

Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21



FINANCE DIVISION
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

consultative and capacity building workshops, awareness sessions and top-up trainings engaging a total of 1,149 participants from HEIs during FY2021.

NAHE will work to collate and establish regional hubs of excellence with institutional partners across Pakistan, develop research policy frameworks that could lead to excellence in teaching and learning for faculty, staff and higher education progress and provide support to HEIs.

Planning & Development of Higher Education

To achieve the goals / targets of higher education mainly with respect to low & inequitable participation in higher education, improved quality of teaching & research and increase in capacity building of faculty, the HEC every year prioritize the projects / programmes which are to be funded through PSDP.

In FY2021, the government has allocated Rs 29.5 billion to HEC for implementation of 144 development projects (113 ongoing & 31 new approved projects) of Public Sector universities/HEIs. During July-March, FY2021 an amount of Rs 22.5 billion (76 percent of the total allocation) has been authorized to HEC for meeting expenditure against development projects.

Annual Status of Education Report, 2021, Measuring the Impact of COVID-19 on Education in Pakistan

Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2021, is the largest citizen-led household-based learning survey mostly in all rural and selected urban areas. It is led by the Idara-e-Taleemo-Aagahi (ITA) in collaboration with other stakeholders.

After unprecedented periods of school closures in 2020 and early 2021, ASER conducted a research study with the aim to measure the impact of COVID-19 on Education in Pakistan. The survey sample comprised of 12 rural districts (4 in Punjab, 4 in Sindh & 4 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa). The reporting includes a total of 7,176 households, 18,838 children aged 3-16 years and out of these, 16,058 children aged 5-16 years (41% girls and 59% boys) were assessed for language and arithmetic competencies from 345 government and 184 private schools.

Box-II: Summary of Key Findings & Comparison between ASER 2019 and 2021. Enrolment (National Rural)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2019, 86% of 6-16-year-old children in these 12 rural districts were enrolled in schools (14% out-of-school children). Amongst the enrolled, 67% were in government schools and 33% were enrolled in non-state institutions (private schools & madrasa). ▶ Pre-school enrolment (3-5 years) in 2019 recorded at 40%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ In 2021, 84% of 6-16-year-old children were enrolled in schools, while 16% were out-of-school (6% are drop-outs). Among 6% who dropped out, 20% reported that they dropped out during COVID-19 due to financial hardships. Amongst the enrolled, 79% were enrolled in government institutes and 21% were enrolled in non-state institutions (private schools & madrasa). ▶ Pre-school enrolment (3-5 years) in 2021 stood at 35%.

<p>Conclusion: Enrolment has dropped slightly for age group 6 to 16, but more significantly for age-group 3 to 5. COVID-19 drove many households into financial hardships leading to an increase in dropouts. Moreover, a higher percentage of girls were found to be dropped out compared to boys.</p>	
<p>Quality of Learning (National Rural)</p>	
<p>In 2019,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percentage of class 3 students able to read class 2 level story in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto: 20 ▶ Percentage of class 5 students able to read class 2 level story in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto: 58 ▶ Percentage of Class 3 students able to do 2-digit division: 22 ▶ Percentage of Class 5 students able to do 2-digit division: 47 ▶ Percentage of Class 3 students able to read Class 2 level English sentences: 23 ▶ Percentage of Class 5 students able to read Class 2 level English sentences: 49 	<p>In 2021,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Percentage of Class 3 students able to read Class 2 level story in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto: 19 ▶ Percentage of Class 5 students able to read Class 2 level story in Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto: 56 ▶ Percentage of Class 3 students able to do 2-digit division: 12 ▶ Percentage of Class 5 students able to do 2-digit division: 44 ▶ Percentage of Class 3 students able to read Class 2 level English sentences: 23 ▶ Percentage of Class 5 students able to read Class 2 level English sentences: 48
<p>Conclusion: Learning losses for children of class 3 are higher compared to children of class 5. Subject-wise losses are more severe for arithmetic.</p>	
<p>Learning and Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ About 52% of the surveyed children were not able to give proper time (at least one hour a day) to their studies during schools' closure periods. ▶ Of those who were able to give time to their studies, one-third reported that they had faced difficulty while studying Mathematics, Science and English on their own. ▶ About 50% students reported that they lacked confidence to study on their own during schools' closure. ▶ PTV's Tele-School & Home Support: About 27% students reported that they took some learning support from PTV's Tele-School programmes. Another 47% and 13% reported that they took family members' and paid tuitions' support/help to continue learning during COVID-19. ▶ Technology Support: About 27% students reported that they relied on TV for learning, another 16% used smart phones for continuing their learning. Average reported number of hours that children had access to household technology (computer/laptop/smartphone) for learning was 1 hour. 	
<p>Conclusion: It is observable that government, school and family resources remained modest for children to continue learning during COVID-19; however, a beginning for innovative distance learning and home support has been made for almost 30% and 54% of the students, respectively.</p>	
<p>School Facilities</p>	
<p>In 2019,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teacher attendance in government schools was 88% compared to 85% in private schools. ▶ 86% of the government schools had toilets, compared to 96% in private schools. ▶ Drinking water facility was available in 86% and 98% in government and private schools respectively. ▶ 18% government and 20% private schools had a functional computer lab. 	<p>In 2021,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teacher attendance in government schools recorded at 75%, compared to 72% in private schools. ▶ 77% of the surveyed government schools had toilets. Similarly, 95% surveyed private primary schools have toilet facilities. ▶ Drinking water facility is available in 68% and 81% in government and private schools, respectively. ▶ 14% government and 27% private schools have a functional computer lab.

<p>Conclusion: There is a disparity among available facilities in government and private schools and technology access remains limited. It is also of concern that compared to 2019, government schools have not maintained trends in making basic facilities available for children.</p>
<p>Schools' SOPs & Preparation to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Alternate Day Schooling: Only 38% of the surveyed government and 55% private schools reported that they are practicing alternate day schooling. ▶ COVID-19 SOPs Posters: 70% of the government and 81% of the surveyed private schools reported that they have COVID-19 SOPs awareness posters on the school walls. ▶ Mask Wearing Practices: 70% of the government and 87% of the private schools reported that they ensure that students and teachers wear masks while in school. ▶ Temperature Check at Entrance: Only 46% of the government schools and 55% of the private schools reported that they ensure temperature check at school entrance. ▶ Social Distancing in Classrooms: 61% of the government schools and 56% of the private schools reported that students are seated at least 3 feet distance. ▶ Isolation Rooms Availability: Only 28% of the government schools and 46% of the private schools reported to have designated a separate room as isolation/quarantine room to isolate a suspected student of COVID-19 case.
<p>Conclusion: Lack of strict enforcement of COVID-19 SOPs in schools (more government) demands urgent government and decision makers' attention at the highest level; there is an urgency to improve non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs) and hold emergency preparedness drills for behavior change.</p>

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only created a health crisis in the country but also adversely affected other sectors including education sector. In order to mitigate the learning losses of students during the closure of educational institutes, the government has launched initiatives like Tele School and Radio School to provide distance learning and addressed provision of education to the children of far flung and remote areas during the pandemic.

Pakistan's literacy and enrolment have been improving over the last couple of years. The present government is focusing to improve both the quality and coverage of education through effective policy interventions and enhancing allocation of resources, but the required reforms in education sector cannot be achieved without active participation of private sector.