Article:	**Understanding the Context of Education in an Urban Slum: A Case of Babu Sabu Lahore**	
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Understanding the Context of Education in an Urban Slum: A Case Study of Babu Sabu, Lahore

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Abstract

Article 25 A of the Constitution of Pakistan stipulates that free and compulsory education must be given to all children between the ages of 5 and 16. However, there are gaps in its implementation leaving out pockets such as children in slums. Non-government organizations (NGOs) play an essential part in bridging the said gaps. This study explored the context of education in a slum area located atBabuSabu Interchange, Lahore where an NGO PAHCHAAN (Protection and Help of Children against Abuse and Neglect)is providing non-formal education to children via community engagement. The current study explored the context of education in a slum where intervention is already implemented through/usingthe case study method. A survey from all the households in this area (*N*=26) and a focus group discussion from six mothers were conducted. The results showed a positive attitude of the mothers towards the education of their children, as 65.4% of the participants strongly agreed that it is essential to get children enrolled in schools. The findings from the focus group discussion highlighted several challenges such as the lack of financial resources, distance of school from the slum area, lack of acceptance of over-aged children and a difficult admission procedure. Bullying and cursing were, however, the leading cause of dropping out of regular schools. This preliminary study highlights the importance of taking a strategic approach towards "education for all," looking at deep-rooted issues so that no child is left behind.

Keywords: education challenges, children, education, slums

Introduction

Families migrate from rural settings to urban areas, yearning for a better lifestyle and opportunities. Continued population growth, poverty, and urbanization leads to large urban settlements with inadequate resources, called slums (Bhattacharya et al., 2012; Fink et al., 2014). Like many other developing countries, Pakistan is facing a rapid increase in urbanization, migration of people from rural areas to big cities resulting in the uncontrolled proliferation of slums (katchiabadis) (Rehman

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et al., 2014). The urban population of Pakistan has drastically increased from an estimated 107 million people to 115 million people. Alternately, the rural population of Pakistan has dropped from 63.4 million to 61.2 million (Rehman et al., 2018). Two primary arguments can be given for the way slum dwellers are perceived. They can be addressed through policies and services. One argument holds that for migrants, slum living is only a transitory phase in their life, and second that for some families, this transitory phase never ends, and they are trapped in this phase for generations (Marx et al., 2013).

Following the first argument, looking at slum dwellers as temporary migrants, little importance is given to improving the infrastructure of the slums or providing services to them (UN Millennium Project, 2005), misrepresenting slums as a policy trap and hence resulting in a poverty trap (Marx et al., 2013). Lucci et al. (2018) has drawn attention that focuses on the shift from rural poverty to urban poverty, as 30% of the developing countries' urban population lives in slums making it an even more important case in this regard.

Context of Education in Pakistan

The literacy rate of Pakistan has been staggering over the past years. The Economic Survey of Pakistan reported that the literacy rate had declined from 60% in 2014 to 58% in 2018 (Rehman et al., 2015). Pakistan has signed and ratified the United Nations Convention for the Rights of Children; however, education has not become a prime priority of any previous or present government. With that, the state is responsible for ensuring the right to education for every child, regardless of race, religion, economic background (United Nations, 2012). Moving towards Education for All commitment (EFA), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Pakistan still has a long way to go in achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) and its commitments in ensuring quality education for all.

According to Article 25 A of Pakistan's constitution, education must be free and compulsory for every child from age 5-16. However, in Pakistan, the education sector's budget allocation and education spending are the lowest in South Asia. Only around 2.3% of Pakistan's GDP was spent on education during 2019-2020. Out of which 89% of the finances are spent on expenditures such as teachers' salaries, only 11% is left for development, resulting in less room for educational innovation and progress (Institute of Social and Policy Science, 2014).

Further, issues associated with it include: a) lack of proper planning in implementation of the law; b) social constraints due to social and cultural barriers

of people for education; c) gender gap; d) cost of education; e) war on terror; f) unavailability of funds for education and development and g) lack of attention given to technical education (Hussain, 2015). Provision of basic life skills and a complete disregard of vocational training and education makes parents strive for formal trainingeven less (Hussain, 2015). Pakistan has the second-highest population of out-of-school children (OOSC), after Nigeria (UNESCO, 2012). In Pakistan, there are an estimated 3,300,032 million out-of-schoolgirls and 2,311,760 out-of-school boys comprising around 33% and 21% of female and male primary age children, respectively (Mundy & Verger, 2015).

Education Challenges in Slums

In developing countries, some groups lack the power that is systematically excluded or held back. These groups, including migrants and slum dwellers, are not sometimes given equal, equitable, and quality education or opportunities (Cameron, 2011).

As Baker (2007) points out, this underdevelopment may be due to the inability of various stakeholders including government, NGOs, and donors, to recognize slums as legal lands. With the constant threat of eviction, agencies and NGOs refrain from investing in school buildings and other infrastructures and avoid providing services there. Service providers, including teachers employed locally, are also under the constant threat of eviction as they also have to move (Rashid & Hossain, 2005). Government and NGOs can improve the condition of these slums by giving them recognition, moving towards a policy shift, and providing them with requisteservices (Cameron, 2011). Provision of services such as education would also increase the likelihood of upward mobility. Mitra and Tsujita (2016) found that in slums, insufficient education decreases the likelihood of upward mobility while education above the threshold increases it. Saving has also been shown to be another aspect of upward mobility in the longitudinal study in the Delhi slum. Like every human being, people, especially youth,have aspirations. It was seen that in the slums of Nairobi, young people tried to reach their aspirations via education, delinquency, residential mobility, and religion (Kabiru et al., 2013). Hence, this indicates that education was an aspect that was recognized to fulfill the aspirations and lead to upward mobility in slums.

However, a dilemma that emerges is how much the household is willing to spend on education and how long. While in India, it is seen that a chunk of children from slums study in private schools, including NGO-run schools and those schools that are run by religious, charitable trusts (Tsujita, 2013). In order to move up the status, would the households economic incentives drive them to spend on

education, which could be seen as a gamble for the future of these children, or would the households seek survival by withdrawing children to work or learn a trade through apprenticeship first (Cameron, 2011).

Tsujita, in his report (2010), mentioned several reasons which led to late admissions, never attending school, and dropouts in children from slum areas in India. The main reasons for late admission included the non-existence of a proper birth certificate or affidavit for birth. These documents are needed atthe time of admission, and not providing them results in delay or non-admission. Parents' unawareness, unavailability, or inability to apply at the time when the school admission is open, resulted in late admissions. For children who dropped out of school, the reasons included illness (which areprevalent considering the slum environment), disinterest in studies, the child is engaged in paid work, and the unavailability of schools such as primary and middle schools in some areas. For children to never attend school, the main reasons included financial constraint, the child being underage, parents' negative perception of education, parents understanding the age of school admission and process, and how "Education is not considered as necessary" at the national level.

Later, Tsujita (2013) added to these factors, looking at empirical data from slums across India. He wrote about several factors that determine the barriers to education in slum children. These ranged from minor solvable issues, which would result in children being out of school to community-related issues and misperceptions. Building upon his report, Tsujita added that a significant chunk of children attending school have crossed the basic age. This lack in school attendance may be attributed to the repetition of class and late admission. Only a tiny percentage of children who cannot attend school or have dropped out are involved in paid work, challenging the existing myth that children do not go to school as they have to work. However, peer groups have a strong influence on these children. It was observed that boys are more vulnerable to their peers' bad habits and behaviors, and many boys roamed around in groups aimlessly, all day, including during school hours. He emphasized that financial constraints were the primary reason children either dropped out of school or never attended school. While in slums, children who belonged to relatively better households were less likely to drop out of school and spend more time in education. Other factors, include parent's financial situation and educational level,both increase the child's schooling.

For children studying in schools, parental motivation and household per capita income also drive the child's schooling and grades.   The father's education level has shown a positive effect on attendance and grade attainment for attendance. Even

though most of the research talks about mothers' education status, Tsujita argued that maybe as mothers did not have a decisive say in education matters, no significant positive effect was seen. Alternatively, in Bangladesh, some information suggests that parental education levelalong with household wealth were the main determinants of access to primary education (Kabeer & Mahmud, 2009; Cameron, 2011).

The significant factors that influence a child in slum's education can be categorized in a) child-level factors, which would include child gender, age, cognitive skills, nutritional and health status, and peer influence b) household factors which would include household size, parental education, household income and assets and religion (looking at particularly disadvantaged groups), c) School factors school distance, quality instruction, cost incurred by household in keeping their children in school, parental perception of the school quality and d) community factors which include the general attitudes of the community regarding education and lifestyle. It is essential to understand an interplay of all these contextual factors; individual, household, school, and community, as education cannot be understood in isolation. Only then there will be a better understanding of why children have been left behind (Abuya et al., 2013)

Purpose of the Study

Despite the existing challenges, interventions by government or non-government actors may be helpful to push for education. This study explores the context of education in an Urban Slum located near BabuSabu Interchange, Lahore, where PAHCHAAN (Protection and Help of Children Against Abuse And Neglect), a nonprofit NGO, has been working.

Within the slum area, PAHCHAAN has a small tent, PAHCHAAN Basti Learning Center, where children have a class daily and are given basic literacy and numeracy, hygiene, religion, and moral development. This center is a part of the project "BachayParhayLikhayAchay" (BPLA). The slum community is sensitized about social issues like child labor, child marriage (which is very dominant in this particular slum), and education's importance. Once the parents and the child are ready, the child is enrolled in a nearby regular school. The learning center then facilitates as a tuition center to minimize dropout rates and encourages other children to be mainstreamed. Recently some mothers have also started studying at the center, stepping forward as much more empowered.

Theoretical Framework

To look at the educational context in the study area of a slum located in BabuSabu Lahore, we use Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework. This

framework looks at development as a consequence of the child's interactions with his/her ecological system. These interactions fall under micro-system, mesosystem, exo-system, and macro-system.

In this study, the micro-system includes the child's interaction with his immediate environment; his/her parents, household, neighbors, schoolteacher, and peer group will be focused. Meso-system, referring to the interaction of the child's immediate environment with each other, will be analyzed through the interaction between family, community, PAHCHAAN learning center, and nearby schools and how the factors mentioned above interplay with each other. Exo-system refers to how settings influence the child's development, he/she has no direct link with it, but the influence may trickle down, affecting the child. Macro-system refers to the subcultures and beliefs which impact the child's development.

This study aims to understand the context of education in BabuSabuBasti, where intervention was already implied. It was achieved by investigating a) opportunities and challenges of gaining an education in the urban slum in light of Bronferbrenner ([1979](#)) Ecological Theory and factors affecting children, b) difference in lifestyle during the time PAHCHAAN has been working in the slum c) the perceptions of parents and community towards education in general.

Methods

Research Design

The case study method was used for the current study. One slum area near BabuSabu Interchange, Lahore, was selected where PAHCHAAN has been providing education. Near BabuSabu, there are more than 15 small slum areas, each inhabiting 20-50 households. The dynamics and lifestyles of these slums vary according to the profession and religion of the slum inhabitants, whether they are gypsies following nomadic lifestyles and the available amenities of life.

Participants

This slum area consisted of 26 households; for household surveys, mothers from each household participated. Among these 26 female participants, 6 participants whose children have been going to PAHCHAAN education centers and who agreed to be part of the focus group to explore their perceptions of the children's education and challenges that come along the way. According to the demographic information about mothers, 21 out of 26 (80.8 %.) were illiterate, unable to read or write with no formal education. 2 females/mothers (7.7 %) have basic literacy, knew how to write their names. Three females/mothers (11.5%) have attended formal education of primary level whereas 24 males/fathers (92.3%) were

illiterate, unable to read or write with no formal education. One male/ father (11.5%) has attended formal education of primary level, and one father (11.5%) had attended secondary education. The household composition varies across the slum area. Two households had no children, with only the couple living in the slum community, and three households (13%) have one child. Five households (21.7%) had four children making six household members, and five households (21.7%) have five children making seven household members, including both the parents. There werethree households (13%) with seven children, with nine members altogether. All households lived in a nuclear family system, with only parents living with their children under one roof; however, they had been residingnear their relatives. Twenty-four (92.3%) of the participants reported that they seek social support from their family in emergencies; moreover, 24 (92.3%) of the participants sought financial support as well. The rest of the 3 participants reported seeking financial and social support from their neighbors in times of emergency.

Instrumentation

The data was collected through a questionnaire designed to explore the community's perceptions about education and the protection of their children. It consisted of 16 statements, and responses were rated on a four-point Likert Scale. Options ranged from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree.' The initial pool of items was generated by reviewing the available literature. After this step, items were presented to three experts and were finalized after consensus.

The second step of data collection included focus group discussions with the mothers. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed with expert opinion for in-depth exploration of the barriers and challenges to children's education and protection. The protocol comprised lead questions exploring why children were not sent to the nearest public school, drop out of children from regular school, and slum culture regarding education. They were also asked to give feedback about PAHCHAAN Basti Learning Center. The protocol was developed in Urdu and executed in Punjabi.

Data Collection

As this study was conducted as a part of a module offered, initial planning was done with the course supervisor looking at the methodology, ethics, and objectives. A survey and semi-structured focus group discussion guide were developed after consultation with the Child Rights Department's research team, the University of Lahore, and PAHCHAAN.

On reaching the slum, community members gathered in one place and were given an orientation of the research and the team. They were asked if they would be comfortable being a part of this study to answer the team members' questions but feel free not to answer questions they felt uncomfortable with. Consent for being filmed/photographed was also taken.

Data was collected in two stages. At the first stage, the survey was conducted, the research team approached each household's mothers and asked structured questions. The second stage included focus group discussion to explore in-depth perceptions and challenges in their children's education. The researcher and a team member fluent in Punjabi asked questions, and the FDG was filmed and recorded. Data was then entered and analyzed.

Data Analysis

Data from the survey was entered in the SPSS version 21, and descriptive statistics were calculated in frequency and percentage. For focus group discussion, conversation verbatim was transcribed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the responses. After initial coding from a research team member, another member reviewed the same transcript to explore if any concept was overlooked. After this step, focused coding was done by the team members, and a final list of codes was prepared. The researchers then merged these codes to create categories and eventually into themes.

Results

Findings from survey and focus group discussion with mothers reflected themes on their perception of their children's education, experience with PAHCHAAN education center, the impact of education on their children, challenges and barriers that come in the process.

Perceptions of the Participants on Education of the Children

Results indicate that more than half (57.7%) of the participants believed that education could shape their children's personalities. Findings reflect the importance of getting both genders' education according to the participants, as 65.4% strongly agreed that it is essential to get children enrolled in schools. Similarly, 34.6% strongly disagreed, and 38.5% disagreed that female children should work at home instead of getting an education. Most participants strongly agreed (30.8%) and agreed (30.8%) that children are safe as far as they are with acquaintances. The majority of the participants reflected (50.0% strongly agreed and 19.2% agreed) that child labor is unacceptable regardless of the nature and hours of the work (see Table 1).

Table 1

Frequency and percentage of the respondents regarding their perceptions on education and protection of the children (N=26)

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n(%)
Education can shape my child's personality	3(11.5)	-	8(30.8)	15(57.7%)
Education is equally important for boys and girls	3(11.5)	1(3.8)	11(42.3)	11(42.3)
It does not matter if girls are not getting the education	10(38.5)	14(53.8)	-	2(7.7)
It is very essential to enroll children in school	4(15.4)	-	5(19.2)	17(65.4)
It is better if a child can earn some money by learning skills than getting an education.	12(46.2)	6(23.1)	5(19.2)	3(11.5)
It is more important to work at the home instead of enrolling a female child into a school	9(34.6)	10(38.5)	4(15.4)	3(11.5)
My child is safe as far as he is with anyone among our acquaintances	5(19.2)	5(19.2)	8(30.8)	8(30.8)
It is okay to leave the child at home if parents have to do important tasks	8(30.8)	5(19.2)	4(15.4)	9(34.6)
There is no harm in hitting children when they do something wrong.	4(15.4)	8(30.8)	8(30.8)	6(23.1)
In an Islamic country like Pakistan, sexual abuse in children is rare.	7(26.9)	6(23.1)	7(26.9)	6(23.1)
If my child does not obey me, I hit him to make him obedient.	4(15.4)	12(46.2)	7(26.9)	3(11.5)

Children should be involved while making decisions about themselves.	9(34.6)	8(30.8)	4(15.4)	5(19.2)
Parents should talk to their children about school activities daily.	7(26.9)	7(26.9)	6(23.1)	6(23.1)
A child with disabilities should be taught only at home.	10(38.5)	6(23.1)	7(26.9)	3(11.5)
I will prefer to spend money on my children without disabilities rather than on children with disabilities.	10(38.5)	12(46.2)	1(3.8)	3(11.5)
Child Labor is unacceptable regardless of the nature and hours of work.	3(11.5)	5(19.2)	5(19.2)	13(50.0)

Findings reflected that they were pleased that their children were getting an education in the PAHCHAAN learning center within the vicinity of the slum. As one of the mothers reported:

"Bhtachalgtahaai k bachyqareeb he school main jatayhain, or perhaekertyhaain is syphly school qareebnahonykiwaja se kahinnahijaty thy"(It feels so good to see children going to nearby school as before this, they couldn't go anywhere to study because there wasn't such place).

Challenges in Slums regarding Education of the Children

When asked why they had not thought about sending their children to school before PAHCHAAN intervened, they answered that no one in their community had been properly educated. No one had guided them about the advantages of education. With poverty being acritical barrier, they had thought education was unaffordable and impossible, and they were also unaware of school procedures for admission of the child. As one of the respondents reported:

"Hamnekabhinahisocha, ham ghareeb log haaikahansy fees laaty or qareebkoe school bhemaujoodnahitha"(We haven't thought about sending our children to school before, because there was not any school in the vicinity and we couldn't bear the expenses). Another mother stated:*"Kitabonkakharchauthanabhtmushkilhai hum logo keliyephir school aanejaanekamasla, islyebachonko door kisi school*

main dakhilkarnekasocha hi nahi" (It is tough for us to afford the expenses of buying books; moreover it was complicated to pick and drop the child from a school which is not near to the house, that's why we never thought of sending the child to the school before.

Data revealed several challenges that come up when it comes to the education of young girls.The main barriers identified in educating girls included early marriage,the responsibility of their younger siblings, and house chores. Young girls were not allowed to attend school if it was outside the slum area.

Perceived Impact of Education on Children Living in Slums

Participants reported that going to school has made an impact on their children in many ways. They reflected that it had helped their lifestyle, making them more hygiene conscious, more aware of the outside world, and the children fighting less and using more appropriate language for communication. As one of the participants reported:

"Bhtachaperhrahehainwazihaferqperahai, safaesuthraekaabdhyanrakhtehain or padhnekashoq ho gayahai"(Our kids show clear differences in their behavior and routine since they have started attending the school, they listen to us, maintain hygiene and are eager to learn).

Issues related to Public Schools in the Nearby Areas of Slum

Participants reported that there were several reasons why they did not admit their child to any public school. Most of the parents reported that it is very far away, and their children cannot cross the busy main road without accompanying adults. Secondly, they have heard that government schools have a highly complex admission process that they could not understand. Moreover, most of the children were over-aged for the criteria of their class level.

Findings show that a few children have been mainstreamed in the government school by PAHCHAAN Learning Center, but they dropped out of the school after some time. When inquired by their mothers about this, they reported that teachers use physical punishments, and the overall environment is not very welcoming to their children. One mother reported: *teacher bht sakht haai or bacho ko marti hai, hamary bachon ko wehan doosry bachy"Jhuggi walay " bulaty haain jiski weja sy hamarey bachy nae jana chahte school* (Teacher was rigorous and used to beat children; moreover, their peers call our children slum residents, due to which our children did not want to go to school).

Discussion

With international obligations, national legislations and frameworks, every child has the right to free and compulsory education. However, there are gaps in the implementation of these laws, missing out pockets of society.Around one-third of the world's population and more than 60% of the urban populationresides in slums in the least developed countries, comprising of millions of children (Unger, 2013). This study looked at a particular slum area where an educational intervention took place by a non-governmental organization by providing a learning center for the children residing in this area.

The current study suggests that overall, parents understand the need to get education for their children. These findings are consistent with Abuya et al. (2018) reporting positive attitudes of parents in the slums regarding children's education. Similarly, Oketch et al. (2012) also reported that parents in the slums have high aspirations for their children's education. They want them to achieve higher levels of education than their own.The current study's findings revealed that mothers reported a positive impact of attending a learning center on their children's behavior resulting in interest in learning and improved hygiene. Similar findings were reported by Cho (2020) in a case study on Urban slum education in Jakarta.

The case study reflected the positive attitude of an educational intervention by a local NGO on children's eating and hygiene habits living in slums, looking at individual factors. Even though most parents said they believed in gender equality in terms of education, in actuality being a girl puts the child at a higher chance for low attendance due to taking care of siblings and household, drop out due to early marriage or never being able to attend a regular school due to social taboos. The age of the child matters in terms of their admission into a regular school. Even though some parents wanted their children to be mainstreamed, the child was over-aged for admission. The interplay of gender and age for girls resulted in a higher chance of never attending regular school. This finding is consistent with the findings of a previous study conducted to explore the low motivation for sending girl childtothe slums of Karachi. Sultana (2019) reported that due to the low socioeconomic status of the parents in slums, it is not the priority of the parents to send them to school; instead, they prefer to send them for labor.

More than two years of having an educational setup within their slum area, regular meetings, and constant encouragement/support to mainstream children into a regular school, around half of the children had dropped out of regular school when enrolled due to early marriage, and household and other reasons. The others were not mainstreamed either due to the parents' disinterest or reluctance to the

complicated admission procedure of schools or schools' unwillingness to take children due to over-age. The barriers to education are like those seen in slum areas in developing countries, as Tsujita (2013) has reported in his study. Similarly, Cho (2020) reported street chores, household work, and lack of birth certificates as significant challenges in children's education living in the slum area.

However, a critical factor that has emerged, associated with dropout, involves bullying and abusing these children. For inclusion, access and equal opportunity are essential. Moreover, much work needs to be done to improve the communities' attitudes, which teaches children to bully and discriminate. Cornell et al. (2013) reported similar findings that bullying leads to an increased dropout rate.

The community plays an active part in shaping a child. In slums, which are tight-knit, with neighbors and family members being an important social support system, general attitudes affect the decision made by elders for all the children in the community. Kielland (2015) suggested developing flexible and low-cost models to minimize the dropout ratio of slum children from mainstream education. These models should be designed according to the needs of the slum community as these should accommodate flexible patterns of attending school and focus on the provison of basic skills and vocational training.

As seen from this study, poverty was not the only reason why children had not been educated. It is an interplay of all these factors which make it challenging for these children to get their basic right to education. While Article 25 A states that every child should be given free and compulsory education, looking at this slum seems like a farfetched notion, with little implementation and focus on the deep-rooted barriers within the individuals, communities, schools, and the society at large. For the inclusion of studentsfrom the slums, gypsy communities, and refugees, extra effort is needed at every level. Policies and strategies need to be made such that all factors play an integral part in directing the child to be given quality education. With the rise of the urban population resulting in more urban slums, interventions need to be done to ensure that children are not deprived of their right to get an education. Moreover, mechanisms for awareness and sensitization are needed in the surrounding community to increase acceptance for the slum community.

Conclusion, Recommendations, and Implications

The current study highlighted parents' perceptions and perspectives in one slum about the education of their children. Perceptions on protection issues were also explored. Findings reflected that parents realized the need to get an education for

their children, although sometimes it becomes challenging for them to provide better opportunities. Several challenges such as lack of awareness and opportunities, complicated enrollment procedures, bullying in schools, and lack of cooperation from the school administration contribute to low literacy rates in these areas. However, this is a preliminary study looking at one slum, of one area in a major city of Lahore, with a small sample of 26 households.

The current study has several implications as it is estimated that the global population will increase by 2 billion by 2030. Most of this will be due to urban settlements in the developing world (Bhattacharya et al., 2012). Like many other developing countries, Pakistan faces a rapid increase in urbanization, migration of people from rural areas to big cities resulting in the uncontrolled proliferation of slums (katchiabadis) (Rehman et al., 2014).

Even though article 25 A states that the state should provide free compulsory education, social factors such as poverty, parental illiteracy, and general perception about education usability have become barriers to retaining children in school. Furthermore, parental perception and attitudes towards safety and security, modesty, mobility, early marriages, and their daughters' protection limit their will and interest in sending their daughters, resulting in a much lower female literacy rate.

There is a lack of adequate planning and strategy, primarily regarding financial management in Pakistan, andmost of the work done is project-based, looking at short-term outcomes and overlooking long-term strategies (Hussain, 2015). Policy needs to address access, equity, equal opportunity, and Education for All (EFA). Even though Free Primary Education (FPE) is assumed to be a "magic bullet," elimination of fees is not a determinant of universal access to education (Abuya et al., 2013). Hence, in Pakistan, free education in public schools still has gaps leaving behind pockets. More research needs to be conducted looking at neglected parts of society. While it is evident from this study, a change in attitude takes much time. Not many projects (NGO or government) focus on the long term, step by step strategies and are typically designed as a short-term fix. A strategic approach towards "Education for All" is vital, inclusive of slum children, also called by some as "jhugi-walas", so that "no child is left behind."

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