

Impact of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" Initiative Upon Provision of Quality Education to The Marginalized Children

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Abstract: The Government of Punjab has been trying to provide quality education to all children of Punjab. However, the failure to successfully achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) within the specified time frame has stipulated new initiatives. So, the Government of Punjab has introduced an initiative for the provision of quality education to the children of brick kiln workers. This study analyzed the impact of Chief Minister's initiative to educate children of brick kiln workers. The sample of the study included 100 teachers from twenty schools and 100 parents in the Multan district of Punjab. Data were collected through a questionnaire for teachers and parents. Analysis of data showed that the Chief Minister's initiative for educating children of brick kiln workers had been an effective initiative for the provision of quality education to the children of brick kiln workers and eradicating child labour.

Keywords: C. M. Punjab; Brick Kiln Workers' Children; Marginalized children; Out of school children.

1. Introduction

Everyone agrees that bettering one's educational opportunities is crucial to a society's overall development. So, every government works hard to ensure that its citizens' children have access to a good school. Providing children with a quality education means equipping them with the information, skills, and values they need to contribute to their own and their country's prosperity (Callingham, 2017; Clinton, & Dawson, 2017; GOP, 2017).

It is generally agreed that everyone has the right to education. So, every country creates plans to guarantee that all of its children have access to high-quality education. The goal of every good school is to help each student achieve his or her full potential as an individual and as a contributor to society at large. Increasing global awareness of human rights can be attributed to the proliferation of digital technologies and the efforts of the United Nations. It has also infused good education with a new and crucial component: a focus on social justice. Now, education works best when it promotes not just an understanding of, but an appreciation for, the rights of others. Scholars in the field of education (e.g. Guo & Yong, 2013; Reid, Gill, and Sears, 2010; White & Murray 2016) agree that it is increasingly important for instructors to demonstrate their ability to deal with problems of social injustice resulting from any kind of division in order to meet the needs of a diverse student body.

The cornerstones of a just and equitable society are the principles of democracy. In a democratic nation, the schools serve as the primary incubators for the cultivation of democratic values and a sense of

social fairness. Mills (2008) stresses that one of the key tenets of any democratic nation's educational programmes is the provision of equal access to education.

According to UNESCO (2014), two of the eight objectives listed are directly tied to education, while the remaining six may be associated with education as well. This is because education helps people grow, learn, survive, and collaborate, all of which are crucial to achieving the remaining six MDGs. Effective education policies require input from a wide variety of parties, thus it's essential that they engage in open discourse. When seen from a broader political viewpoint, these policies become more important to address because of the connections they make to other areas and policy concerns. In order to facilitate policy discourse, the Education for All (EFA) coordinating body was founded in the year 2000. This body's responsibilities include, among other things, the scheduling of consultative sessions amongst stakeholders and the sharing of knowledge and research. Stakeholders can get insight from one another and exchange strategies for bolstering their respective educational systems through on-the-ground initiatives following this consultative gathering. The goal of the discussion amongst education sector stakeholders at the national level is to help the country as a whole come to a consensus on how to better implement national education policies and strategies in order to meet the education-related MDGs by 2015. All kids, no matter their family's financial position, deserve the chance to go to school. Over half of the world's 58 million primary school-aged children, who are not in school, are located in areas plagued by violence and crises (UNESCO, 2014). An estimate by UNESCO (2015) places Pakistan among the 30 nations least likely to meet the MDG target of universal primary education by 2015. Many things have contributed to Pakistan's success in achieving universal primary education. Rapid population growth, little local community input, and inadequate national and provincial funding are all contributing concerns. Universalizing primary education in Pakistan is still a major concern, as UNICEF (2013) reports that 5.4 million children were not in school in 2011. According to the World Bank (2013), gender discrimination in Pakistan is a major barrier to the country's ability to reach its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for education. Pakistani girls are especially at risk because, due to cultural norms, they face significant barriers that make it difficult for them to complete basic school. A little over two percent of GDP is allocated to education in Pakistan (GDP). This is not only insufficient to meet education goals, but it also goes against Pakistan's international and domestic promises.

As reported by UNESCO (2012), the National Education Policy (2009) was endorsed by the Prime Minister and delegates from the federating units, who also signed a joint declaration committing to public harmonisation. A number of cross-sectoral initiatives, funded by the province's development partners, are already well under way towards the province's goal of achieving universal primary education. The European Union, Dutch Government, Australian Agency for International Development (AUS-AID), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) are all providing funding for these initiatives. A massive sum of money, in the neighbourhood of £203 million, will be donated by the UK government's Department for International Development (DFID) to the province of Punjab in order to better its educational system.

Husain (2005) established a connection between national development and education in Pakistan, highlighting a number of problems plaguing the country's educational system. Reasons for Pakistan's dismal literacy rate include inadequate funding, tax programme oversight, and subpar teaching materials and facilities. According to a report published in 2010 by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency, despite the fact that Education for All has been declared by the Government of Pakistan as a key pillar of Pakistan's poverty reduction strategy, the state has failed to increase access to education in line with the country's rapidly increasing population and to girls and other excluded groups.

Punjab's provincial government has just begun funding a programme to educate the children of brick kiln employees. The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of C. M. Punjab's "brick kiln workers' children" programme on the access to high-quality education for disadvantaged youth in Punjab.

1.2. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to explore effect of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon provision of quality education to the marginalized children.

1.3. Research Questions

The objective of the study was achieved through seeking answers to the following of research questions:

- a. What is effect of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon enrollment of marginalized children?
- b. What is role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon retention of the enrolled marginalized children?
- c. How much C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has contributed in provision of quality education to the enrolled marginalized children?
- d. How much are the parents and teachers satisfied about C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative?

1.4. Delimitation of Research

The study was delimited to public schools of district Multan.

2. Research Method

The study adopted quantitative method of research to achieve the objectives. The sample of study included 100 teachers who were teaching at primary level and 100 parents. The teachers and the students were selected through random sampling method. In this study, the data was gathered through questionnaire and observation schedule.

3. Results

The collected data disclosed following findings.

a. Brick Kiln workers' financial status as hindrance to their children's education

Table 1 shows teachers' and parents' opinion about Brick Kiln workers' financial status as hindrance to their children's education. This table indicates that most of the teachers (85%) and parents (82%) agreed that Brick Kiln workers' financial status was hindrance to their children's education.

Table 1. Opinion about Brick Kiln workers' financial status as hindrance to their children's education

Statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	MEAN
Brick Kiln workers could not send their children to school due to financial constraints.	Teachers	34	51	1	12	2	4.03
	Parents	15	67	3	14	1	3.81

b. Enrollment of all the Brick Kiln workers' children registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative in the schools

Table 2 shows teachers' and parents' opinion about enrollment of all the Brick Kiln workers' children registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative in the schools. This table indicates that majority of the teachers (61%) and parents (74%) agreed that all the Brick Kiln workers' children registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative have been enrolled in the schools

Table 2. Opinion about enrollment of all the Brick Kiln workers' children registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative in the schools

Statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	MEAN
All the children of Brick Kiln workers registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative are studying in the schools.	Teachers	18	43	5	19	1	3.16
	Parents	19	55	7	16	2	3.7

- c. The role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative to bring the out of school children to study in the schools

Table 3 shows teachers' and parents' opinion about the role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative to bring the out of school children to study in the schools. This table indicates that most of the teachers (79%) and parents (83%) agreed that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" has enabled the Brick Kiln workers' out of school children to study in the schools.

Table 3. Opinion about the role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative to bring the out of school children to study in the schools

Statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	MEAN
The C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has enabled the out of school children to study in the schools.	Teachers	21	58	2	17	2	3.79
	Parents	18	65	1	15	1	3.84

- d. **The impact of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon the drop out ratio Brick Kiln Workers' Children**

Table 5 shows teachers' and parents' opinion about the role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative to enable Brick Kiln Workers' Children to study in public and private schools. This table indicates that most of the teachers (85%) and parents (78%) agreed that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has enabled Brick Kiln Workers' Children to study in public and private schools.

Table 5. Opinion about role of C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative to enable Brick Kiln Workers' Children to study in public and private schools

Statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	MEAN
The C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative supports the students to study in public as well as private the schools.	Teachers	16	69	5	6	4	3.87
	Parents	27	51	2	17	3	3.82

- f. **The role of the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon provision of quality education to the Brick Kiln Workers' children**

Table 6 shows teachers' and parents' opinion about the role of the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon provision of quality education to the Brick Kiln Workers' children. This table indicates that most of the teachers (82%) and parents (73%) agreed that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" has enabled the Brick Kiln workers' children to get quality education.

Table 6. Opinion about the role of the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative upon provision of quality education to the Brick Kiln Workers' children

Statement	Respondent	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA	MEAN
The C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative	Teachers	8	74	3	13	2	3.73

has enabled the Brick Kiln Workers' children to get Parents 14 59 9 14 4 3.65 quality education..

5. Discussion

Article 25-A of the constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan stipulates the state of Pakistan to provide free and compulsory education to all the children of Pakistan. The provincial and federal governments are providing free education through a network of public schools. However, the tuition fee and textbooks are not the only educational expenditures, there are other expenses such as uniform, stationary, travelling etc. born by the students' parents. The parents of the marginalized children are unable to bear these expenses. Therefore, most of the teachers (85%) and parents (82%) rightly think that Brick Kiln workers' meager financial status was hindrance to their children's education. The provincial government also recognized this obstacle and through C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative provided financial help to Brick Kiln workers to enable them education their children. It had a positive impact which is endorsed by the majority of the teachers (61%) and parents (74%) who state that all the Brick Kiln workers' children registered with C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative have been enrolled in the schools. Oldham, Flood, & Angelle (2020) in their study also found that the Principals of the school thought that the financial support enhances the enrolment rate of marginalized children.

Pakistan is one of those countries who have largest number of out of school children. Niță and Pâravu (2020) recommend that proper financial to the disadvantaged children support plays a vital role in continuation of their education. The C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" has played its role in bringing out of school children to school. Most of the teachers (79%) and parents (83%) also are the view that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" has enabled the Brick Kiln workers' out of school children to study in the schools. C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has also facilitated in decreasing the drop out ratio of the enrolled students. Almost all the teachers (93%) and most of the parents (72%) claim that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has decreased the drop out ratio of the Brick Kiln workers' children.

C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative is not only for the children to study in the public schools. It also facilitates the children to study in private schools. Most of the teachers (85%) and parents (78%) endorsed the opinion that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" initiative has enabled Brick Kiln Workers' Children to study in public and private schools. Moreover, most of the teachers (82%) and parents (73%) think that the C. M. Punjab's "Brick Kiln Workers' Children" has provided good opportunity to the Brick Kiln workers' children to get quality education.

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