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Promoting Social Justice and Equity through University Education in Pakistan

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Abstract

Education is a social entity and takes input from the society and returns output to it as well. University education is considered as the hub that produces human capital into the market. Universities shall play their role to promote social justice and equity for people from all spheres of the society. This study was focused to explore the perceptions of teachers about the social injustice and inequity in universities of Pakistan. The aim was to promote social justice and equity in education by highlighting the factors that cause injustice and inequity, to find out the imbalance in the market value of our educational system, and to find the administrative measures that could promote social justice and equity. For that purpose the experienced teachers and administrators were purposely selected to participate in this research. Interviews were conducted with prior permission to record it. The data generated from 12 participants (10 males and 2 females) were analyzed by Thematic Description Approach under qualitative data analysis techniques. The themes for each question from the transcribed interviews were identified and coded. Major factors were identified and significant differences were revealed on behalf of the interviewees' perceptions. Suggestions were given to take effective administrative measures. Results revealed practical implications for educationists and policy makers to promote social justice and equity.

Keywords
Social justice, Equity, University, Education, Pakistan

Promoting Social Justice and Equity through University Education in Pakistan

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Education is a social entity and takes input from the society and returns output to it as well. University education is considered as the hub that produces human capital into the market. Universities shall play their role to promote social justice and equity for people from all spheres of the society. This study was focused to explore the perceptions of teachers about the social injustice and inequity in universities of Pakistan. The aim was to promote social justice and equity in education by highlighting the factors that cause injustice and inequity, to find out the imbalance in the market value of our educational system, and to find the administrative measures that could promote social justice and equity. For that purpose the experienced teachers and administrators were purposely selected to participate in this research. Interviews were conducted with prior permission to record it. The data generated from 12 participants (10 males and 2 females) were analyzed by Thematic Description Approach under qualitative data analysis techniques. The themes for each question from the transcribed interviews were identified and coded. Major factors were identified and significant differences were revealed on behalf of the interviewees' perceptions. Suggestions were given to take effective administrative measures. Results revealed practical implications for educationists and policy makers to promote social justice and equity.

INTRODUCTION

Education has its roots deep in the society as education has many bases and society is one of the important bases of education. Education having social foundations adds value to the society in return. The market value of education and its output in the form of intellectual capital pay back to the society. Equity and equality in education are the two terms pertinent in connection with the society.

The provisions like right to education and free education for all in the constitution of Pakistan claim to serve the purpose of social justice, equality and equity in education. With lots of influx of foreign aid in our education system at all levels, we still have a marathon distance to achieve the set goals. Of late there have been serious developments in the educational policies of Pakistan regarding education for all. The focus in the National Education Policy 2009 is clearly on the equity in education for all the different segments and sub-groups of the society. The focus on employability of education was also documented in the policy.

Social justice and equity is a topic of research of worldwide interest. Kohli (2005) envisioned social justice education as a form of empowerment, in which issues of equity were addressed overwhelmingly. Bell (1997) explained education for social justice and equity as both a process and a goal. Willis (1977) and Fagan (1995) described how an educational system that reproduces the inequalities of society, and replicates its class system, contributes to the problem of dropouts. There have been studies that contribute toward the social justice and equity by emphasizing that individual entities of each group is essential for justice (see Berlin, 1997; Kristeva, 2002). Whereas Bernstein (2000) talks about the hurdles that minority groups and people from other vicinities experience in trying to gain acceptance in educational institutions.

Stressing the role of leadership in social justice and equity, Hytten (2006) pointed out, "While there have always been educators calling for a social justice approach toward education, this vision has never been a dominant one" (Hytten, 2006, p. 224). Numerous studies focusing on educational leadership for social justice such as (Brown, 2004; Cambron-McCabe & Mc-Carthy, 2005; Marshall 2004; Reihl, 2000) expressed the role of leadership for making social justice and equity in educational institutions. Basically a social justice framework not only identifies but also challenges the societal structures that spread discrimination, prejudice and classism (Carr, 2007; Cochran-Smith, 2008). Talking about the theoretical orientations of social justice Mthethwa-Sommers (2014) reported critical theory, multicultural education theory, postmodern theory, and post-structural theory. Talking about his personal experience of school education and social justice Ali (2014) expressed that the core concern of social justice is to ensure wellbeing of the individual as well as collectively. He further emphasized that justice is possible when equity is ensured.

Education in Pakistan is not offering equality and equity for all segments. There is social class divide system in our society. It is a vicious cycle: society produces class system; and educational system further nourishes class system. There is separate education for separate classes according to their standard of living they opt their preferred education type. For instance, there is public sector education for the non-affording, then there is private sector education and in private sector education there is further categorization of middle class, upper class, and elite class. All these classes can take the type of education they like. As a result, this education system further creates a gap in the society. Another disturbing fact about the education system of Pakistan is the rural-urban divide which reflects in its education system. The data published by Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) illustrating out of school children ranging from 6 years to 16 years in the rural areas of Pakistan, reported 8% girls and 7% boys to be out of school (not enrolled in schools) from the rural Punjab (largest province of Pakistan) for the year 2015, which is constant at this rate since 2014 (ASER, 2015). A report published for UNESCO termed as Policy Analysis of Education in Punjab Province highlighted the gap in the intended justice and equity in education and the ground realities. It showed that not every member of the society has easy access to higher education. In terms of access there are issues of infrastructure inadequacies in the existing post-graduate colleges and universities.

Along with the missing facilities the curricular issues and access of advanced database for knowledge and skill enhancement, the issue of applied knowledge with the graduates also arise, since the universities only focus on information memorization hence lacking practicality (Malik, 2011).

The university education is governed and regularized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan. There are 179 universities/ Degree Awarding Institutions (DAIs) in Pakistan for the need of almost 120 [Million] youth. Out of the 179, 114 universities/ DAIs are public sector and 65 are private (Higher Education Commission, 2016). This itself lays the grounds for inequity as state sector universities/ DAIs have limited seats along with competition on merit, access to remote/ deprived/ privileged areas is difficult, and no considerable number of universities/ DAIs cater specifically the demand of females. Another interesting fact on the enrollment statistics in universities/ DAIs of Pakistan is the low number of enrollments in M.Phil and PhD-- in the years 2014-15 a total of 1298600 students were enrolled, out of which only 124107 were enrolled in M. Phil (18 years education) and only 14374 were enrolled in PhD programmes all over the Pakistan (Higher Education Commission, 2016).

This gap in the society, in terms of the class system and lack of opportunities for marginalized groups, can lead toward some serious inequity and injustice. There is no adequate access to males and females, especially, to study in state run universities. State is further failing to provide basic education to the marginalized groups. Apart from the access issue, the quality of education, being given, is also questionable. The higher education system of Pakistan has been ranked the lowest by the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) university rankings (QS, 2016). So even if a student gets access to higher education, he/she is not getting parity (in terms of quality) with similar qualified persons in the region. It certainly affects the job market of the students in multi-national corporations (MNCs). Besides, higher education does not help them raise their standard of living, which eventually creates the social divide based on inequity and injustice. National Education Policy (2009) clearly states that "…if immediate attention is not paid to reducing social exclusion and moving towards inclusive development in Pakistan, the country can face unprecedented social upheavals." This reflects that the government keenly realizes the dismal state of social injustice and inequity in our education system. Unfortunately, despite government's interest, no considerable research have been done in Pakistani context specifically to ensure social justice and equity through education. This research, however, took an initiative forward in this direction. It was delimited only to study the role of university education in promoting social justice and inequity. It was aimed at highlighting the role of university education in filling this gap and also to suggest administrative measures that can offer social justice and equity in university education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

For the purpose of investigating this deeply rooted problem in the society of Pakistan and yet only little attention is given on it, this research was intended to get deep understanding of this phenomenon. This study tried to explore the actual causes of the social injustice and inequity in university education in Pakistan which sadly, available literature could not highlight. Along with identifying the root causes of social injustice and inequity this study focused at highlighting the factors that could promote so-

cial justice and equity from the eyes of senior educationists. To study these gaps and to make better understanding the following objectives were made:

1. Explore the perceptions of teachers and administrators about the existing social injustice and inequity in university education.
2. Identify the administrative measures for university education to promote social justice and equity.

The following research questions were made to achieve the objectives of the study. (1) What are the perceptions of teachers and administrators about the existing social injustice and inequity in university education? (2) What do the teachers say about the market value of education and equal opportunity of job for all? (3) What administrative measures can be taken by university administration to provide social justice and equity through university education?

METHODOLOGY

For this research qualitative approach was used to explore the gaps in our education system that lead toward social injustice and inequity. An exploratory research was conducted to view the problem in-depth and to also suggest the administrative measures for university education to promote social justice and equity. Qualitative approach was adopted for this inquiry since the researchers wanted to deeply understand the problem and its root causes. Through qualitative approach of inquiry participants give meanings to the social events hence making the understanding of the problem wider and deeper (Silverman, 2013). Moreover it was an exploratory design research and qualitative research fits best while exploring relatively new or less researched phenomenon, studying deep, and when generating new knowledge (Creswell, 2007).

Sampling Design

The sampling technique employed for this study was purposive sampling. The sample selected was comprised of the university teachers, educationists, and those serving on the administrative posts. The reason for selecting this sample was to get an in depth view of the ground reality of our education system since the participants were practicing educationists. Male and female participants were selected considering their locality, caste, ethnicity, and religious/ political affiliations in order to get wider and rich views. Teachers and administrators were selected based on their diverse experience in the public sector and private sector universities of Pakistan. Along with that the representation from southern Punjab, Gilgit Baltistan, and other remote areas was specially ensured in order to get an insight in socially diverse demographics. The teachers who were serving in the educational institutions for more than 20 years and had an administrative experience of at least 10 years were selected. The reason to purposely select these participants was mainly, the importance of this grave issue (social injustice and inequity) and to get an in-depth understanding from the views of veteran educationists. There were 12 participants purposely selected out of which two were females to get their perspectives too. The description of the participants of the study was like: two people were institutions heads- one of private sector university, other of a government institution. Both the females were teachers along with the administrative heads of their government educational institutions. One male participants belonged to southern Punjab, one from Gilgit

Baltistan serving their in a state university, one university teacher from Baluchistan, and another from the under developed district of Punjab. These purposely selected participants were chosen to get different perspectives of socially diverse people.

Instrumentation

A semi-structured interview was conducted based on the literature review of the existing knowledge on the matter. The interview items were validated with the expert opinion of the research advisor. The interview questions carried nine primary questions as well as probing questions to get clear understanding of what the participants believed. There were 9 questions in the interview along with the probing questions and further clarity was made from the participants where needed.

Procedure

The interview time was scheduled with prior appointment with the participants. The concept of the research was shared with the participants. Interview protocols were followed throughout. Interview questions, primary questions and any other details were given to the participants. The voice recorder was kept with the researcher and after approval from the participants the whole interviews were recorded. The recordings were shared with the participants and any ambiguity was cleared.

Ethical Considerations

The professional spirits were followed through the research project. The participants were informed of the objectives of the research. Prior time was taken from the participants for interviews. Meeting places were decided with the participants of other cities. During interviews any query of the participants relating to the research and the use of data was made clear to them. Interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewees. The recordings were shared with them, any ambiguities at both ends were made clear at the spot. The anonymity of the participants and the use of data only for this research was ensured to the participants.

RESULTS

The interviews were transcribed into English language keeping in view the essence of the terms used. The meanings of the words were given especial focus while transcribing. The data were analyzed using qualitative data analysis techniques. Thematic description approach was used by the researcher. Main themes were identified from each of the answer of the participants. They were coded throughout the transcriptions. Here is the analysis of the interviews under each research question.

> *Research question 1.* What are the perceptions of teachers and administrators about the existing social injustice and inequity in university education?

When the first research question was answered, all the twelve (12) participants of the research agreed that there is social injustice and inequity in our university education system. One participant replied in the following words "The educational institutions are built according to the need of the society and we in this existing setup have grown into divide system." To get an in-depth view of the problem the researcher asked the question that, what factors do you think of this existing social injustice and inequity in education. In response to this question, the par-

ticipants replied with numerous factors, each of the participant shared their experiences, and learning opportunities. Six out of the twelve participants narrated that government or political factor is the real cause of this social injustice and inequity. It was interesting to know that those six participants were themselves serving in the government sector institutions. A respondent having international exposure and diversified experiences explained it in the following words "Our Political system does not provide equity. Even our democracy is immature: only true democracy can provide equal opportunity to its citizens."

The same government and political factor was explained by another participant who is an institutional administrative head in these words "Governmental policies are theoretically perfect, but in practical the situation is different. The problem lies in the implementation of that policy"

Other participants, including those from southern Punjab and less developed district, elaborated the factors like poverty and traditions in the society. Two participants said that societal divide is the main factor of this injustice and inequity, while one respondent was different in the approach toward this problem. The person having the background of religion, culture, and social studies, viewed this situation as a planned activity against the educational system of Pakistan. The participant used the following words to express the concerns "This social injustice and inequity in education is a conspiracy of the west that did not want Islamic system of Education to prevail in the world. They (west) divided our educational system by introducing western educational systems and practices in our lands. In the book Jewish Protocols it is mentioned categorically that the west wanted to destroy the educational system of Pakistan."

Another participant having profile of working in Cambridge education system and other teaching and administrative roles in universities that follow British Education system viewed this problem as a conscious effort of our own educational system. The participant explained "There are things which we have done consciously like: self-finance basis and evening programmes. The reason behind this, they say, is financial need of the university. But whatever be the case, it causes inequity as in evening programme the merit is usually less than the morning programmes hence it is compromised. Further the students who come to university with O-levels and A-levels (GCE examination from Cambridge) background and those who come from matric, and intermediate level, there is a huge difference in their confidence levels, which also causes injustice and inequity."

Concerning the factors the data thus generated from the participants depicted that 6 participants serving in the public sector institutions held government responsible for social injustice and inequity. One person who studied abroad and had a broadened concept of western democracy related this problem with the immature democracy of Pakistan. This is an interesting phenomenon to note here, that people gave meanings to the realities in their own perspectives which was the core reason of selecting qualitative approach to get a comprehensive understanding of the problem at hand. A participant with inclination towards religion termed it as a conspiracy against Islamic system of education by violating the core principles of Islam. The participant who was rendering services to British education system too, held responsible the very own education system of Pakistan. It also reflected that the education system of Britain (in terms of Cambridge board) is so strong and associated with the core so-

cial and cultural roots of Britain that the person considered that Pakistan education system is weak in comparison, specifically in accepting the influence of other systems.

When asked specifically about any role of 'medium of instruction' in creating social injustice and inequity. Nine out of twelve participants agreed that it is pertinent factor in the social injustice and inequity. They said that language acts like a barrier for people coming from remote areas, and knowing good English raises your success chances. One respondent from southern Punjab gave a comprehensive response, "Regional languages help in understanding. When I was in school, my teacher used to teach us and give examples in Saraiki language (a regional language), I still remember those examples. Even we used to question in Saraiki language. Now, when I teach to children I still recall those experiences which I had in Saraiki language. If my teachers would have taught me in English language then I might have not remembered that and understood that, in the first place."

When a probing question was asked that how does language/ medium of instruction create injustice and inequity the participant added, "People often ask me that you belong to such a language that is deprived and have no opportunities. I have been rejected from many jobs because my accent was not that good. I was unable to speak good English. But this should not happen. Government should concentrate that it must not happen." Another respondent narrated his experience that "It is my observation that people in remote areas, speaking regional languages, are more intelligent, they think beyond what we think. Maybe it is because of the hardships they are facing." So here we can see the difference in the two participants, one who belonged to deprived area was of the view that there are no opportunities for people unable to speak good English while the participant, who was a social researcher himself, informed that people belonging to these areas are more intelligent. It can be said that the views of both the participants were correct simultaneously, as a person in those areas can be intelligent yet awaits opportunity. One female participant belonging from a rural area suggested that medium of instruction does not play any role, "bribery and corruption system is most dangerous. Whatever language u speak if you have money you can get (purchase) education." This could be influenced by the environment in which the participant was serving as there are still some areas, especially in the rural Pakistan, where political affiliations, nepotism, and cast system is given importance considerably more than merit.

When asked about 'curriculum' that whether it plays any role in social injustice and inequity, seven participants rated curriculum high as a cause of this social injustice and inequity. One respondent being the chairman of a private sector university at Lahore and having vast educational experience said "The mother of all evils is curriculum. I do not want to critique on it. It had to be a collective effort but unfortunately what was required of the time, it could not be done. With change in the governments, agitations in Pakistan, lack of leadership, political and religious philosophy of people in power and financial interests of governments, we could not take out the outdated things and did not add new things in our curriculum."

Another participant was of the view that "The books here are not written by our local authors. The reference books that are followed in Pakistani universities are written by foreigners the examples and cases given in those books are not related

to Pakistan. The curriculum should be contextual: portraying the ground realities of Pakistan."

One participant emphasized that "Science is science everywhere. Science cannot be called as Indian science or Pakistani science it is rather universal. If there is universal curriculum throughout the world then it can provide equal opportunity for all." Here again we can see the difference in the perspectives of people who were brought and bred in Pakistani culture had different view on curriculum and the participant who had international exposure and a certain influence of their system viewed it in an international context.

Among those who were against the view that curriculum plays any role in social injustice and inequity, one participant explained that "If we say that subject and course outline is what plays a role in injustice and inequity than it would not be the case. But if we talk about the overall opportunities that a student goes through during university life, then that plays a role." This person had a PhD majoring in curricular studies that is why he gave a break-down of the analysis and likely so, the researcher delimited the term curriculum only to the scope of text books. Remaining participants said that no curriculum does not play any role, what you will teach to the students they will learn. It also showed that university teachers enjoy autonomy in Pakistan education system since they are the ones who teach, assess, and evaluate.

Another question was asked directly relating to the educational policies of Pakistan if they do cause this social injustice and inequity. Only five participants said that yes it is because of the educational policies. One participant said "The educational policies only focus public education. I have not read as yet, that if there is any strict measure and/or policy for private education system." A participant replied to this by saying, "Yes it is a flaw of our educational policy that there are 16 different types of syllabi/ schemes that are being offered." Another person being the administrative head gave her views in the following words "Policies are run on experimental basis." She was serving as the administrative head of a public sector institution so she had a better insight into the policy and the directives issued by the governmental executives. Since the nature of her role as a head required implementation of the instructions by the governmental heads. While all other participants believed that educational policies are good in general and are not creating social injustice and inequity. To add to this, one participant said "Public sector universities are open for all. Whosoever has more marks can get admission."

A probing question was asked that what educational policy should be there to promote educational justice and equity. Suggestions given by participants were, to make uniform curriculum, teacher trainings, resources should be aligned, and philosophical school of thought of teacher should be aligned with the curriculum because the teacher is the implementer of that curriculum. One participant responded in these words "If a teacher is from a different philosophical school of thought than that of the curriculum then the true essence of the curriculum is compromised in implementation phase." One thing that was certain from the views of the participants was they all held the teacher most responsible as teachers are considered the change agents.

Research question 2. What do the teachers say about the market value of education and equal opportunity of job for all?

To answer this question the interviewees informed the researcher that yes the market value of our education is not such that it could provide equal opportunity of job for all which further creates injustice and inequity. This is how one participant belonging to an administrative position in a public sector institution narrated, "This is an era of Information Technology. According to the era, the market trend should be followed. Degrees in Arts, Languages, and Social Studies are needed to be re-considered. There has to be close coordination in market value and degree education. If there are 10 jobs advertised there are 10,000 people who apply. This shows that we are giving objective-less education." As the participant belonged to the administrative head position in an institution he had better data on the applications that they receive for admissions/ jobs. Highlighting the market value of the degree programmes that are offered through universities a participant replied that "A person who has studied a subject related to economics and those who have studied a regional language shall be equal. Though apparently the chances of a person to be successful with degree in economics are higher than that of a person having degree in any regional language. In this world, specifically in sub-continent, people with economics have not contributed in the society as much as the Sufi people (Mystics) who have studied Punjabi (regional language) and revolutionized the societal setup."

Another question was asked from the participants that is there really an equal opportunity of job for all spheres of the society. In response to that question, nine participants said that No, there is not an equal opportunity for job to all. They were of the view that institution type is the main reason behind this unequal job opportunity. One person teaching in well reputed private universities as visiting faculty expressed "Some institutions give you market oriented study. They increase your employability." Another participant added that "Those studying in private sector, prefer to get private sector jobs. If a person pays heavy fee then they would like to get private jobs that can offer them more salaries. Even if they get state sector jobs their needs may not get fulfilled. My experience is that there is no equal job opportunity." One participant also believed that there is no equal opportunity for job but did not find the institution type responsible for that. The person conveyed the thoughts by saying "Yes there is a flaw in equal opportunity for job. This flaw is in the planning of educational system. We get into market saturation and then the job opportunities get imbalanced." A female participant involved in the administration of the district education of Punjab province narrated that "no there is no equal opportunity, not in the studies, not in the job." In this particular section it was noted that the views of the participants were mixed, we cannot say that because this participant has certain characteristics that is why he/ she has believed so and so.

On the contrary, one participant shared the experiences by saying "Yes, I think there are equal opportunities. In government sector jobs many people from rich families fail. Those who have skill and aptitude will be successful in attaining the job." The participant was a government servant and had been selected passing three competitive examinations. So his view of taking this question can be influenced by his personal experience, which he considered to be solely based on merit.

Research question 3. What administrative measures can be taken to provide social justice and equity through university education?

This research question was asked from the participants to find probable ways out to cater this social injustice and inequity. All the participants of the study were positive in answering this question. They all believed that it is possible to promote social justice and equity through university education. Their responses and discourses varied on how to do that.

For example, when they were asked to give their opinion on how can different classes in society, people from different race and ethnicity be jelled in a harmonious educational system entailing social justice and equity. One participant said that "If there are four restaurants in one city each offering different variety, people will go to them on choice, but if there is only restaurant then all would come to that restaurant. Similarly, there would have to be a uniform policy to combine these classes in the society. It appears hard in Pakistan as education is an industry now. It is not in the interest of educational industrialists. You have all the infrastructure available you only have to implement the uniform policy to ensure harmony."

Three participants said that it can be done through following the principles of Islam. A participant stressed upon this expression by saying "Yes we can do that. Take help from our religion. We have misinterpreted the teachings of Islam. We have separated our own classes, tribes, and territories. Religion has given us the guidelines, but next step was to be taken by the men in power. It should have been discussed in the parliaments, but even now if an initiative by government is taken then it would still be possible. Like in Europe many countries have eradicated corruption from their system. They have eradicated it by diminishing the need of corruption." Interesting to note was the fact that this participant had no apparent religious outlook yet he believed religious teachings can help the cause.

On the same theme another participant added "Muslim system of education was best example for that. Jamia Nizamia Baghdadiya was serving to the people for decades. There were no fee in that. People who were affluent in that area used to pay the fee of students. That is why when we see famous personalities in the history of Islam we see that they have received degrees from various educational institutions. There used to be multiple teachers. See, Data Ali Usman Hajveri (a famous shrine of Sufi Mystic in Lahore) in his book Kashafal Mehjoob that he has benefited from more than 40 teachers. This system was as helpful as it can be seen that those Muslim leaders who were the reformers and who had done wonders for the society, they were all servants. Like, Kutbuddin Aibak, Sultan Shamsuddind Altamish, Ghyassuddin Balbun were all servants." This participant also had a major degree in Islamic and Pakistan studies.

Similar to this was the response of another participant who added, "Aligarh institute is a recent example of this education system. In which all scholars from different segments of the society came to study and they became renowned leaders in Tehreek-I-Azadi (Freedom Movement)."

While those were the views of the people who believed that through Islamic teachings it is still easily possible, there were a few participants who believed that though it is do-able, but would not be an easy task to do with current setup. They reckoned the factors like: basic values of the society; lack of political will; cultural and regional barriers; and deep rooting of this class system, would be a hurdle in bringing all classes of the society together. A participant in these words expressed his thoughts "Yes it can be done, but very difficult in Pakistan to do it. Because

of the mindset of the rich class. They don't want others to come close to them. See the bureaucrats, the Civil Servants of Pakistan (CSPs), and the Feudalism in our rural areas will not let that happen. I don't think government can really do that."

The mindset and living patterns of the people were also a matter of concern in this regard to one of the participants who said, "It is in the minds of the people from the society already. People from other segments of the society when come to university they have certain perceptions. Some people want to empower themselves. For example a person with army background would like to be in power in the university."

Two participants said that if you want to jell in all the class systems you have to eliminate this quota system. "I am personally against the quota system. Because of quota we violate merit. There should be similar institutions in all areas across the country. Sometimes people exploit this quota system. Now there is a change in the thinking patterns of our youth about the class system. Twenty years back the caste system was stronger, but nowadays its intensity has reduced. If teacher is a product of class system and caste approach, then he will carry it in his classroom." a participant added.

Other factors that were identified by the respondents to achieve the social justice and equity in university education, were promoting unity and patriotism, uniformity, nationhood, trainings, teachings in native language, professional development of faculty, addressing gender differences in studies, and by reducing biases of the administration. It was observed in the data that all the participants were in agreement on some common factors mentioned above irrespective of being teachers or administrators.

When the participants were asked if there can be any administrative model that can promote social justice and equity in our university education? They replied that yes there can be a model that can be pilot. The answer to this by one of the participants was "It will start from the admission process, we have to ensure merit." Two of the participants believed that Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital is a model already available to be followed. One of them stated that "During the training sessions of the doctors in that hospital, it is hard to identify the patients as paying and non-paying patients, but if a doctor identifies them by some means and his behavior changes then he is expelled." Other participants added that curriculum of that model shall be made the same. Three participants who surprisingly were in administrative positions, informed that the representation from all the provinces and regional languages should be ensured in the administrative positions in that model institution.

One participant explained in these words that "we have to talk about the attitude. We have to work on the base first. We should focus on the attitude building. When people come to university education they already have some mental framework. Such research activities, seminars, and thought provoking sessions shall be conducted." Another participant responded by saying that "Islamic values can be a best fit model for that. The example of Jamia Nizamia Baghdadiya (an ancient Muslim university) was followed by the European universities and now this problem is very much sorted out in European universities, even the concept of academic tutors was followed after the practice of Jamia Nizamia Baghdadia (Nizamia Baghdadia University) where support staff used to work with the senior teachers.

Another participant added that "We need volunteers for that" and it was continued by another participant that "Volun-

teers from the discipline of sociology, Islamic studies, gender studies, and economics shall be a part of that model. Self-finance should be banned." While three participants thought that rigorous training seminars shall be conducted in this regard. Those three participants were teachers. One participant, the private university head, summed up the administrative model question in the following words "Educational Institutions shall play the role of a Mother to promote social justice and equity."

So we can say based on the interpreted data that those participants who were in administrative positions believed that representation from all walks of life in Pakistan is important to make this model effective while those participants who were teachers were more reliant on the trainings of the members of that model.

DISCUSSION
The results were interpreted and answers of the research questions were achieved accordingly. For first research question about perceptions of teachers about social injustice and inequity, mostly the participants agreed that it prevails in our university education and has deep roots in the society. The factors that participants explored for this social injustice and inequity were lack of the attention of the government and political entities, poverty, traditions of the society, societal divide (class system), conscious effort through offering self-finance system and evening programmes, curriculum, medium of instruction, putting Islamic principles aside, and according to one participant the planned agenda of the west. The adjustment of students coming from remote areas was also taken as a contributor in this problem. The attitudes of the students from other provinces and regions is also a hurdle in offering them social justice and equity. Bernstein (2000) also considered that there are some difficulties in the adjustment of people who come from the deprived areas. The variance in the perceptions of the participants were noticed while explaining the factors in the section above. This research article only served the purpose of exploring these factors from teachers and administrators. This research has not focused on the importance and significance of those factors. A study focusing the significance of these factors in social injustice and inequity is recommended at this point by the researchers to get a clear picture of these factors as contributors.

The research question about market value was divided into two broad categories. One was regarding the market value of public and private sector institutions and second was regarding the equal opportunity of job for our students from different degree programmes. In explaining the market value of the public sector and private sector institutions the participants expressed their thoughts in the favour of famous private sector institutions that take heavy investments from the students and in return offer them the employability. They were convinced that the institution type plays an important role in the market value. A good reputed private sector institution is likely to give more opportunities to its students as compared to a public sector institution. This is a limitation of this research as it has only explored the perceptions of the participants and not validated it with content/ meta-analysis.

To answer the equal opportunity question, the opinion of participants was mixed. Majority were of the view that there is no equal opportunity of job for all and students who have paid heavy fee would have more chances to get better jobs. The

market value of our degree programmes was also a factor recognized by the participants as a hurdle in equal job opportunity. In an early study in 1991 Ahmad, Arshad, and Ahmad also highlighted the poor market value of our educational degree programmes. Market saturation was also a factor highlighted by the participants. Khan (2009) through his work established the need of new market oriented degree programmes for the universities of Pakistan. Flaw in the planning phase of the educational system by not checking the demand and supply of our education system was also reckoned as a pertinent factor. Only one participant believed that through merit and recruitment test systems the equal opportunity for job is ensured.

As far as the administrative measures to provide social justice and equity through university education is concerned, the participants shared many suggestions in uprooting social injustice and inequity. They believed that through the will of the government and the ruling class this can be done. Theoharis (2007) also discussed the role of leadership in social justice education. Another major factor identified to promote social justice and equity through university education was by following the principles of Islam. This finding was totally contextual and people in other regions of the world may or may not involve religion in their education system.

Making a common medium of instruction and unified curriculum throughout the Pakistan were also eminent factors. Ahmad (2011) also expressed in her work on medium of instruction in education system of Pakistan that medium of instruction shall create any sort of complex and be it superior or inferior among the students. While a few participants viewed it as a difficult task to perform. They valued the feudalism, bureaucratic system, and the mindset of the peoples ruling in the rural areas of Pakistan, as a barrier in promoting social justice and equity. Every region has some peculiar features which make that place distinctive from others. Likewise, the social structure of Pakistan might be different from even our neighbouring countries. Since the article only focused on the social realities of Pakistan the findings are exclusive only for this context. Eliminating the quota system from our educational spheres was also weighed as important by the participants of the study.

When asked about a proposed model for promoting social justice and equity through university education, the participants expressed their concerns which can be summed up in to the following factors: starting from the initial stage and ensuring merit and justice right from the admission process, as well as making the curriculum same throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan. Promoting native languages, and representations from all four provinces were also viewed as important factors, especially in the opinion of those serving in administration. Islamic system of education was considered an important model to be followed to promote the cause. Since the problem was local and the data thus generated only focused on the contextual and local experiences of the participants, this solution in terms of Islamic system of education can be understood in a local concept. The Islam is being interpreted differently here in Pakistan by different organizations. So when participants viewed Islamic principles as a possible solution they meant the actual true spirits of Islam and not the sponsored or manipulated Islamic perspective.

Shaping the attitudes through continuous seminars, training sessions, and workshops were also high on the recommendation lists of the participants. Volunteers and members from the disciplines of sociology, Islamic studies, gender studies, and economics were also considered to be fruitful in that model. Banning self-finance and eliminating the quota system were also the suggested components of that model. While others may consider self-finance or quota system as an option for education for all, few participants of this study believed it be a part of the problem. These findings may vary on that with other relevant research. An important tag line of the proposed model in views of a participant was that- it should act like a mother. This proposed model is a contribution of this research along with the factor highlighting social injustice and inequity in university education. A research based on the proposed model of this research is recommended by the researchers to pilot first and evaluate the results of that project.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the in depth study of the problem the researchers conclude that all the participants agreed on the fact that there is social inequity and injustice in higher education in Pakistan. They explored many factors of this social injustice and inequity. It was concluded that people from different vicinities of Pakistan speak of this problem in the perspective of their respective higher educational institutions which clearly implied that it is a common problem all over the Pakistan. People with different backgrounds though having different outlooks to the problem but in common they all agreed that role of government and people in the ruling class was the major contributory factor toward the existing social imbalance in education. Participants whether men or women, were on the same page regarding the belief that social divide and caste system is deeply infiltrated in our educational systems. It was concluded that in order to promote social justice and equity in education we have to break the threshold mindsets of the people and to change their attitudes. Training sessions and seminars were suggested as a productive tool for that matter.

The role of educational policy implementers needed to be more effective. They need to ensure that the points mentioned in the educational policy shall be practiced in letter and spirit in our educational system. The factors in existing social injustice and inequity concluded from the in-depth sessions with the interviewees were lack of interest of governments, political drawbacks, having different languages as medium of instruction, curriculum too rigid and static, having different syllabi, misalignment in the ideology of curriculum and curriculum implementers (teachers), lack of opportunities for people from different spheres of the society, untrue democratic set-up, not practicing the principles of Islam in Education, traditions and mindsets of people, allowing quota system, evening programmes, and self-finance systems, western conspiracy to avoid the Islamic system of Education, and following the philosophy of west in our education. These factors were specific to the context of university education and societal set up of Pakistan. Since we cannot find much literature on the phenomenon in university education, these conclusions drawn from the findings of this research holds significance in highlighting the issue for the policy makers and stakeholders.

In the market value of our education the faults were narrated in the planning phase by the mismatch in the demand and supply of the education. The institution type and market value of the educational degree programmes were highlighted as key factors in employability. Recommendations like rethinking policy

matters on education such as giving objective based education, uniformity of curricula, native medium of instruction with promoting regional languages, and through commitment of ruling elite, were also given.

The promotion of social justice and equity through university education was recommended by virtue of hiring volunteers from the fields of sociology, gender studies, Islamic studies, having background from all four provinces of Pakistan. The quota system was recommended to be eliminated. Curricular changes especially inclusion of Islamic principles and their true implementation was also recommended. A model to be formulated based on the system being followed in Shaukat Khanum Memorial Hospital which ensures parity for all. For further research, a developmental study of a model for promotion of social justice and equity shall be conducted at university level based on the administrative measures suggested in this research. Research focusing on the market value and its effect on the social injustice and inequality is also recommended based on the findings of this study. The dream of becoming a nation where university education ensures social justice and equity shall be made possible if the state will act like a mother free from all biases.

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