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Primary Education in Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan: Problems and Prospects

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PRIMARY EDUCATION
IN NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE
OF PAKISTAN: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

A Project Presented

by

FAZLI MANAN

Submitted to the Center for International Education
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF EDUCATION

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School of Education

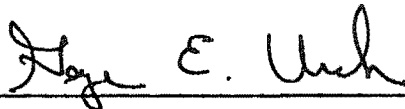
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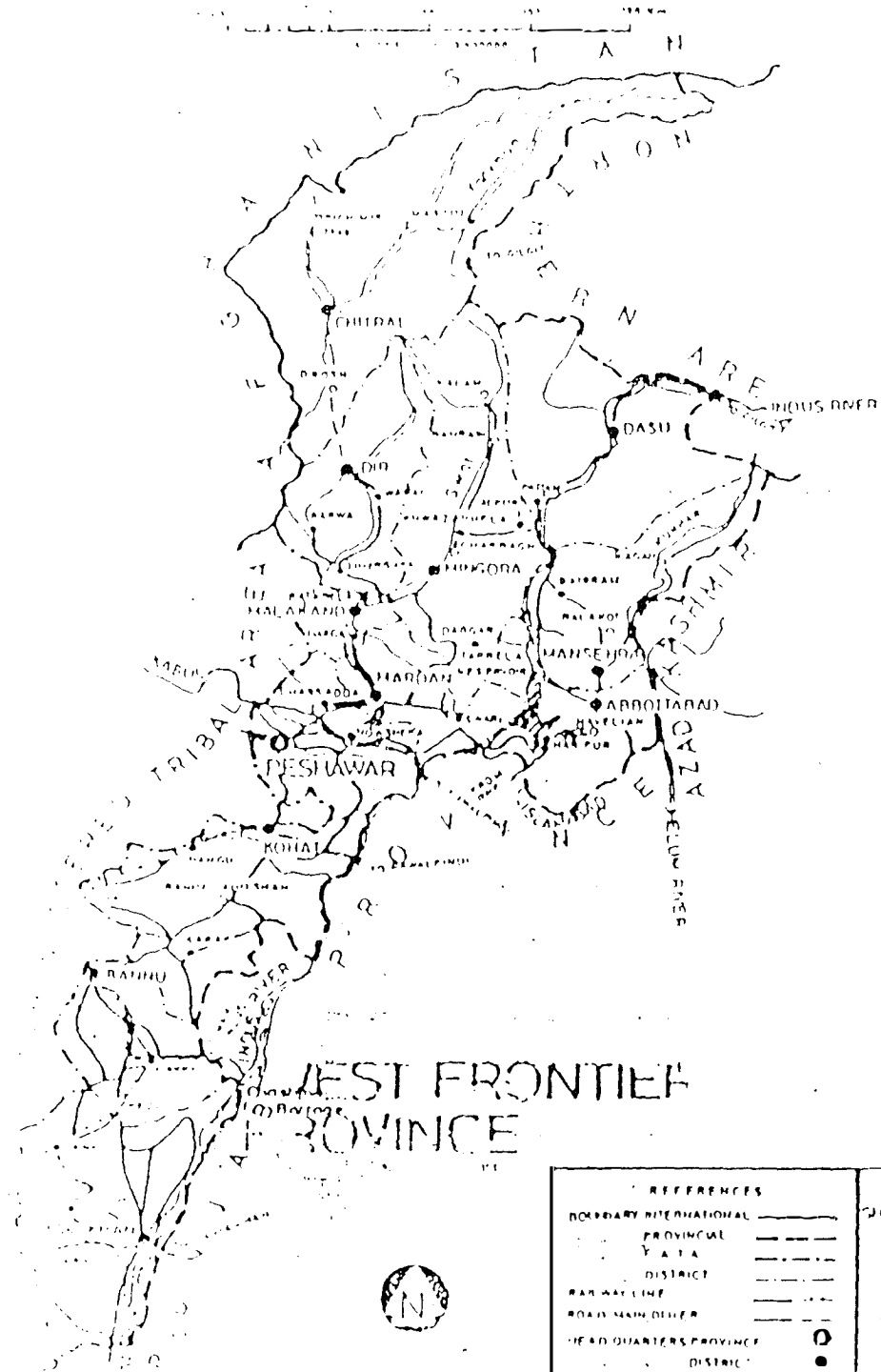
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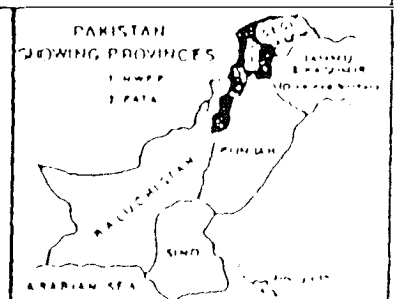
A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "George E. Urch", is written over a horizontal line.

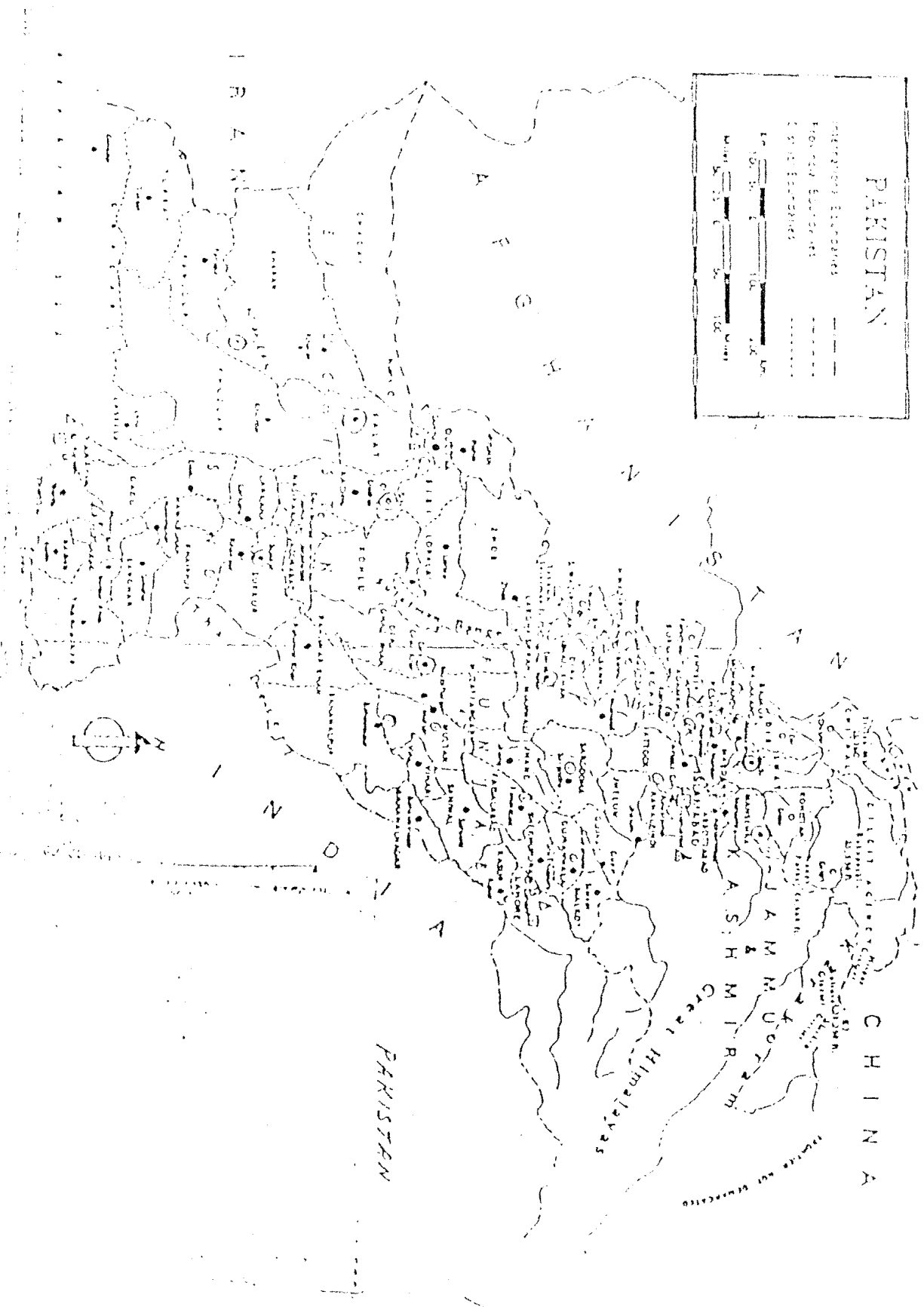
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Massachusetts at Amherst, U.S.A.

NORTH WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE



REFERENCES	
BOUNDARY INTERNATIONAL	—
PROVINCIAL	---
DISTRICT	- - -
RAILWAY LINE	—+—
ROADS MAIN OTHER	—+—
HEAD QUARTERS PROVINCE	●
DISTRICT	●
SUBDIVISION	●
OTHER LOCALITIES	○
WATER	—





PAKISTAN

International Boundaries
Provincial Boundaries
State Boundaries

Scale: 1:100,000
1 cm = 10 km
1 inch = 100 miles

PAKISTAN

CHINA

Great Himalayas

INDIA



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This study is concerned with problems and prospects of primary education in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

Purpose and objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to make an exact, qualitative, and objective appraisal of the existing condition of primary education in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To find out the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system of primary education in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.
2. To discover the nature and extent of deficiencies or problems, if any.
3. To identify the key issues/factors hampering the developmental efforts.
4. To approach the key issues in light of various research reports and other pertinent articles.
5. To propose possible solutions to the problems and make suggestions for improvement of the system of primary education in the province.

Significance of the Study

Primary education in Pakistan has not received the attention it really deserved during the past 45 years. The lip-service bore no fruit either as a result it has been facing tremendous problems both in quality and quantity. Despite the best efforts on the part of Government, the goal of universalization of primary education has not been reached. The literacy rate is among the lowest in the world. Female literacy is endemic.

In so far as primary education in the North West Frontier Province (N.W.F.P) is concerned, the situation is bleak. Despite a considerable portion of the resources available to the province being diverted to the primary education sector, the literacy rate is amongst the lowest in the country at 16.7% as compared to 30.1% for Pakistan. Female literacy is 6.5% as compared to nearly 16% in the country. The literacy rate for rural-female at 3.8% means that more than 96% of girls and women in the rural area of the province are illiterate¹.

Although the provincial government has been allocating sizeable resources, approximately 20-25% of its annual developmental as well as non-developmental budget, to the education sector, even then serious deficiencies and problems persist. These problems and deficiencies need to be explored

¹The cited figures have been taken from Government of N.W.F.P, Education Department, Report on Social Action Plan (1991-94) for Education Section: Peshawar.

and approached in an attempt to improve the present system of primary education in the province.

The researcher, being a resident of and having been a teacher and administrator in the education department of N.W.F.P, has closely observed the poor condition of primary education in the province. He has noticed that the falling standard and deteriorating quality of primary education need a careful study of the existing system, so that the key issues/factors hampering the developmental efforts can be identified and approached for possible solutions.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited to the following aspects of primary education in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan:

1. Enrolment and Dropout.

Enrolment includes the number of children of primary school age group (5-9 years) in the five grades of primary education out of the total number of children of the same age group in the overall population of the province.

Dropout includes classwise enrolment of children in five grades and comparison of the present number of students in a grade with that of participation at the time of admission in first grade.

2. Curriculum and Instruction.

Curriculum includes the syllabuses determined for all subjects of study in primary schools. It also includes

different kinds of games and activities available in the primary schools.

Instruction includes method of teaching and use of various audio-visual aids that can facilitate the teaching-learning process.

3. Teacher supply and Training.

Teacher supply includes availability of qualified teachers and procedure of their recruitment, selection, and assignment.

Training includes the pre-service and in-service educational opportunities and resources that are provided to the teachers for their professional development.

4. Supervision and Evaluation.

This includes procedure used by supervisors for supervision and assessment of teachers' performance.

Methodology

For methodological purpose, the topic was analysed at three levels: (1) identification of the most pressing problems found in primary education of the province; (2) investigation of how other nations around the world have dealt with similar problems; and (3) describing possible solutions for the problems based on research and personal experience of the investigator.

The sources of data for identification of the problems comprise both official and unofficial documents, publications,

yearbooks on educational statistics, educational plans, and personal observation of the investigator being a teacher and an administrator in the education system of the province under study.

The available data on the strategies and programs used by other countries include a body of literature on education, research reports, and other pertinent articles. Possible solutions to the problems and suggestions for improvement are based on review of the case studies and personal experience of the investigator.

CHAPTER II

OVERVIEW OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Pakistan's Situation

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan emerged as an independent sovereign state on August 14, 1947. It is an ideological state and was the outcome of the relentless struggle launched by the muslims of the Indian sub-continent to have a separate homeland where they could practice their faith and religion freely.

Geographical Background.

Pakistan is basically an agricultural country. However, there are a number of fast growing industries which are slowly but surely giving its economy an industrial bias. Government is also encouraging in the setting-up of agro-based industries to give it further boost and to accelerate the pace of industrial growth for the economic prosperity of its people.

It has a total area of nearly 796095 square kilometers with a population of 110 million. The country is divided into federal territories and four provinces namely Punjab, Sind, North West Frontier Province, and Baluchistan.

Pakistan's population is growing at an alarming rate of 3.1%. The infant mortality rate is 98 per one thousand live birth. It has 30.1% literacy rate and there is a doctor

for every 2086 persons. Per capita income is 365 US Dollars and GDP growth rate is 5.2%. The foreign debt is 15.6 billions and the inflation rate is 10.6%.¹

Management of education System.

Education in Pakistan is on the concurrent Legislative list of the Federal and Provincial governments. The federal government has the powers to attend to matters relating to policy, planning, curriculum, textbooks standards, and Islamic education. It is also responsible for issues pertaining to the education of Pakistani students in foreign countries and foreign students in Pakistan. The federal government is the overall policy making, coordinating, and advisory authority. All educational institutions lying in the federal area and some special institutions lying in provinces are administered by the Federal government. Apart from the above, the provincial governments are solely responsible for all other matters concerning implementation of education policy, organization, administration, and management of the public school system. The private sector is also permitted to contribute in the process of schooling and does so to some extent upto all stages now. Finances to meet the development expenditure in education in the province are

¹The mentioned facts have been taken from the Primary and Non-formal Education Wing, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, A Framework for National Plan of Action (1990-2000), Islamabad.

provided by the federal government. Recurring expenditure to meet salaries and regular supplies are borne by the provincial governments.

The federal ministry of education is headed by the Minister of education. The highest civil servant responsible to the ministry is the Education Secretary. The ministry is divided into wings. A provincial education department is headed by a provincial Education Minister. However, the civil servant in charge of the department is the provincial Education Secretary. All provinces, except Baluchistan, have been further divided into regions for the purpose of administration. The head of the regional office is called the Director. He/She is the person who looks after the department professionally. The hierarchy then runs down to the Divisional Director, District Education Officer, Sub-divisional Education Officer, and Assistant Sub-divisional Education officers. The administrative structure is quite centralized.

Status of primary Education.

There are nearly 120,000 primary schools which provide basic education facilities to approximately 60% of the school-going children of age-group 5 to 9 years. Enrolment of children in these schools is around 9.00 million which is approximately 52% of the total population of the 5 to 9 age group children. Boys participation rate is around 67% while it is 34% in case of girls. In other words, 33% of the boys and 66% of the girls of school going age are still

out of the school system. Due to the rapid population growth, approximately 2.6 million children of the relevant age group are being added annually to the existing population of 5-9 age cohort, out of which only 1.6 million could find places in the existing primary schools. The remaining one million continue joining the swelling ranks of illiterates which has evidently placed Pakistan at the lowest bottom in literacy rate among the countries of the world. The position of female education is all the more grim and serious whose participation varies from overall 34% to the lowest i.e. 1.7% in some of the remote districts in the sparsely populated province of Baluchistan. The situation is further aggravated due to the problem of dropout which is nearly 50% especially during grade 1 - 3. Lax, ineffective supervision, teacher absenteeism, irrelevance of curricula, and indifference of community, are some of the root-causes of dropout which have become a bane of the primary education system of Pakistan.

The most agonizing and disturbing fact is that there are nearly 29000 primary schools which have no buildings. These institutions are called shelterless schools which function either under a shade of tree or in an open sky where the children squat on bare earth in all seasons and confront the vagaries of inclement weather passively. Besides, there are 1600 primary schools which have only one classroom. This is quite negation of the concept of quality education which lays the minimum target on one teacher and one classroom for every class. The conditions of primary schools in the rural

areas is all the more depressing. Shortage of trained teachers, teachers absenteeism, low participation of females, and above all teachers' perfunctory attitude toward teaching because of lack of dedication, motivation, and interest in their profession, are some of the glaring problems and issues which warrant serious attention².

North West Frontier Province's Situation

The North West Frontier Province (N.W.F.P) is one of the four provinces of Pakistan situated at the north-west bordering Afghanistan and China. An outline of some of the basic facts and status of primary education in this province is given below:

N.W.F.P. at a Glance

Some of the basic facts about N.W.F.P are as under:

1.	Area	.. 74,521 Square Kilometers
2.	Population	
	Male	.. 5,821,752
	Female	.. <u>5,239,576</u>
	Total	..11,061,328
3.	Density of population	.. 148 person per square K.M.
4.	Sex ratio	.. 894 female to 1000 male
5.	Climate	.. Cold in winter and hot in summer.
6.	Average rainfall	.. 16.5 inches

²Ibid

7. Languages spoken .. Pushto, Urdu, Hindko,
Punjabi, Seraeeki,
Chitrali, Kohistani
8. Economy .. Agriculture/Business
9. Literacy rate
- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| Male | .. 25.8% |
| Female | .. 6.5% |
| Aggregate | .. 16.7% |

10. Number of government schools:

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Higher Secon:</u>
Male	12,204	658	325	48
Female	3,681	184	171	10
Total	15,885	842	996	58

Source: Population Census Organization, N.W.F.P.

Brief description of primary Education

Primary education is an important sub-sector of N.W.F.P, Education Department. There are 15885 primary and 842 middle schools catering the needs of children both in rural and urban areas of the province with an enrolment of 1,330,576 (in primary schools) and 277,633 (in middle schools). The overall enrolment rate is 54% of the relevant age group (5 - 9 years), 81% for male and 24% for female. The figures given at Table 1 reflect enrolment in the provincial government schools.

Table 1
Enrolment in Government Schools

Level of schools		Number of schools	Enrolment
Primary	(a) Boys	12,204	1,040,176
	(b) Girls	3,681	290,400
	Total	15,885	1,330,576
Middle	(a) Boys	658	237,435
	(b) Girls	134	40,198
	Total	842	277,633

Source: Educational Statistics (yearbook, 1990-91),
Directorate of Secondary Education, NWFP.

In Pakistan, about 17% of the total primary schools are shelterless. The N.W.F.P is fortunate in this respect and has the smallest number of these shelterless schools. Table 2 clarifies the position.

Table 2
Shelterless Schools

Province	Rural	Urban	Total
Punjab	12,092	—	12,092
Baluchistan	3,100	50	3,150
Sind	2,200	258	2,458
N.W.F.P	201	6	207

Source: Primary Education Improvement, by National
Education Council, Islamabad, 1986.

Coupled with the alarming situation, in most of the primary schools, the teaching-learning aids are only chalk, black boards, and textbooks. A large number of teachers, being untrained, are not well conversant with the methodology of teaching, due to which they are not in a position to impart quality education according to the latest techniques. The result is that the standard of education at primary level is not showing any improvement.

Various research studies conducted by many agencies have revealed that the main reasons for massive dropouts, low participation rates, increase in out of school children, and poor turn out from schools lie in the weaknesses inherent in the educational system itself.

Problems of falling standards and deterioration in quality of education is compounded by virtual nonexistence of incentives and motivation for acquisition of knowledge. Excessive expenditure on salaries and very little funds for non-salary essential components such as buildings, equipments, materials, furniture, etc: are problems common to all primary schools in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

CHAPTER III

AREAS OF MAJOR PROBLEMS

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the most pressing problems found in primary education in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. As mentioned in chapter I, the following areas/aspects of primary education in the province were to be studied for identification of the major problems:

Enrolment and Dropout

The enrolment rate, especially in respect of girls students, in N.W.F.P is very discouraging and requires immediate attention and concerted efforts on the part of all concerned. Table 3 shows percentage of the children of relevant age-group (5 - 9 years) in the five grades of primary education in the province.

Table 3

Enrolment Rate

Gender	Urban	Rural	Total
Male	78	83	81
Female	49	19	24
Male and Female	64	52	54

Source: Primary Education Development Program,
Government of N.W.F.P, 1989 - 1999.

Dropout rate in primary classes is the highest in N.W.F.P as compared to the provinces of Punjab, and Sind and to some extent similar to Baluchistan. Table 4 clearly throws light on this grim picture by showing provincewise percentage of dropouts in primary education.

Table 4

Provincewise Dropout Rate

Area		Baluchistan	NWFP	Sind	Punjab
Urban	(a) Male	56	60	40	12
	(b) Female	80	70	50	24
	Aggregate	60	63	43	18
Rural	(a) Male	68	70	77	18
	(b) Female	93	78	89	56
	Aggregate	79	71	79	49

Source: Primary Education: Desired Measure by National Council, Islamabad, 1986.

Curriculum and Instruction

There has been wide-spread criticism on the primary school curricula, which has been branded irrelevant, unsuited to the development levels of children, and devoid of basic knowledge of science, which evidently has failed to lay the sound foundations for the promotion of science and technology. The existing curricula is overloaded with general subjects

and is beyond the absorbing capacity of the child. It has even failed to provide basic proficiency in language and a child soon relapses into illiteracy after leaving the primary school.

Another defective aspect of the existing curricula of primary education is that of non-availability of physical education activities which are important for the health and physical/mental growth of children at primary schools. Children of this particular age level (5 - 9 years) like to play games and take part in various physical activities, but unfortunately, they are not given the opportunity to fulfil their desire/need.

In most of the primary schools in N.W.F.P, the instructional materials are only chalk, black/green boards, and the textbooks. Besides the non-availability of teaching aids, a large number of teachers are not well conversant with the methodology of teaching, due to which they are not in a position to facilitate the teaching-learning process and impart quality education to the children.

Teacher supply and Training

One of the crucial problems still to be solved is that of selection and training of teachers working in the primary schools of the province. A planned recruiting program to contact, inform, and enable suitable young men and women to prepare for and enter teaching does not exist. Recruiting procedure is limited to the rules of appointment which mainly

specify the appointing authority and prescribe the minimum academic and professional qualification required for teachers. Vacancies are filled as they occur, all appointments being first made on a temporary/probationary basis. The minimum requirements for primary teaching are the Matriculation certificate and one year of professional training. In case of un-trained teachers, it is just Matriculation certificate.

In N.W.F.P, there are 19 government colleges for elementary (primary) teachers including 6 for female teachers. The teacher training program conducted through these colleges is just sufficient to provide trained staff to the newly established primary schools under annual development program and foreign aided projects, but lags behind in providing inservice training to all the untrained teachers serving in the primary schools of the province. The total number of trained and untrained primary school teachers in N.W.F.P is shown in Table 5 below:

Table 5
Number of Teachers

Teachers	Male	Female	Total
Trained	22,145	6,866	29,011
Untrained	9,321	3,753	13,074
Total	31,466	10,619	42,085

Source: Report on Social Action Plan (1991 - 94) for Education Sector, Government of N.W.F.P.

The untrained teachers, who have at least three years service at their credit, are trained through short term courses of three months duration, which is inadequate for their professional development.

Coupled with the lack of inservice teacher training facilities, supply of female teachers to primary schools in rural areas of N.W.F.P is also a major problem to be solved. In the tradition bound society of rural area, a preference for female teachers has been a recurring note. Parents feel more comfortable when their girls are under the care of female teachers. While the crucial need for women teacher has been identified and found essential, the problem lies in the availability of trained women teachers. In most cases, trained women teachers prefer teaching in urban areas, further aggravating the lack of trained teachers who would be willing to be posted in rural schools.

Supervision and Evaluation

One of the major problems in primary education in the North West Frontier Province has been the defective procedure of teacher supervision and evaluation. It is an established fact that successful implementation of a program depends, more or less, on the efficient working of the administrative machinery which handles the program. Need for such an improvement becomes more necessary in view of huge involvement of the program. During the past decade, there had been tremendous increase in the number of primary schools in

the province which has rendered them unmanageable in the present administrative set up. No proper training has ever been arranged for the grass root level supervisors and officers who handle the affairs of primary education. The head teachers of primary schools, who used to be very effective one time, are not more than figure heads as they do not have the power to manage their schools. The supervisors sitting far away in their offices rule them, which in fact they cannot, due to which the primary education in N.W.F.P has suffered enormously.

Effective supervision of schools is hampered by several problems. There are too few supervisors to cover the vast areas that need to be covered, some of which are virtually inaccessible, particularly in far flung mountainous area of the province. Then too, the small number of existing supervisors are burdened by the large quantity of administrative paper work, leaving them little time for actual field visits. Supervisors also prefer to visit the more accessible schools, situated at a distance of not less than 16 kilometers from their offices, which then allows them to claim their travelling allowance and go home to their families. Even during these casual visits, the supervisors just check the teachers/students' attendance, building condition, and see that rules are obeyed. Such a visit can rightly be called an inspection, not supervision, because the teaching-learning activities are not observed and checked

for providing professional guidance to the teachers. The irregular visits and lack of supervision, especially in the more remote schools lead to both teacher and pupil absenteeism and eventually to the student dropping out of schools.

Another problem in primary education of the province is the defective procedure of evaluation used by the supervisors for assessing teachers' work. Most of the supervisors use the process of summative evaluation for teachers' assessment. They fix dates for annual inspection of almost all the schools during the last two months (February and March) of the academic year and judge the value/quality of teacher work done throughout the year. Such an approach to evaluation is mostly based on individual characteristic/academic qualifications of teachers. But for instructional purpose, the evaluation should not be geared to individual characteristics of teachers because success in teaching may not be associated with college degree, grade-point average, knowledge of the subject, or years of experience. It is mostly based on the process and method teachers use for imparting knowledge and facilitating the teaching-learning process.

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIENCE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate how some other developing countries have dealt with similar problems. As mentioned in Chapter III, the following major problems identified in the system of primary education in North West Frontier Province of Pakistan are to be discussed in the light of experience from other countries:

High Dropout

Dropout refers to those students who begin but do not complete an education program. The high dropout and low participation and retention rate at primary level is a major problem common to almost all the developing countries of the world. In many countries, a major factor undermining universal primary education is that a large proportion of the children who enrol in school dropout before completing the entire primary cycle, usually within the first two years. The incidence of dropout is indicative of the low efficiency of the education system and represents a waste of human and financial resources invested in the system (Singh, 1986).

According to the UNESCO Bulletin "Education for All" (1989), in India, it is currently estimated that about 85% of all students dropout of the school system by the eight

year of schooling. In remote rural areas, the dropout rate is even higher. The reasons for dropout and absenteeism pointed out in Bulletin (page 94) are:

1. "health and medical problems,
2. poorly qualified teachers and the low standard of education provided in schools,
3. an inflexible curriculum that is too demanding and which involves teaching what many students and parents regard as irrelevant,
4. passive, teacher-oriented modes of learning,
5. the seasonal demands of agricultural work that require children to assist parents in their work activities".

The Bulletin has further clarified that it is particularly difficult to attract and retain in school children who come from economically deprived and socially disadvantaged sections of the society, and who live in remote, difficult terrain. To combat low retention and high absenteeism rates, education authorities in many countries have developed a number of tactics. In some countries education is universal but not compulsory (e.g. Malaysia), while in other it is compulsory (e.g. Thailand, China). In countries such as Australia and Viet Nam, although education is compulsory, special allowance is made to accommodate the needs of particular racial/ethnic groups who may not want to attend school. Attempts are also being made to maximize parental support for their children's education. This is encouraged through such activities as home visit programs, the provision of scholarships, free hostel accommodations and free lunches, textbooks, and uniforms.

In Africa, some of the countries have attempted to redesign their educational structures, especially at the primary level. According to Mbamba (1982), " some English speaking countries have attempted to amalgamate the two-stage primary education they inherited into one, usually with a reduction of a grade in the total. Sudan has changed its primary education structure from four to six years in order to reduce dropout. Primary education in Tanzania lasts for a period of seven years. Botswana has been recommended a long-term structure of six years universal primary education, but has to maintain the present seven years structure untill the quality of primary education has been improved. Zambia was recommended a primary education structure of six years to replace the present structure of seven years. Zimbabwe has a primary education lasting for seven years. The entry age varies from country to country and is arround the age of 6 - 7 years"¹.

Irrelevant Curriculum

The school curriculum is the main means by which a country's goals in education are translated into practice at the school level. The curriculum, its outline and content, indicates which areas of knowledge and what types of skill

¹Mauno A. Mbamba, Primary Education for an Independent Namibia: Planning in a situation of uncertainty and instability, (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1982), page 160.

development are particularly valued in any given country. According to the UNESCO Bulletin (Education for all, 1989), in most countries in the Asia and Pacific region, "curriculum outlines are prepared by central education authorities and are generally prescriptive. In other countries (e.g. India, Australia, Malaysia), a curriculum framework rather than compulsory syllabi is prepared. Certain core components within this framework are taught throughout the countries with regional or context-specific components being incorporated as required. For instance, curriculum units relevant to the needs and interests of populations being taught are specifically included in some countries (e.g. Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal).

"In the vast majority of countries in the region, with the exception of Australia, whose curriculum development is coordinated at the state or territory level, the curriculum of schools is centrally developed. Many feel that such a centralized curriculum is too rigid, inflexible, and un-suitable for many school populations. The reason is that these centralized subject-based curriculums are often biased towards the perceived needs and interests of urban population groups and reflect an expectation that those being taught are motivated in the school system for an extended period of time. As a result in many countries (e.g. Nepal, Thailand, Maldives), the content of the school curriculum is often regarded as being irrelevant to the needs and

aspirations of those living in rural education contexts.

"There is a growing awareness of these types of problems and so more is being done in countries throughout the region to decentralize decision making regarding what is appropriate curriculum content for different population groups. Special efforts have been made to cater to the needs and aspirations of children and adults belonging to disadvantaged sections of the population and those residing in remote areas of a country. Examples include the development of a curriculum that is oriented towards community problems (e.g. Malaysia, India, Thailand, Viet Nam), and the framing of a health, nutritional and environmental sanitation curriculum (e.g. India). A number of countries in the region have also developed new curricula which emphasize pupil-oriented activities. They encourage pupils to be active and resourceful learners, while teachers are encouraged to utilize project and assignment work that enables children to learn independently"².

In several countries, there has been a re-examination of the curriculum in relation to universal primary education when it was felt that the existing curriculum did not meet the diversified needs of learners. Irrelevant curricula and

²UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Bulletin, Education for All, (Bangkok: UNESCO, 1989), p.94-95.

unsuitable teaching methods are seen as an important reason for non-enrolment and early withdrawal from school. According to Raja Roy Singh (1986), curriculum renewal in these countries is moving towards:

- 1) "Decentralized adaptation of the core curriculum to meet the specific needs of local communities;
- 2) Infusion into the curriculum of issues which are of great concern to local communities, such as health, hygiene, nutrition, population education, and environmental education;
- 3) Emphasis on socially useful productive work aimed at linking education and the world of work and at promoting from quite early age a feeling of the dignity of manual work and work methods;
- 4) Use of the local environment as a learning resource, particularly for generating concern for its protection and preservations;
- 5) Strengthening of science and mathematics in the curriculum to prepare children more adequately for living in a society in which science and technology have a crucial role in national development as well as in individual living;
- 6) An orientation with respect to moral values"³.

Dearth of instructional Materials

Dearth of instructional materials which are relevant to the content of the curriculum being taught, is also one of the major factors influencing the quality of primary

³Raja Roy Singh, Education in Asia and the Pacific: Retrospect : Prospect, (Bangkok: UNESCO, 1986), p. 126 - 127

education in various developing countries. It has been reported in the UNESCO Bulletin (Education for All, 1989) that in some countries where the curriculum is centrally prescribed (e.g. Viet Nam, India, China, Malaysia), textbooks and other materials are prepared and published by a government curriculum branch or commercial publishers, and then distributed for use nation wide.

In an effort to overcome the lack of relevant teaching-learning materials, teachers in such countries as Australia, Malaysia, India, and the Maldives are encouraged by education authorities to prepare their own materials and audio-visual aids, using local resources, in order to make the materials more relevant to the particular population groups being taught. They have also been encouraged to develop materials that meet the needs of those being taught in large single classes and multiple class/multigrade teaching situations, as well as the demand of the newly literate for more and better books. Of special relevance in difficult education contexts has been the production of low cost teaching learning materials that are responsive and relevant to local needs. In order to help achieve this end, many countries in the Asia and Pacific region (e.g. China, Australia, Maldives, Thailand) organize workshops for teachers to assist them in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to develop their own resource materials for use in schools (Education for all, 1989).

Lack of teacher training Facilities

The preparation of teaching personnel for improving the quality of education and implementing innovative programs calls for special attention. With increased emphasis on inservice teacher education, a variety of approaches are being used in various developing countries, including correspondance courses and radio and television packages comprising broadcasts, pre- and post-broadcast discussion and support material in print. In some countries, teachers centers are being set up to provide consultation and other services to teachers, alongwith weekend orientation courses. Networks of institutions providing support services to each other is another approach used for the inservice upgrading of teachers' competences through school-based or area-based programs (Singh, 1986).

Coupled with the lack of teacher training facilities, shortage of qualified teachers is another problem faced by various developing countries. The fact that those who are available to teach in schools often do not have the necessary knowledge and skills needed for effective teaching. For instance, they may not know how to teach large, often multigrade classes, or possess the skills to cope with teaching children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

As per UNESCO Bulletin (1989), it is widely accepted throughout the Asia and Pacific region that without appropriately trained and sensitized teacher nothing substantial

can be achieved to improve the outcome of teaching and learning in difficult education contexts. In many countries of the region, a relatively standardized pre-service teacher education program is taught, but little is being done to orientate prospective teachers to the type of local conditions and learning difficulties that are especially relevant in effectively teaching children in their charge.

It has also been pointed out in the UNESCO Bulletin (1989) that there is a surplus of trained teachers in some countries in the region (e.g. Australia, Thailand, India), it is generally difficult to staff schools in the overcrowded urban and remote rural areas because these are often regarded as unattractive or undesirable work locations by many teachers. In Viet Nam, the commitment of teachers who do work in such schools is recognized by the award of medal.

According to the same Bulletin (page 97), " a problem that persists throughout the region relates to the quality and appropriateness of the teacher education programs provided, whether at preservice or inservice levels. To resolve this problem, many countries have conducted national enquiries into their systems of teacher education in order to identify the areas where changes can be made to ensure that teachers are being adequately prepared to teach the diverse population groups in their charge. Many other initiatives and innovations also are occurring. For example, attempts are being made in most countries to attract the most capable

recruits into the profession (e.g. China, Nepal). In addition, school-based teacher education programs are being adopted in some countries (e.g. Australia, Thailand, Malaysia) in order to overcome the theory-practice gap that is said to occur in many preservice centers. Also, inservice training is being made more widely available (e.g. India, Malaysia, China, Nepal), using distance education and external studies as the main instructional medium".

In the BRIDGES⁴ research report series number 9, Nielsen and Tatto (1991) have discussed the issue of teacher education in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. According to them, Sri Lanka has distinguished itself as the only major country in the South Asian region (which includes India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) to achieve a high rate of literacy and enrolment in basic education. This impressive accomplishment is rooted in the Government's commitment to universal primary education. The reforms initiated by the government have given birth to two new approaches to primary school teacher training: preservice training at the newly constituted colleges of education, started in 1985; and inservice training through distance

⁴BRIDGES (Basic Research and Implementation in Developing Education Systems) is a project of the Harvard Institute for International Development, the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and the office of Education, Bureau for science and technology, United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

education which was initiated in 1983 by the National Institute of Education with help from SIDA, the Swedish International Development Agency. Similarly, Indonesia has also attained near universal primary education (95-98%) during the late eighties (1988/89). After attaining extraordinary success in increasing access to basic education, the Indonesian government now gives more attention to improving the quality of teachers than increasing the number of teachers. The Indonesian Open Learning University has been taking the leading role in a consortium of Indonesian institutions to train teachers through distance education.

Irregular teacher supervision and Evaluation

Noel F. McGinn (1992), in his foreword to BRIDGES research report series number 11, has called attention to two key concepts taken from classical organization theory: span of control; and scope of control. Span of control refers to the number of agencies that are supervised by a superior agency. If the span of control is too large, the supervising agency can not do their job well. Many countries have a school inspectorate system in which supervisors are unable to help improve teaching because they are responsible for too many schools. To solve this problem, some countries have created a new layer of authority in between the district supervisor and the school. The sub-district officers may be responsible for as few as ten schools.

Scope of control refers to the kind of authority held by each agency. McGinn (1992) has given the example of Sri Lanka, where each new layer of the organization has been assigned responsibilities appropriate for that span of control. According to him, the effectiveness and efficiency of the schools can be increased by moving critical decision closer to the scene of action.

Alkin, cited by Mbamba (page 177) defines evaluation as, "the process of ascertaining the decision to be made, selecting related information, and collecting and analysing information in order to report summary data useful to decision makers in selecting among alternatives".

Evaluation may be formative or it may be summative. Formative evaluation is carried out at intervals throughout the implementation process, while summative evaluation is done at the end of the implementation process of the program. The first is the type of evaluation which guides and aids development, while the second is the kind of evaluation which gives judgement as to the value or worth of the resulting program, especially the outcome of the program (Mbamba, 1982). In order to carry out a successful program of evaluation, the evaluator should, according to Yoloye cited by Mbamba (page 179), have the following characteristics:

- 1) "have competence in the skills of evaluation,
- 2) become a responsive and interactive member of the management team,
- 3) support active rather than passive management processes,

- 4) function as an intermediary and facilitator, and
- 5) have administrative competence".

In order to assess the extent to which formulated educational goals are being achieved, there is a need in all developing countries for a vigorous and comprehensive system of supervision and evaluation. Only through regular supervision and formative evaluation and assessment will administrators have reliable information regarding the extent to which the teaching-learning situation they have helped organize has been successful.

CHAPTER V

PROPOSALS AND SUGGESTIONS

Proposals for solution of the Problems

The problems diagnosed in primary education in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan, reported in chapter III, are to be approached in the light of experience from other countries, discussed in chapter IV, and proposals made for their solutions and suggestions made for further improvement in this chapter. These proposals are described under the following sub-headings:

Strengthening of institutional Capacity

Opening of new primary schools for attaining 100% enrolment is obviously beyond the resources of the government. Therefore, manageable, feasible, and practicable physical targets for opening new primary schools be determined and attained through the annual development programs and foreign aided projects.

Since construction of primary school buildings takes at least 1 to 1.5 year, therefore, for the time being, it is proposed to start operating the primary schools in rented buildings, mosque buildings, working places, and all available space which can be considered for teaching purposes. The system of double shift schooling be introduced in order

to utilize the existing facilities/buildings effectively to the maximum.

Making school environment Attractive

Most of the existing primary schools have no holding power because of an unattractive environment, which results in poor retention and high dropout. To overcome this pressing problem, a right and meaningful direction should be given to the primary education system in the province. The existing physical and human resources infrastructure be improved by providing buildings to shelterless schools and additional classrooms to overcrowded schools. Qualified teachers, flexible curriculum, student-oriented modes of learning, and provision of suitable instructional material can make the school environment attractive for students. Primary education should be made compulsory for each and every child, those not complying with this directive should be fined. To accomodate the needs of poor and disadvantaged students, who may not want to attend school, a special allowance should be paid to them. Attempts should also be made to maximize parental support for their children's education.

Reviewing the existing Curriculum

The existing curriculum of primary education in the province is overloaded and unsuited to the development needs of the children. It should be made flexible and relevant to the needs and interests of children. Instead of centralized

rigid curriculum biased towards the perceived needs and interests of urban population group, a decentralized flexible curriculum appropriate for different population group is needed for primary education in province. Special efforts are to be made to cater to the needs and aspirations of children belonging to disadvantaged sections of the population and those residing in the remote area of the province.

In order to make it more effective according to local needs, the existing curriculum at primary level should be reviewed. Similarly, textbooks at primary level should also be reviewed and made more effective and attractive for the children. Children like beautifully arranged books with pictures, illustrations, and reading materials which are easily understood. The books being used in primary schools of North West Frontier Province lack many such qualities. If beautifully designed and improved, these books will be a source of motivation and attraction for the children.

Curriculum provisions also need to be related to the personal, vocational, and citizenship needs of the learner and to the economic, social, and cultural needs of the country. But, curriculum provision alone cannot guarantee either the quality of the educative process or the achievement of the curriculum objectives. Much depends on the availability of other necessary facilities for schooling.

Developing appropriate instructional Materials

In order to facilitate the teaching-learning process and improve the quality of teaching, the most appropriate instructional materials should be provided to each and every primary school in the province. Some of these teacher support and auxiliary instructional materials are: political and topographical maps, charts, illustrated diagrams of science processes, alphabet strips, alphabet cards, number cards, number lines, children's dictionaries, atlases, children's magazines, etc. As curriculum is centrally prescribed and implemented in primary schools of the province, so all instructional materials which are relevant to the content of the curriculum being taught should be developed and published by Bureau of Curriculum Development and Education Extension services, Government of N.W.F.P, and then distributed for use in schools throughout the province. Teachers can also be encouraged by the education authorities of the province to prepare their own materials and audio-visual aids, using local resources, that meet the needs of those being taught in schools. For this purpose, workshops can be organized for teachers to assist them in acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to develop their own resource materials for use in schools.

Encouraging female Teachers

One major problem in female primary education is the shortage as well as un-willingness of female teachers to

serve in schools located in rural areas of the province. It is proposed to introduce special incentives in the shape of hardships allowance at a reasonable rate per month to female teachers for service in primary schools in the remote rural areas. Proper arrangement for their accommodation and security in the remote backward areas should also be made by the government. The philanthropists of the local community should also realize their responsibility in this regard.

Training of Supervisors

One of the main problems in the primary education sector of the province has been the lack of adequate planning, management, supervision and monitoring capability at the lower implementation level. For increasing efficiency and making qualitative changes, it would be necessary to have qualified and trained educational administrators and supervisors at all levels of the system. These administrators and supervisors should have competence in the skills of supervision and evaluation, so that they can be responsive and interactive members of the management team.

In order to improve job related skills of supervisors and administrators working at all levels of the primary education system, organizational development training workshops should be designed and conducted by the Directorate of primary education, N.W.F.P. For increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of primary schools, the head teachers

should also be properly trained in school management, administration, and supervision of classroom instructions.

Introducing alternative methods for teacher Training

Teacher training is essential for improving the quality of primary education in N.W.F.P, which has chosen to employ un-qualified teachers to achieve universal primary enrolment. In order to cater for the training needs of preservice as well as inservice unqualified/untrained teachers, the existing teacher-training capacity needs to be increased and new colleges for elementary teachers opened. Establishing new teacher training colleges and making necessary arrangements for conventional/broad inservice training to improve the quality of teaching force can be expensive, and out of reach for the education department in the province, which is already under-financed. But, alternative methods that can be effective for training the teachers with less cost than conventional methods can be adopted for solution of teacher-training problem. These methods can be:

Distance Education. In some subjects it is possible to provide training which is at least as good as that provided by traditional inservice programs at much less cost through the use of distance education method. This method is not equally effective for all subjects or in all contexts, but it can produce the requisite results in the subject of teacher-training in terms of how much teacher trainees learn, yet cost less. The critical factor in distance

education is not the capital-expensive hardware of radio and television transmitters and receivers. Successful programs can be run using correspondence methods, and broadcasts over unused commercial television channels or radio stations. It is not the technology of transmission that makes these programs effective, but the kind of learning situation that they create. In distance education, learning materials are developed using principles of instructional design, which focus on how people learn, rather than on the subject matter being taught.

The distance education program being implemented through Allama Iqbal Open University in the country (Pakistan) needs to be improved and re-designed for fulfilling the professional needs and requirements of teachers.

Professional Seminars. Inservice training can take place through discussion and conference with fellow teachers, headmaster, learning coordinators, and other visiting supervisors. For this purpose, professional seminars can be arranged by the local education authorities to provide a time for relaxed non-threatening discussion periods, so that teachers are able to express themselves freely.

The most effective part of these professional seminars is that of cooperative or collaborative learning. Teachers get the opportunity to meet and discuss their lessons and difficulties with their counterparts and find out alternatives/solutions to their problems. These meetings/seminars can partially substitute for inservice teacher training.

Peer Coaching. Inservice training can also take place within the school through observing others at work and through consultation with experienced colleagues/peers. Peer coaching can play an effective role in the professional development and training of a beginning teacher if properly planned and carried out in the schools. This involves identification of the problems and difficulties faced by the new/untrained teacher and support provided by an insider/experienced teacher who is assigned the responsibility to train and educate the newcomer.

It is important to provide the new teacher with a mentor who is experienced and able to guide, assist, and support him/her. It is also important for new/beginning teachers to be able to discuss ideas and concerns with peers. As the purpose of peer coaching is to assist, not assess the beginning teachers, so it should take place in a friendly situation and good professional relationship among teachers.

Suggestions for Improvement

The following suggestions are offered for raising the standard and improving the quality of primary education in the province:

1. The lack of schools is one of the most serious problems to enrolling and retaining children in schools. There is a grave need for more and better equipped facilities, particularly in the rural area of the province. In

addition, the existing facilities, often poorly constructed and overcrowded, also require improvement, otherwise the numbers of non-enrolled and dropouts will grow.

2. It is not enough to say that a teaching facility exists within so many kilometers of a village, when in fact to reach that school a child must ford a wide stream or go across a thick forest or high mountain. So, in the hilly and remote backward area of the province, the criteria for establishment of new schools should be relaxed.
3. A detailed school mapping exercise be carried out to determine the needs and proper locations for opening of new primary schools to meet the needs of all children within an easily accessible distance.
4. The existing primary schools for boys should be used for co-education at least upto 3rd grade if the establishment of separate schools for girls does not fall under the existing criteria for opening new schools in certain areas of the province.
5. The analytical capacity of the education system in N.W.F.P is inadequately developed with weak data gathering and research capabilities. As a result the working of the system is poorly monitored and policy decisions tend to be a trial based on unreliable data. A pre-requisite of increasing efficiency is the development and maintenance of a research cell/capacity to

diagnose and analyse the existing system and provide a reliable base for decision making, planning, management, and implementation.

6. In order to make the school environment healthy and attractive for children, physical activities e.g. sports, athletics, games, skipping, etc; should be included in the primary school curriculum. Children of the primary school age group (5-9 years) like to be involved in physical activities.
7. To overcome the shortage of female teachers in the rural areas of the province, the prescribed qualification for appointment of female teachers belonging to that area need to be relaxed. If possible, financial aid for meeting the private cost of their education may also be provided to encourage and motivate them for acquiring higher education.
8. The existing criteria for teacher - pupil ratio of one teacher for forty students (1 : 40) should be changed into a ratio of one teacher for twenty five students (1 : 25), so that proper individual attention can be given to each and every student by the teacher for effective learning.
9. The salary structure and service conditions of primary teachers should be improved. They join the service as primary teacher and retire as primary teacher. No opportunity for promotion to higher posts is given to them. In order to make teaching profession attractive,

a reasonable quota in the existing posts of learning coordinators be determined for promotion of primary school teachers on the virtue of seniority, so that they may have a chance of vertical promotion like clerks, patwaries, stenotypists, etc: in other departments.

10. A strong motivational campaign should be launched to convince parents to send their children, particularly girls, to schools.

Suggestion for further Research

Similar research studies should be conducted at each district and sub-divisional level to see whether the quality of primary education there is upto the standard or below the standard. The conditions prevailing in the girls schools be compared with those of boys schools. The facilities available in public (private) schools should be studied and compared with those of government schools. Similarly, the English medium schools be compared with Urdu medium schools. Such comparative studies will help in improving the efficiency and quality of primary education and removing the disparities and discrepancies, if any.

It is hoped that this study will persuade the authorities and public of North West Frontier Province to pay more attention to the educational needs of small children. Thus it may contribute, in a humble way, towards improvement in the quality of primary education in the province.

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