gives a sense of urgency to the importance of education as the country needed to transform its economy from agriculture to industrialization, and industry needs more skilled human capital. 5 areas were prioritized - Islamic values as an instrument for education, re-orientation of the education system according to economic needs, the role of education in social change, the quality of education, and the decentralization of educational administration. Its principles were changing gradually to accommodate the economic development of the country driven by Islamic values and quality education. It is accepted in this policy document that the Primary education system had been highly inefficient and had serious deficiencies. Measures recommended included increasing literacy, for example compulsory attendance, girls' enrollment, new facilities, separate girls' schools, etc.

It was noted in the document that there was a universal consensus that the quality of education was deteriorating. Many reasons were highlighted in the policy document to address the urgent need to produce quality education to ultimately achieve the stated objectives. An imbalance prevailed, there was a serious gap in resource allocation and outcomes between different academic disciplines, especially in the arts and sciences.

Religious education was also promoted as an important aim. It was made compulsory until year 10. The syllabus of Islamic teaching was re-organized and 3 points, relating to democracy, and a tolerant and just society, were addressed. This raises the important question of why Pakistan is still so far from achieving these aims to create a moderate society. Non-Muslims were also given consideration, allowing them to learn according to their own religious beliefs. At university level, Islamic studies departments were established to ensure that compulsory Islamic study courses met contemporary needs and challenges via Islamic education.

The curriculum development emphasized Pakistan's national objectives via linguistic, numerical skills, daily life problem solving skills, becoming more responsive to society, and a better understanding of nature and the environment. Science and technical education stressed enhancing the national economic situation. In order to aid curriculum development, various committees were formed for preparing and reorganizing curricula for each level of education to address the needs of the nation. The policy document recommended reform of the examination system because it was failing to achieve the prime objective of quality learning for pupils. Libraries were established at all

levels, to provide at least basic text books and other reading material to enhance the reading habits of pupils. Language was considered as a basic educational and instructional instrument to motivate and develop a conducive environment for pupils to take interest in their academic activities.

The 1972 policy document stressed building on national ideology and harmony by the conscious use of education. Illiteracy was to be eradicated within the shortest possible time according to national needs, economic development and equality was promoted to reduce disparities and to minimize differences. This document also proposed to increase access to universal Primary education for boys in 1979 and for girls in 1984, which has not yet been achieved. Even elementary school (from grade six to eight) was proposed for universal access:1982 for boys and 1987 for girls.

The education policy formulated in 1970 was the first to put forward a stronger emphasis on educational improvements. The decade of the1970s was a crisis period for Pakistan. During the 1971 war with India, Pakistan lost East Pakistan and economic growth decreased; there was an increase in poverty and many other problems. In 1977, amilitary coup toppled the elected Prime Minister and triggered general political instability. General Mohammad Zia ul Haqproclaimed himself chief martial law administrator, and later President.

Soon after his takeover, another policy document was prepared and recommended various new initiatives and concepts to achieve the desired objectives. For the first time, Islamization was stressed in this policy document, and required the revising of curriculum and textbooks according to Islamic principles. Mosque and Mohala school concepts were introduced in order to improve the literacy rate. Non-formal schools were required to improve literacy. Decentralization of school administration was proposed to improve quality. Some administrative improvements were subsequently observed by the decentralization of roles and responsibilities to district level.

An interesting new educational aim was introduced for the first time in this policy document: that each Pakistani national should be educated to become a Muslim ummah for the welfare of other Muslim brothers across the globe and spread the message of Islam. It was also stressed that literacy should be increased, the maximum potential of each and every citizen exploited for productive purposes, and the promotion and propagation of scientific and technological training and research for the socio-economic growth of the country.

In the first section relating to Primary education, numerous issues were highlighted. The document demonstrates a clear understanding of the vital issues. However, all of those issues are still the same today, perhaps even more complex. The key question raised here is: 'Why has it taken so long to resolve these issues? Why have politicians or administrations never taken concrete measures to genuinely implement all these proposed policies? Unfortunately,

virtually the same targets exist today as those originally set for Primary school education.

In keeping with the Islamization concept of education, this document was prepared under the rule of a Martial Law administrator who had a professed Islamic mindset. This led to education concepts being completely influenced by Islamic ideology. The mosque schools concept was driven by this mindset. Behind this concept there was a principle concerning the Mosque and its role in Muslim society, the idea being that this public sphere could be used to increase literacy, especially for girls in rural areas, because of the inherent respect given to religious affiliation. It was decided to use the mosques to educate the masses so as to increase enrollment in Primary level education.

A survey carried out in 1986 showed that at that time 21,983 mosque schools were established which had 631,465 children (Afzal, 1988, p. 82). Another research study found that mosque schools had a positive impact on girls' access to schooling in rural areas (Anderson, 1989, p. 23). However, this innovation faced quite a number of problems related to the administrative, social, and religious environment which hindered its implementation and the achievement of quality education (Afzal, 1988, pp. 85-93).

Another concept, Mohala schools, was initiated for girl students to learn basic skills for running households, and to learn to read and write with the help of a house mother who would manage teaching in the home. This concept was new and more difficult to implement because of multi-faceted issues.

Village workshop schools were also introduced to deal with the students who had dropped out of the system. In these workshop schools, students were given certain basic skills to make them productive individuals. A course of one year's duration was introduced and trained teachers in specific subjects were engaged to produce skilled workers to meet the emerging industrial needs of the country.

Despite the various political periods, and all the policies and plans giving due consideration to the importance of female education, the situation today remains as challenging as ever. The problem is arguably worse because of the population explosion in the three decades since 1990. All aspects of female education were addressed in the various policies produced, but Pakistan has still not achieved even the minimum of the set targets. According to the policy document, people derive values from Islam, however most cultural values are driven by the cultural history of a region. In order to promote Islam, learning Arabic was introduced in order to learn the Koran and Sunnah. Islamiyat (Islamic studies) were made compulsory from primary to higher secondary school.

Third period: 1990 to 2009

In the 1992 policy document, 4 values: educational, economic, social, and institutional were focused on. Like the previous ones, in this document certain issues and challenges were acknowledged, and it was accepted that these frameworks did not significantly impact on individuals nor benefit society as a whole.

The conceptual framework of this policy document is much the same as previous ones. It continues to end or se Islamic values as the prime principle of education. Its foundation also rests on the same values. The only difference in this one is to use the new term *Islamization of education* "Inculcating Islamic education through the educational system in order to create a Muslim society". Equality, quality, and efficiency were taken as principles of this document. Disparities and inequalities were also considered as the major challenges of this effort to implement this new policy initiative.

Moral values driven by Islamic ideology were adopted to create an egalitarian Muslim society. Deeni Madaris (Religious institutions) were financially supported and recognized. The condition of DeeniMadaris was improved through financial assistance, provision of library books and equating the prestigious degrees of these Madaris with M.A (Master of Arts) in Islamiy at and Arabic (Ministry of Education, 1992).

This policy document mostly focused on character building in the context of Islamic values. It did not place significant value on science and technology as the means to improve economic and scientific research and work. The notion of character building has been a big question mark over the decades. The world view in this document is completely different in relation to whether science enhances human welfare and development. Strategies included comprehensive training programs for teachers, reorganization of administration, text books, teaching methodology, curriculum etc. Prominent themes in this policy document were primary education, religious and moral education, the quality of education, literacy, development of social sciences, budget, private partnerships for education, computer education.

A criticism of the 2009 educational policy document is that it makes compulsory Education for all and some sections of Education for Sustainable Development, but it does not recommend resources and an implementation strategy. The 2009 policy document, compared to previous policy documents, was criticized by Aamir Saeed (2015)who suggested that it is unrealistic, overly ambitious, and establishes no formal accountability, nor time frames within which to achieve objectives.

1999 was a year of political turmoil. An elected Prime Minister's government was again toppled by a military chief in October 1999. This change of government and political scenario also affected the education sector. Again, priorities were changed, and education became a subject which received less priority relative to bringing about political and governance stability in the country. At the end of 2005 a review was due and accordingly a review committee was formed under the supervision of Mr Javed Hassan Aly. The review team consisted of a diverse group of individuals, education experts, consultants etc. This exercise was done in several stages by taking on board as many stakeholders as possible to contribute to the formulation of a new policy document. This process was supposed to end in 2007 with its final recommendations, but due to change of government, the process was delayed for 2 years, and it was approved and announced in August 2009. This exercise adopted a different thematic approach compared to the sector al approach of previous policies.

Fourth period: after 2009 to the present:

Another era began after a new policy document was approved with the 2010 18th constitutional amendments by national/federal government in Pakistan's national Assembly Parliament. At that time, the party in power was the Pakistan's People Party in the federal capital: Islamabad. With the consensus of the majority of the political parties, the 18th constitutional amendment was passed and was implemented in April 2010. There was a key agenda in the amendment that power should be devolved from the center to the provinces to ensure effective and efficient service delivery and accountability. Theoretically, key departments were handed over to the provinces, but due to some delayed administrative procedures, a number of ministries and departments remain in the center.

The Education ministry was one of the departments devolved to the provinces and after this amendment, Education was the responsibility of the provinces. However, this development resulted in a huge implementation gap which created extensive confusion about roles and responsibilities, which over time, was gradually clarified.

This period was considered as key to fulfill international commitments at all levels because of the increase of global environmental, population, health, and educational challenges. However, it has engendered a separate debate about the actual situation. Almost 5 years were wasted clarifying roles and responsibilities, an incompetent bureaucracy and a lack of priority by political regimes still prevail within the education authorities. This provides an easy escape and excuse to avoid fulfilling the 2015 MDG targets. The situation is still not very encouraging with respect to the estimates and facts leading to similar concerns regarding the achievement of the 2030 SDG targets.

Table 1: Education policies and Objectives

Education policies/Reports	Key set objectives of Education policies/Reports
National education policy 1947/ Educational Conference	Islamic Ideology, Social Democracy, character building
The report of the Commission on National Education	Reorganization and reorientation of the education system, spiritual, moral and cultural values. Higher Education coordination, developing agriculture and technology
Education policy 1970	Islamic values, economic needs, emphasis on scientific and technical and vocational. Social change for democratic society and equal access to education. Quality education. Strengthen educational institutions, dignity of labour.
Education policy 1972-1980	Ideology of Pakistan, National cohesion, dignity of labour, Equal access to education for all, Participation of all stake holders, Skill development for economic activities.
National education policy 1978	Islamic principles of life and commitment to the ideology of Pakistan was its primary aim, Adult education.
National Education policy 1992	Educational, economic, social and institutional. Islamic principles, equity, quality and efficiency, Universal primary education. Harmony with nature.
National Education Policy 2009	An education which caters for social, political, spiritual needs of society. Pakistan ideology, Nationhood, social cohesion, equality. Responsible individuals and global citizens. Sustainable development.

As discussed above, some key highlights of the 2009 policy document are its response to the sustainable development agenda, which only the 2009 policy document addresses. The 2009 policy document discusses globalization, competitiveness, social exclusion, and social cohesion, International development partnership, ECE Early childhood, development agencies, and addresses some international development agenda points. It is acknowledged that there is a deficit in the benefits arising from the phenomenon of globalization. Pakistan ranks 122 in the current Global Competitive index 2016/17 overall ranking.

Pakistan's education system has consistently faced the same challenges since its inception. All the major policy documents rightly identified and recognized all the major challenges the education system was facing. However, little improvement has been observed mitigating those challenges. The major challenges are corruption, lack of political will, political interference, lack of merit, financing education, infrastructure, development of quality teachers, regular training of teaching and other administrative staff, the bureaucratic working environment, development of a quality curriculum, accessibility, different types of educational systems, overcrowded classrooms, unequal opportunities, lack of interest from political regimes in education, prioritising the problem etc.

Education for Sustainable Development:

Agenda 21 highlighted the phrase "*Education for sustainable development*". It was the first time that this term was introduced formally at an international level where education is taken as a tool for action on sustainable development issues at a large scale across the globe. Since the inception of the concept at the Rio Conference in 1992, it has become prominent in the global development agenda of the political domain.

The debate and discussion is on-going in order to create a relationship between education and sustainable development. An argument from McKeown (2002) is "The relationship between education and sustainable development is complex". Many proponents advocate ESD as it is considered to be a key and comprehensive strategy to deal with future generations' challenges in terms of the sustainability of human beings. It has gradually become more important because education for sustainable

development can provide some characteristics to deal with future disasters in a proactive and preventive strategy.

Human beings are facing large scale challenges at different levels: both local and global. The upsurge of social, economic, and environmental issues has mobilized us to rethink human activity and find sustainable solutions to protect the earth and its people. Some examples of social issues which hamper social growth are human rights, inequality, poverty, peace, health, justice, violence, terrorism etc. These social issues are present in Pakistan. An education system is needed which deals with these critical social issues to create a sustainable society. Economic growth has improved in some parts of Pakistan but its impact is not significant at a mass level. Environmental challenges increase as the population increases. Climate change, global warming, and uneven weather patterns are affecting us more than ever. Despite technological advances, we still have a long way to go to deal with the forecast future challenges we will face if we continue at our current pace. Pakistan is currently facing massive economic, environmental, and social issues such as temperature increase, uneven weather patterns, longer duration periods of smog, air pollution, deteriorating ground water, deforestation, urbanization, population, industrialization, installation of more coal plants etc. The only solution seems to lie in education for sustainable development for Pakistan.

After decades of discussion, debates, pilot projects and programmes, there is wide acceptance that the strategy to deal with the above-mentioned global challenges is education for sustainable development at a large scale with a simultaneous and rapid reduction in the causes. The following discussion is about the scope of ESD, its definition, nature, utility, impact etc.

ESD is considered to bean applied aspect of SD, and therefore as Laurie (2016) said "Efforts began with raising awareness, moved to capacity building, then to experimentation and finally, implementation of good practice". An important argument concerning ESD is the need to enhance evidence-based research in order to expand ESD implementation. In spite of widespread implementation and success stories of ESD, the expansion of ESD in primary, secondary and higher education will require the ESD community to provide evidence that ESD is effective and contributes to the overall quality of education (Laurie,

2016).Therefore, the argument in this regard is to reinforce advanced academic and institutional research to create concrete scientific evidence to justify the logical outcomes of ESD. That is why education at all levels is critical in order to achieve sustainable development goals.

As well as these different interpretations of ESD, in 1998 the Council for Environmental Education published a strategy report (CEE, 1998) entitled *"Education for Sustainable Development in the Schools Sector"* in the Sustainable Development Education Panel (SDEP) which is particularly significant for teachers. ESD was defined in this report (p.3) in the following way: *"Education for sustainable development enables people to develop the knowledge, values, and skills to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both globally and locally, that will improve the quality of life now and without damaging the planet for the future* (Sahin, 2016).

Another argument for the ESD approach is that we have utilized human-centric approaches to understand our value, our place and role within the biological and environmental eco-systems. Such an approach which overemphasizes human beings has brought about depletion of natural resources, damage to the natural environment, and created a challenge to the long-term sustainability of our planet by breaking the chain of eco-systems on earth (Tillmanns, Holland, Lorenzi, and McDonagh, 2014) (Sahin, 2016).On the other hand, other advocates argue for environmentally sensitive approaches to deal with the challenge.

There is another key question for debate on education for sustainable development -Is education a good thing? The volume of education has increased and continues to increase, yet so does pollution, exhaustion of resources, and the dangers of ecological catastrophe. If still more education is to save us, it needs to be education of a different kind: an education that takes us into the depth of things. It has been comprehensively proven that developed countries have a higher ecological footprint than less developed nations. Developed countries use more resources, consume more, and exploit more than those who have not enough resources. Some developed countries are now rapidly transforming their nation through ESD educational strategies to adopt sustainable development life styles to protect people and the earth.

A very important argument comes from Selby (2007, p249) who is also concerned with the concept of ESD and argues that "the heating is happening" and calls for "education for sustainable contraction" in which we accept the climate change threat, move away from the current denial or the "business as usual" mindset (Selby 2007, p 265) and respond to the need for transformation. This argument stresses the need for rapid action to respond to the rapid changes in the environment in order to mitigate its effects.

Education for sustainable development is the process of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes, needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations.

Other than environmentalists, some researchers and educators are looking at ESD from other points of view, such asSterling (2001)who argues that ESD can be recognized as sustainable education in which there is a movement toward the renewal of education systems and institutions *"doing better things"* and *seeing things differently* (Sterling, 2001).

DaniellaTilbury(2002) argues for a vision in which "ESD encompasses a vision that integrates environment, economy and society". It encompasses all 3 dimensions of sustainable development.

Lucie Sauvé (1996)sub-divides education by environmental perspectives arguing that education can have 3 typologies 1) The rational educational paradigm, 2) The humanistic educational paradigm and 3) The inventive educational paradigm.

Uncertainties and debates regarding the term Sustainable Development (SD) are still on-going, and similarly, the notion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is open to debate (Sahin, 2016). Academia, international development organizations, governments, and environmental scientists are all defining ESD within their own contexts. There is considerable debate in all these fields. According to Sterling (2001), ESD can be recognized as sustainable education in which there is a movement toward the renewal of education systems and institutions 'doing better things' and 'seeing things differently(Sahin, 2016).

The goal of the UN decade of education for sustainable development 2005 – 2014 was to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects of learning in order to encourage changes in behaviour that allow for a more sustainable and just society for all. This involves learning the values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation.

A more urgent need, however, arises from the observation that ESD remains poorly researched with little evidence for its efficacity (Tilbury, 2011).It is widely accepted among academia that ESD needs more evidence for it to be integrated in education at a large scale so as to impact within a minimum time frame. More research is needed to support this global agenda to protect both people and the earth. This paper may contribute at a small scale to increase arguments for the advancement of ESD in Pakistan.

ESD Policies from UNESCO:

In December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 57/254 proclaiming the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. This initiative completed a series of texts (chapter 36 of Agenda 21, provision 124) adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. (Johannesburg, September, 2002). UNESCO was entrusted with the task of leading the Decade and drawing up a draft program of international implementation.

In its international plan for the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005), UNESCO considered that education for sustainable development should *"integrate into the teaching and learning process the key themes of sustainable development, such as climate change, prevention of natural risks, biodiversity, poverty reduction or sustainable consumption. It involves the adoption of participatory pedagogical methods aimed at motivating and empowering learners to change their behaviour and become actors of sustainable development. This is why education for sustainable development promotes the acquisition of skills that enable learners to develop their critical thinking skills, imagine prospective scenarios and make joint decisions"*. The authors of the report did not hesitate then to provoke by concluding that education for sustainable development implied "*a profound change in teaching as it is generally practiced today*".

If education for sustainable development seems well defined in the International Plan for the Implementation of the Decade, 3 areas were given special attention: (1) sustainability issues, (2) the role of values (3) the links between the various United Nations initiatives.

1) Education for sustainable development must prepare "people from all walks of life to plan, respond and find solutions to the issues that threaten the sustainability of our planet" (UNESCO, 2005, p.7). Most of these issues were discussed at the Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and redefined at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002). There is the problem of access to water (source of conflicts), the energy issue (more precisely the slow pace of the establishment of renewable energies), biodiversity (definition of property rights in the face of bio-piracy of large pharmaceutical companies in the South), and health (many populations exposed to malaria and AIDS). In its point 5, the Johannesburg Declaration states that all these issues are the responsibility of States, are part of a spatio-temporal scale, and are linked to the 3 pillars of sustainable development - the environment, society, and the economy. "As such, we assume our collective responsibility to advance economic development, social development and environmental protection at the local, national, regional and global levels as independent and complementary pillars of sustainable development". The action plan - as specified in point 11 of the same declaration - specifies that "the elimination of poverty, the adaptation of consumption and production methods, as well as the management of the stock of necessary natural resources economic and social development are overriding goals of sustainable development, and are also prerequisites". The sphere of sustainability is thus both complex and protean (waste management is mixed with the defense of human rights, the reduction of poverty, population migration, climate change, etc.). To deal with all these issues, it is necessary to implement innovative educational strategies (here the aim is no more or less than an education reform), likely to bring about profound changes in the behavior of citizens.

2) To bring about this change of mentality and to move into the twenty-first century, States have to rely on the values that forged their identity. The challenge of education for sustainable development does not mean making a clean sweep of its history and culture, of contrasting traditional society with techno-society, but of understanding its own values, those of the society in which we live, and those of other societies. This is an essential aspect of education for sustainable development, "every nation, every cultural group and every individual must develop the capacity to recognize their own values and evaluate them in the context of sustainability" (UNESCO, 2005, p.8). It is difficult to draw up an exhaustive list of values, some of them refer to ideas of justice (human rights, equity, and equality), respect (of others, nature), emotions (sympathy, empathy, apathy), on principles (participation, solidarity, precaution, responsibility). Moreover, we could discuss for a long time the values that should be introduced into educational programs. Education for sustainable development emphasizes the issue of the transmission of values; this intergenerational heritage must enable us to identify locally relevant and culturally appropriate values. This touches on the fourth pillar of sustainable development, culture.

3) Education for sustainable development must be placed among the other initiatives of UNESCO. These include the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Education for All (EFA) and the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD). All these initiatives give a large place to basic education, wishing to extend it to all continents (especially Africa) and to improve its quality.

If ESD is central to UNESCO's initiatives, it is because it is not limited to education alone. Indeed, it refers to the social, cultural, and institutional dimensions of each country. It emphasizes the values and principles conveyed by sustainable development. It induces a profound reform of pedagogical practices. Finally, it introduces the participation of partners at all levels (local, regional, national, and international) and from all spheres (governments, civil society, NGOs, private sector). The notions of governance and stakeholders are thus emerging as the 5th pillar of sustainable development. At the national level, ministries of education provide a policy framework for ESD (formal education) and mobilize resources (including providing educators and trainers with the knowledge and information to put ESD into practice); NGOs facilitate exchanges on good practices (informal education); the media promote public awareness of sustainable development and ESD.

The overall assessment of the actions carried out during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development has yet to be made, but initiatives from countries of the South have revealed some key points (UNESCO, 2014).

i. Education for sustainable development has stimulated educational innovation. Education policies (including curriculum reform) have promoted learning for sustainable development in many countries, from early childhood education to training in the private sector. Siraj-Blatchford (2014) refer to the case of the

Matarajio project in the Rift Valley (Kenya), which was based on the ecological legacy of Wangari Maathai, environmental activist and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Children were able to learn and exchange about environmental issues, while participating in various practical activities on appreciation, preservation and management of woodlands. Ackbarally (2013) notes that nearly 250,000 primary and secondary school students in Mauritius are learning about climate change and the environment. Higher education is not left out, the regional network Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability into the African University Partnership Programme (MESA) brings together nearly 77 universities in 32 African countries.

ii.   Education for Sustainable Development succeeds in investing and bringing together all levels and fields of education, particularly between formal, non-formal and informal education. Tostan (2013) described the Solar Power project, carried out by the NGO Tostan in Africa, which gives rural women the means to go to the "Barefoot College" to follow a training programme in solar energy engineering. On their return, these women can train other women from neighbouring communities, multiplying the effects of the programme (58 solar engineers trained) and giving each of them a livelihood. Thanks to this project, women have access to a renewable energy source and are establishing themselves as entrepreneurs in their communities, which contribute to strengthening community-driven development (452 solar panels installed in 9 villages in Senegal).

iii. Development education highlighted the role of stakeholders and partnerships in the implementation of education programmes. In the public sector, the Government of Mongolia and the Swiss Department for Development and Cooperation have signed a cooperation agreement to promote a sustainable future through ESD. This project involves 752 schools, teacher training institutions and education departments, 500,000 children and 26,000 teachers are involved in the project (SDC, 2013).

These achievements do not, however, exhaust the subject and there are still many challenges to be faced: Education for sustainable development is not yet integrated coherently into sectoral policies; the place of ESD in early childhood is very heterogeneous across countries (wide gaps in accessibility and quality of programmes); educators in ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) do not always have the skills to incorporate ESD into their teaching; much remains to be done to integrate ESD into technical and professional education and training in both formal and informal contexts; the compartmentalization of disciplines continues to impede the analysis of complex problems and prevent learners from developing the capacity to address complexity; accessibility to adult learning and education remains difficult, which hampers the diffusion of concepts and practices of sustainable development among adult learners; it is essential to reorient private sector education and training so that education defines the skills needed for critical analysis, decision making, and collaborative problem solving. Finally, there is a need to build the capacity of all stakeholders to work in partnership and, in particular, to

better understand the social learning process and measures to assess and improve outcomes.

In November 2014, the Nagoya Conference reiterated this commitment, while initiating the beginning of a new period, a post-2014 strategy based on the Global Action Program.

The Aichi-Nagoya Declaration of 12 November 2014 stated "*ESD's ability to help learners to transform themselves and the society in which they live by developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to address global citizenship and local challenges of the present and the future, such as critical and systemic thinking, problem solving through analysis, creativity, collaborative work, and decision-making in a world of uncertainty, as well as an understanding of the interdependence of global tasks and responsibilities that emanate from this awareness*". In other words, education for sustainable development must invite us to change our behaviour; it is both an opportunity to seize and an encouragement to show responsibility to engage developed and developing countries to intensify their eradication of poverty, reduction of inequalities, and protection of the environment. Of course, the implementation of ESD depends on local, regional, national, and international contexts, it also recognizes the contribution of culture to sustainable development and the need to respect a set of key principles (e.g. human rights, working conditions, gender equality, democracy, social justice).

The road map proposed by UNESCO in the Post 2015 agenda renewed the commitment of the international community to ESD, with particular emphasis on the following 2 objectives:
(1) "reorienting education and learning so that everyone has the opportunity to become acquainted with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary to have the means to contribute to sustainable development ";
(2) " to increase the place of education and learning in all action plans, programs and activities that promote sustainable development "(UNESCO, 2014, p.14).

The Global Action Program pays great attention to groups that are particularly vulnerable to "unsustainable" development: G*irls and women* (participation in decision-making, ESD policy, and program development); S*mall Island Developing States* (those hardest hit by climate change) and *Africa* (one of the continent's most vulnerable to drought, further desertification, and severe storms). 5 areas of priority action have thus emerged: (i) policies to support ESD; (ii) a transformation of the learning and training environments; (iii) capacity building of educators and trainers; (iv) empowerment and youth mobilization; (v) acceleration of the search for durable solutions at the local level.

Education for sustainable development thus constitutes a response for the countries of the North and the South to meeting certain essential needs, notably by strengthening the synergies between the school and the civil community, and by rehabilitating education in local contexts (in a sense, ESD could counteract the idea that globalization would be

reduced to the imposition of a new "commercial" school system, Lange 2003, Akkari, Payet, 2010).

Education for Sustainable Development in Pakistan:

Pakistan is one of the countries which has always showed an active role in committing to most of the global goals, for the development of the people of Pakistan. On the contrary, Pakistan has remained in last place in achieving most of the global goals, such as education for all, polio eradication, and climate mitigation according to the Paris agreement in 2015 (UNFCC conference).As for HDI and GNI, Pakistan is a long away from devising a strategy to deal with the upsurge of many challenges on different fronts. Solving all these threats to sustainability of society is based on education. For this, at national level the Pakistan federal government has taken some initiatives to review previous programmes, policies and projects to learn lessons from the past and plan

for the future, which is a normal exercise of any government to review situations and project for future situations. In this case, the planning commission is taking the lead in Pakistan to devise a strategy to deal with the goals of education for sustainable development from a sustainable development goals perspective. They have put some priorities on a list for the next 15 years in the policy document Vision 2025.

Pakistan in its Vision 2025, pillar one, People First, addresses the pressing need of human development and increase investment in social capital. To achieve this objective, this document prioritizes Primary education enrolment at the top of the list. It aims to increase the rate up to 100%(P. c. o. Pakistan, 2015)by 2025. It aims to increase the literacy rate to 90%(P. c. o. Pakistan, 2015), and increase the rate of secondary and tertiary education.

Pillar-1	Links with MDGs	Links with SDGs
People First: Developing social and human capital and empowering women	This pillar encompasses poverty eradication (MDG1), access to health and education services (MDGs 2, 4, 5 and 6, and gender empowerment (MDG 3)	SDGs1 (Poverty), 3, (health), 4 (Education) and 5 (gender)

Figure 2 Pakistan vision 2025 document

The above-mentioned recent documents demonstrate an interest of the state to align every future strategy or plan with sustainability in allsegments of society. According to this document **"**The vision of a 'knowledge economy' cannot come about without promoting quality education in Pakistan(P. c. o. Pakistan, 2015)". The focus is on the science and technological domains of education. Higher education is given attention in order to focus on producing a human resource with the knowledge and skills to create a knowledge economy to compete in the world. In this Vision 2025 document the government of Pakistan gives focus to all three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social, and environment. In the social domain, this vision presents the social trends. Demographic changes are discussed to understand the population dynamics, especially the youth segment of society. "Pakistan will have one of the youngest workforces in the world by 2025(P. c. o. Pakistan, 2015)".This vision aims to build skillful youth to optimize the high youth bulge in the next three decades. Population increase is considered to cater for the challenges of youth employment, urbanization, quality of life, and basic infrastructure to improve the overall living standard of the nation. This population is an asset if it is utilized as an opportunity, otherwise this will raise more challenges in an already poverty-stricken country. Environment is also discussed in this document. Climate change is considered to be a threat to the nation's sustainability. Its impacts are occurring all over the country. This document accepts the urgent need to address the issue of Climate Change. It is recommended that new alternatives should be adopted to avoid deteriorating the climate more, such as renewable energy, education, increasing adaptation of capacity for the poor and vulnerable, etc. Sustainable natural resource use is also stressed in this vision. Sustainable practices to use water and other natural resources through education will save the planet earth.

This document indirectly addresses the key features of Education for Sustainable Development. It is mentioned that education needs reforms and a different approach.

Curriculum, pedagogy, technology, assessment and governance will be reformed to improve quality in education. Vision 2025 states "These reforms will ensure that the educational system helps individuals in acquiring/sharpening of creative and analytical abilities and problem solving skills"(P. c. o. Pakistan, 2015). Critical thinking and responsible citizenship will enhance sustainability of not only a sustainable nation but also a sustainable planet.

There are some examples of education for sustainable practices highlighted by UNCESCO booklet in Pakistan. This special publication of UNESCO documented some good practices in educational institutions in capital Islamabad high school (from grade 6 to 12), especially in girls' schools and the north west province of Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa.

The Islamabad College for Girls Sector G-7/2, introduced solar panels to transform its computer lab from electricity to solar energy. This new innovation and transformation is a start of adoption of alternative energy sources. It created an urge among children to think about future energy sources to save planet earth from climate change. The same school installed drains to save rain water for the school garden. This helps to create an idea of resilient societies to equip children with skills to prepare for any future disasters to minimize risk to life and assets by adopting certain basic habits and ESD principles.

Some ingredients of education for sustainable development have been envisioned in the national level official document of Pakistan Vision 2025, but there is no official document which discuss educational for sustainable development as a strategy or a priority for transforming the society in order to increase quality of life of the people and planet.

CONCLUSION

It is imperative that Pakistan transforms its education system in order to create a sustainable society. Its education policies are still failing to address urgent local, as well as global needs to protect people and the planet. Many of Pakistan's previous education policy documents addressing the creation of a better society were driven by Islamic ideology with its values and norms. More recent policies addressed economic issues as well as national character building. All previous policy documents failed to achieve their objectives for a range of reasons. Only the 2009 document identified and used the term 'sustainable development' and discussed global citizenship through the reorientation of the education system. In the 2009 document economic growth is also taken into account while advancing the role of education at Higher education level.

This paper aims to create a link between education for sustainable development, sustainable development, and Pakistan's education policies from a global sustainable development perspective. There is a question mark with respect to Pakistan's education system and its policies to address local as well as global issues. The limited scope of the paper cannot cover the future challenges that future generations will face in terms of a sustainable society, most of the policy discussion is devoted to the general educational challenges and possible policy solutions.

Higher education, along with Primary school education has not so far demonstrated encouraging outcomes. Higher education faces many complex challenges and because of this has been unable to achieve innovation for the betterment of Pakistan people and the planet.

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[i]University Clermont Ferrand, CERDI (Center of Studies and Research on Interntional Development), France

[ii]18th Constitutional amendment bill passed by National Assembly in April 2010

[iii]In 1996, the OECD published its work on 'The KnowledgeBased Economy' within which knowledge is "*recognized as the driver of productivity and economic growth, leading to a new focus on the role of information, technology and learning in economic performance*" (OECD, 1996, p. 3).This puts a particular focus on the education sectorand even more so on Higher education, given its central place in national innovation systems.

[iv]The importance of human capital in improving individual material well-being and in spurring overall growth in the economy can hardly be overstated. As a primary source of human capital, education raises labor force productivity, improves general welfare, and fosters growth. The positive externalities associated with human capital accumulation, and the difference between social and private returns to education, often provide the rationale for government intervention.

[v]Sustainable development is required to be depicted as crucial for all countries and, even more so, in geographically small regions due to their limited natural resources and high population density (Mifsud 2012).

[vi] East Pakistan up to 1971, after war with India it become Bangladesh.