

Higher Education in Pakistan

A Historical – Futuristic Perspective

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Ph.D. (AIS: Education) Thesis

The National University of Modern Languages
Islamabad

June 2001

**Higher Education in Pakistan:
A Historical – Futuristic Perspective**

A thesis submitted to the

**National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad
Through The Pakistan Futuristics Institute, Islamabad**

**In fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
Ph.D.:**

Doctor of Philosophy: AIS: Education

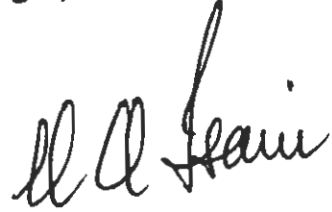
*The Author
June 2001*

Declaration

I, Usman Ali Isani do hereby solemnly declare that the work produced in this thesis is my own and has not been presented before to any other institution or university for a degree.


This work was carried out and completed at the Pakistan Futuristics Institute and the National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad

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Thesis Statement

Planners and decision makers in Pakistan have always acknowledged the importance of Education in the socio-economic development of the country. This has been reiterated in every Education Policy and in all the eight Five Year Plans. However, this commitment has never been backed by:

- a) any Constitution putting a direct responsibility on the government for providing basic and compulsory education by any specific deadline;
- b) allocating adequate funds, both developmental and recurring, to education particularly to Higher Education;
- c) giving higher education its due share of resources and political commitment to improve standards.

The focus of this thesis is on Higher Education. Despite prolonged neglect, the system of Higher Education in Pakistan has the ability to equip the country to face the challenges of the 21st century. It needs political commitment, better public sector funding and partnership with the private sector to do so.

Pragmatic futuristic policy options and suggestions have been offered to reform Higher Education in Pakistan in order to serve the abiding national interest in the regional and global context.

Abstract

The study examines the importance of Higher Education in the development of a nation. It looks at the provisions regarding education in the different Constitutions of Pakistan, and compares them with those in the Constitutions of some other countries. The conclusions are that Pakistan would be well advised to re-look at the constitutional provisions regarding education in the Constitution of Pakistan.

A detailed examination and analysis of major Education Policies / Commissions has been carried out. It covers an appraisal of the Five Year Plan outlays for education in general and in particular, Higher Education.

Various problems affecting higher education have been analysed, and suggestions offered for improvement. Lack of quality in education has been discussed at length. Financing of universities, both public and private, along with the Self-financing Scheme, has been examined. The potential of Higher Education through distance learning has been looked at.

The role of the University Grants Commission and a National Council for Accreditation and Quality Control has been discussed. The emergence of the private sector in university education, along with its pitfalls, have been dealt with. Finally, the thesis deals with plans for the future development of Higher Education in Pakistan. It presents policy proposals, and a critical ideological vision for the future, which is, none-the-less, realistic and pragmatic, in the tradition and spirit of Pakistan's founders, who were all Islamic ideological Pragmatics Visionary Futurists.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my wife, Amna, whose patience made it possible.

Acknowledgement

I owe a debt of gratitude to Brigadier Aziz Ahmed Khan, Rector, National University of Modern Languages who motivated me to undertake this exercise, at a time of my life which most others would consider too late.

Little miracles of life happen every now and then. A traveller on a difficult journey meets with a helpful guide who shows him the way and gives him heart to continue till the end of the road. Such was Dr. Ikram Azam. He helped and guided me gently and deftly to complete a difficult journey.

To these two gentlemen I owe this work.

Bio-data

The author, Usman Ali Isani started his career as a soldier and then as a civil servant 48 years ago. He has a Masters Degree in History from the Punjab University and a Masters Degree in Education from the University of California at Berkeley. He has served as Secretary Education in the Government of Sindh; thereafter as Joint Secretary and Additional Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Education. Having served two tenures as Chairman of the University Grants Commission, he has recently been appointed as Vice-Chancellor, of the Quaid-e-Azam University.

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