



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**USA Cooperation for Education Sector in Pakistan after 9/11: An Analysis**

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**ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to assess different ways of cooperation of the USA in improvement of education in Pakistan in the wake of War on Terror and deals with the reflection that following 9/11 that the lack of education and the inadequacy of the opportunities in Pakistan contributed significantly to the development of extremism and its associated ideologies which fueled the terrorism and sectarian tension in the society of Pakistan and stifled the growth of country's economy. Following the historical method the data has been collected for this paper from different archival sources that lead to the findings of research. While assessing different modes of cooperation it is exposed that the boost of American cooperation established new links of USA-Pakistan relations in people to people contacts and social sectors. It developed the education sector and enhanced the social acceptance for the USA in Pakistan. The paper recommends that international cooperation in the field of education should be enhanced so that it may be helpful in durable peace and stability. Mutual cooperation in education is guarantee of decrease in violent resorts for the ends of political controls.

**Introduction**

In the wake of War on Terror after 9/11 the USA decided to invest majorly in the human development in Pakistan. It was in the national interest of the USA to build its better image in the hearts of the Pakistan people. It was viewed that *madrassas* in Pakistan had contributed for the militancy since many decades. The USA reflected that the public education system in Pakistan suffered a lot and was neglected and being politicized over the last 3 decades. The literacy rate in Pakistan over the age of 15 years was only 43.5 %, where such rate in India was 61 %. The rate

of literacy of the women in Pakistan was abysmal, which was about to 32%. The world bank, as well the other donor agencies spent billions of dollars to curtail the situation of illiteracy on its 'Social Action Plan' during the phase between 1980's to 1990's. In spite of investing the billion dollars on education programs, it failed to achieve its targets. The other reason was seen of the inefficiency of educational bureaucracy of Pakistan. It was realized by the international donor institutions, especially the USA government, to make necessary reforms in the education system of Pakistan (Curtis, & L., A. 2007).

### **Assistance for Education**

The educational reforms were launched in the Education Sector Reforms Assistance (ESRA) in January, 2002. In 2003, USA started a program to construct and furnish the 65 primary to high schools in the 5 agencies of FATA, Pakistan. USAID grants provided the funds for the need based scholarships of higher learning along with the grants of the Fulbright scholarships to the post graduate programs at USA. The student's patents and teacher associated was also formed with the help and support of the USAID program (Ministry of Education Government of Pakistan, 2004).

In 2003, government of the Pakistan and the USA signed an agreement for comprehensive program of science and technology cooperation which worked under the framework for increasing the cooperation in the science, technology, engineering and education for the benefit of mutual and peaceful purposes, between the communities of the both countries for seeking education (HEC, 2017).

The USA assistance for the primary education and for the literacy in Pakistan was doubled, from \$28 million to \$66 million during the fiscal years of 2004 to 2005. The primary schools, which were devastated in the year of 2005, by earthquake, have also been reconstructed with the help and assistance of the USA, in the Azad Jammu and Kashmir. (Wilder, 2008) (Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 110th Congress, 2007)

In the year of 2005, the USAID joined the Pakistan's Ministry of Science and the Technology with the collaboration of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of the Pakistan, for supporting the joint efforts of the USA-Pakistan's programs of the science and technology (HEC, 2017).

In 2007, the emergency supplementary budget, of the USA also requested for the aid of \$110 million for the development of the FATA, including educational sector (Zaidi, 2011). The USA department of the state joined the USAID for co-sponsoring the USAID program started in 2008. This program was implemented by the USA National Academy of Science (NAS), with the affiliation of the HEC of Pakistan. It intended to increase and strengthen the breadth for the cooperation and linkages of Pakistani scientists with their counterpart USA's scientists and the USA based scientifically and technologically advanced institutions (PASTIC, 2015).

In the fiscal year of 2008, the State Department requested to include \$52 million for the programs of general education in addition to the \$50 million for the reconstruction of the schools and the health centers, which were greatly affected in the earthquake in Pakistan. (2008). The USA and Pakistan shared interests of pursuing the objective of educated population to be entered in the workforce. To achieve this target, USAID launched a program of Pakistan Reading Project, which designed to improve of reading level up to 3.2 million children across Pakistan (Sheikh, 2013).

### **U.S. Educational support for Females in Pakistan**

USA provided more than 6,000 scholarships for the young talented women and girls who had received the higher education, since 2010 in Pakistan. USA also provided the health services to more than 9.8 million women and children. The USA also built and reconstructed more than 600 schools, which served approximately the 86,000 children across Pakistan. In addition to this, the USA also constructed 16 educational facilities and teachers training centers throughout Pakistan. She had helped to reach about 578,000 girls for the purpose of their education. More than 12,000 females education has been trained through such support. More than 9,000 women entered directly to the job market since 2012. USA facilitated more than 513,000 women by entering their identity in the data base of NADRA. USA provided health and legal facilities to the women of Pakistan. She also provided counseling services to about 59,000 women, who were injured and survived from gender based violence (USAID, 2019, October 5).

It was expected that the educated girls after being educated from this aid would help their poor families through jobs and can better play in the formation of a developed, educated and responsible society. Alfonso E. Lenhardt, acting administrator of the USAID, said that such programs have been initiated, with the involvement of State Department and Peace Corps along with other USA officials, to assure that the adolescent girls of deserving families are educated (*The Express Tribune*, 2015)

In October, 2015, USA announced the aid of \$70 million for the girl's education in Pakistan. She, while announcing the aid, acclaimed that USA was committed to spend double of her aid for the building of education sector, especially for the girls and women, in Pakistan. She announced that USA would invest \$70 million to educate the Pakistani adolescence.

The girl's aid would be provided through USAID program in Pakistan, the new along with the running programs of USAID. More than 200,000 from 10 years to 19 years of age girls were expected to get benefit from these programs. Dozens of new schools would be established along with the rehabilitation of hundreds of existing girl's schools in the country. The program was named as 'Let Girls Learn'. It would foster the opportunities in public- private partnership, and will collaborate with the other institutions for advancement and development of girl's education in

Pakistan. Political system and the social commitment to strengthen the adolescence girl's education in Pakistan would also strengthened through these programs.

Pakistan received more than \$649 million for assistance in education system of Pakistan by 2015, the highest aid ever received in this field. This aid was increased from \$586 provided in the fiscal year of 2014 and Pakistan became the most aid recipient country in South Asia. The most portion of such aid was specific for primary schools system in Pakistan and 57.16 % of this aid was reserved for basic education in Pakistan (Sheikh, 2013).

USA & Pakistan arranged a workshop on education, science and technology working group (ESTWG), under the dialogue and bilateral strategies on June, 2015. During the visit of Prime Minister of Pakistan met with the American President along with other officials of USA on October, 22nd 2015. Both leaders discussed the proposal for the establishment of Pakistan-USA Knowledge Corridor. They directed the respective regimes for intensification of mutual cooperation of this framework of importance in order to achieve this ambition on priority basis for the development of high level of human capital, which was envisioned in Pakistan document policy for vision of 202 (US Embassy Pakistan, 2016).

### **3rd Largest Pakistani Student's Population Enrolled in USA**

The executive director for the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP), Rita Akhtar, said that by the academic year of 2012-2013, the numbers of students from Pakistan to study at USA had significantly increased, which made Pakistan 3<sup>rd</sup> largest county that whose students were enrolled in the universities and the colleges of the USA. An educational week under the plate form of USEFP was celebrated in the different cities of the Pakistan. The USEFP also arranged many healthy and extra co-curricular activities in Pakistan of sports, arts and cultural festivals, and was promoting the cultural exchange programs of both countries in order to come close to the people of both countries (Shuaib, 2013)

### **Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship**

This program was designed for the mid-career professionals having strong demonstration of leadership skills, to study at USA. It was a graduate level program where the degree was not issued but academic course work and other activities of professional growth were conducted. This program spanned ten months consisting of internship as well the academic work in relation with some professional organization. This was big source of providing leaders and policy makers which had lasting productivity and ties between Americans and their counterpart professionals at overseas. Approximately eighteen campuses were allocated on very competitive ground of selection process for hosting the fellows in thematic groups and affinities of the subject. Universities were chosen on the bases of their resources and support level, guidance for offering the academic as well the administrative support. The faculty was very highly advanced which advised the fellows to pursue balance in the professional and the academics programs. All Pakistanis must have to return back to

their country after completion of the program of studies (USEF Pakistan. 2019, October 15).

### **Fulbright Scholarship Program**

This program was designed for up to one year of lectureship or post- doctoral research, or the combination of both at a USA college or university, with at least one full time covered dependent. The selectees were expected to share their knowledge and experience about the society of Pakistan. They were likely to share their culture with USA's students, their colleagues, and the groups of communities during their stay in USA. On their return, they were expected to make significant contribution for bringing improvement in education sector of Pakistan. They were probably to cultivate a positive change in the society by sharing their expertise, which they acquired during their stay in USA, with Pakistani students, their colleagues, and the groups of communities in Pakistan. All the expenses along with the visa facilities were fully sponsored by the Government of USA (Bint, 2015).

### **Structure of Fulbright Specialist Program (FSP)**

This program was designed for senior USA scholars and professionals for the span of 2-6 weeks, to undertake the collaboration of the proposed projects with their mutual counterparts of higher education in the institutions of Pakistan. The projects were to be approved by USEFP and the process was very competitive. The goal of the program was to develop a linkage between the both countries' educational institutions. (USEF Pakistan. 2019, October 27)

### **Fulbright Degree Program; Structure and Results**

This program was funded by USA for studies in degree programs of Master and PhD in USA. The American agency, USAID, was authorized to issue these grants for higher learning, which covered tuition, books material, airfare, health insurance and sufficient stipends for living at USA. The visa process was also assisted by USEFP, and it was issued from the concerned USA embassy, with some conditions and restrictions. The criteria for such grants were specified and the grantee had to fulfill all the requirements as per prescribed rules and the eligibility criteria. The applicant had to sign an agreement and a bond for Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, with surety that after completing the studies at USA, he or she will have to return back to the native country to serve her for certain years of service. So that Pakistan can get benefit by acquired skills and specialties of the incumbent, acquired during his/her stay at USA (USEF Pakistan. 2019, October 27)

### **Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA); Structure and Objectives**

The program of Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA), a non-degree program was started with the help of the State Department. The duration of the program was nine months. The program was designed with a view

to will provide opportunities to young teachers. It aimed at learn the English refining the language and teaching skills, improving the level of English language and its proficiency and learning the culture and the knowledge of the American society. These teachers were expected to teach their native language to the students of colleges and universities of USA as well. In this was also a contribution for strengthening foreign languages at USA. They were probable to interact with different cultural groups for discussion.(USEF Pakistan. 2019, October 27).

### **TOEFL in Pakistan**

The test of 'TOEFL' was widely used for the students seeking admission in American educational institutions. At that time in Pakistan there were different authorized TOEFL test centers, which were taking this test using computer and internet as well (USEF Pakistan, 2019, October 30).

The United States Education Foundation Pakistan and the Education of USA, working in cooperation with State Department of USA, organized an educational tour to South Asian counties, for the student's admissions and recruitments. These Personnel's also travelled to Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad for interaction with the Pakistani youth, the students of educational institutions of Pakistan, who were interested in getting higher education at USA ("7 U.S. Universities," 2014).

### **8.5% Rise in the Number of Pakistani Students Studying in USA**

The USA Education and the USEFP hosted a ceremony for the orientation of pre-departure of 70 students, who had gone to study different subjects in universities and college of USA. The similar orientation was also conducted at Lahore and Karachi, for 188 students. The students were enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs at different US colleges and universities. The numbers of Pakistani students studying in USA was increased significantly to 5354, in the academic year of 2014-2015. This increase was about 8.5 % more than the last year as per the report of the Doors annual report, published in Young Nation magazine on July 9, 2016 ("8.5% Rise," 2016).

### **Information Technology Certifications**

To provide the business solution for I.T skills related professionals, the certifications for I.T professionals, were serving as exams taken bodies, so that they could demonstrate their expertise. A wide range of I.T. Certifications like MCSA, MCSE, CCNA, CCNP, CISCO, Teradata, and EXIN etc. were offered through this joint venture.

### **Professional Licenses Exams Testing Centers**

The certification for professional's trade mark certification and professional designation were simply called certified certifications. The qualification earned and qualified by any individual was an assurance for certain qualification for performing

any special job or task, in the subject market. The USEFP testing centers were very common and were conducting many tests for acquiring the particular license at par with the set standards of the organizations and institutions of USA. Some of these tests were the FRM, the GARP, the USMLE, and the PMP. There was wide range of tests and exams available to check the eligibility of any license or certification at the prometric testing centers in Pakistan.

### **Standardized Testing**

The USEFP was the sole testing center authorized for the Prometric Test Center (PTC). The Prometric was a leading and globally test provider of services for solution in the corporate sector, academia, government, financial institutions and rendered professional clientage. The USEFP testing center was operating in Pakistan for last two decades. It expanded its operations from Islamabad to Lahore and Karachi. The proposed test was paper based, computer based or internet based assessment (USEFP, 2019, December5).

### **United States Educational Foundation Pakistan (USEFP); Exchange Program**

The USEFP was established in Pakistan in 1950, with the mutual collaboration of the USA-Pakistan, which was guided by the bi-national commission, comprised of an equal number from the both countries and its Chair has been altering in each year between the both countries. The USEFP fostered the mutual understanding among the people of both nations, through its educational and the cultural exchanging programs. More than 5,000 people of Pakistan and 9,00 people of the USA, participated in the USEFP exchanged programs. The foundation was supported by both governments of USA and Pakistan, and was not working as an agency. The scholars from Pakistan were sent to the different universities and institution of the USA, and the American scholars to the Pakistani universities and institution through this platform. The goal of this foundation was to learn about the both countries 'education and the culture as well (USEFP, 2019, December 11).

### **BECA & ECA programs for the Pakistani People**

The Bureau of the Educational and Cultural Affairs (BECA) had the mission to increase the mutual understanding between the people of USA and that of Pakistan through education and exchange of culture. It would strengthen and help in developing peaceful relations of USA and Pakistan. The Educational and Cultural Exchange mandated by its Act came into effect in 1961. The USA State Department of the Bureau of the Educational and the Cultural Affairs worked closely to build its friendly and peaceful relations with the people of Pakistan, through activities of academia, cultural exchange programs, sports matches, professionals and public and the private partnership.

The BECA programs, its funding along with the other activities encouraged USA involvement as well as participation of traditionally and under-represented

groups from Pakistan, especially women, the racial and the ethnic minorities; and the people having disabilities. The opportunities were open to the people of Pakistan, regardless of their race, creed, caste, culture, color, origin, gender, age, sex, geography, socio-matrices, religion, and sexual orientation. The Bureau was committed for its fairness, equity and inclusion of artists, educators, athletes, students, youth, and the rising leaders and such program were running in more than 160 countries in the entire world for its participation in culture, sports as well as the exchange of professionals activities.

The ECA was leading the public diplomacy and outreach of its efforts of USA, department of the state, by its exchange programs. Such programs were improving foreign relations and were strengthening national security of USA. It had supported the international leadership of USA, and provided the broad range domestic and worldwide benefits. It helped in breaking down the barriers that were supposed to divide the society and the country as well (Afzaal & Kiyani, 2014).

The USA supported for the development of four years and two years, university degree programs, particular for the teaching education of the professionals, which facilitated more than 10,000 teachers and the school administrators across the Pakistan (US Embassy Pakistan, 2014).

### **The program of Teacher's training in America**

The Teacher's training program in America was designed for the teachers working in the schools of Pakistan to excel their capabilities. Acquiring this was a unique opportunity for teachers to develop their expertise in their relative subjects/area to enhance the teaching skill as well as seeking the knowledge about USA. In this program, best teaching methodologies in practice, lesson planning techniques and use of latest technologies would be inculcated to the educators for more nuanced understanding about USA, and for the betterment of the productivity among the teachers and the student's communities of both the countries of USA and Pakistan. This would lead to the development of leadership in teaching community. This teaching program was devised for eight weeks training at USA for the teachers of Pakistan (USEFP, 2019, December 11).

### **Pre-Serving Teachers' Education Programs**

The project of USAID for teacher education worked closely with the government of Pakistan, HEC, the provincial governments, the education departments, the universities, and the Government Colleges of Elementary education, to institutionalize the specific reforms in pre-service education, desired by Government of Pakistan, through the policy making and implementation of National Education Policy (NEP). The primary objective of the said project was to help Government of Pakistan in developing, introducing and the implementing the effective curricula for the new bachelor degree programs of four years. The program was designed for the support of pre-service education on priority bases. It aimed at getting teachers graduated from such colleges and universities with the latest



knowledge, skills and dispositions, required for the effectiveness of instruction and for fulfilling the national standers of Pakistani teachers (Hina, 2017).

### **Education Advising USA**

The Centers of Education Advising USA were hosted through the support and help of the USEFP, which were part of a global network of 450 advising centers, in more than 170 counties of the world. The advisers were assisting the students in research. They prepared them for the standard test, applying for such test. They also in served in admission securing financing in education, preparation, and assisting in securing the USA visa for higher studies (USEFP, 2019, December 17).

### **Professional Partnership Program for the Public Administration**

The program of the public diplomacy was funded with the support of Bureau for the Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA).The program consisted with the strategies which employed by the Americans professionals, for countering the corruption and the bureaucratic entanglements in the offices of the public administration. This facilitated 75 participants in different 5 groups, for the duration of two years, to study the techniques of the public administration and the processes, along with the internship for 2-4 weeks, with the organizations of the public sectors. The first program was launched in2011 (USEFP, 2019, December 21).

### **Role of the Madrassa in Islamic Militancy in Pakistan**

There was intense debate in the circles of American policy makers and the academicians that Madrassas in Pakistan were creating Islamic militancy. The international media mostly exaggerated the figures and depicted the picture of the madrassas of Pakistan insanelly. Different religious seminaries conducted to promote the pan-Islamic and the anti-violence ideologies in Pakistan. The policy makers of the USA could turn their focus and attention towards such madrassas, which had links with the terrorist organization. The death of Daniel Pearl, the journalist for the Wall Street Journal, in 2002, the hijacking of the plane of Indian airline which landed in the Kandahar Afghanistan on December 1999, and murdering of five western hostages, including a citizen of the USA, Donald Hutchings, on 1995 were linked with so called madrassa attached religious elements (Fair, 2008) & (Muzaffar, et. al. 2020)

### **Lincoln Corners Pakistan - Connecting Pakistanis to America**

To connect the people of the Pakistan with the people of the America, seventeen Lincoln Corners were established under the partnership of the USA embassy with the selected educational institutions in Pakistan, which were located at the different universities, the public libraries, and the cultural centers in Pakistan. A Lincoln's Corner comprised of the multimedia resource center, in which the visitors could be connected, and to practices the languages of English and learn about the

ways of living and the diversified cultures of the USA. It provided the access to the current and that reliable for information of the USA through the books, the magazines, the movies and many more others resources of information regarding the USA history and the culture and the healthy activities for the educational purposes about the USA.

There was comfortable space for the learning environment with the open dialogue discussion, with the facilities of the free and fast Wi-Fi internet, to access the American websites for information and the facilities of library and e-learning from the millions of the data bases of the USA. The cultural programs, speakers of the high ranks with the special events were added for the excitement to this space. In 2015, Eighteen Lincoln Corners were operational across Pakistan. Each center had the staff of its coordination with the bilingual professionals from Pakistan, which was available for the assistance to the incoming visitors with the curious and interests for the USA (US Embassy Pakistan, 2019, December 25).

The USA Ambassador for Pakistan, Richard Olson, inaugurated a Lincoln Corner at Government College University Faisalabad. He explained that it would represent a strong and growing partnership among the people of Pakistan and that of USA. He said that Corner would serve for information center with the reference books, periodicals, magazines, media, and internet facilities to the students of university. He termed security as internal matter of Pakistan and said that Pakistan would take required actions to deal with such issue by itself. He furthered that USA was working very closely with Pakistan in education sector, business community, and ensuring food security, especially in Province of Punjab (Naz, 2014).

## **Conclusion**

USA supported in the education sector of Pakistan to eradicate terrorism from the syllabus and academia, especially the religious education in Pakistan by supporting the platform of religious harmony among different religions. Education system was reformed with USA assistance. USAID program contributed a lot for the welfare of the people of Pakistan. Different kinds of scholarships were provided to students for studying abroad. United States Educational Foundation Pakistan strove for educational promotion and opportunities in Pakistan; with its main focus on boosting up science and technology in Pakistan with the help and support of USA. Different American delegates visited Pakistan to promote education culture in Pakistan and a number of MOU's were signed among the different universities of USA and Pakistan.

Lincoln Corners were set up in different regions of Pakistan to bring both the nation closer to each other. USA also invested millions of dollars for girl's education in Pakistan especially in FATA. Different kinds of Projects were run with the collaboration of both countries for the well-being of the people of Pakistan from basic education to higher education. Fulbright Scholarships served to bring both countries closer for better relations and understanding through educational learning. International testing centers run by USA operated in Pakistan for evaluation of

different examinations and certifications to assess the individual educational capabilities at par with the international standards.

For engagement of the people of both countries, USA organized educational workshops and training sessions in Pakistan. The Bureau of the Educational and the Cultural Affairs (BECA) had the mission to increase mutual understanding among the people of USA and that of Pakistan by means of education and exchange of the culture which would strengthen their ties and would help to develop the peaceful relations of USA and Pakistan.

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