

Addressing the Issue of Nomadic Communities Children Educational Exclusion through Mobile Tent Schools in Malakand, Pakistan

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Abstract: *This paper aims to unveil the unseen status of nomadic communities' education in Pakistani society, with special reference to the stillness nature of educational system and nomadism, a two contradictory phenomena's. Nomadism and stillness of educational institutions are on two opposite poles, and needs to synthesis both for ameliorating the exacerbated educational status of nomadic communities in the country. The problem of education for nomads is increasing with the passage of time due to massive technological, as well as structural changes in society, and is now one of the major challenges for education provisions. On the other hand, their conservatism, ethnic marginality and mobile ways of life, highly contributed in educational exclusion of these communities. Education policies should be flexible, multidimensional, and target specific in nature, with the aim to resolve structural, social and economic marginalization, as well as developing their coping capabilities for changes raised by globalization. The study explores effective and suitable ways to bridge the gap between what educational institution try to teach and what nomadic communities children needs with respect to education. Mobile tent schools were found significantly associative in nature, for reducing their educational exclusion in the study area.*

Key Words: *Nomads, Education, Social Exclusion, Mobile Tent Schools, Ethnicity*

1. Introduction

Education is an indispensable component of society by means of it one can struggle and conquer the battle of socio-cultural life. Social and cultural background determined ones' cognitive development and his behaviours because of his contact with other members of society (Rogoff,

1995). In the same way, Bandura (1969) tells that individual's socio and cultural outlook is the important predictor of his knowledge, skills and tendencies. Similarly, Tezcan (1993) says, that social institutions are responsible to mould and develop manners and world views of individuals according to the cultural set up they live in. Meir (1990) in his study points out that in Israel, the intention to educate nomads include to sedentarise them from nomadic way of life, and finally to control their locational patterns. Similarly, Shahshahani (1995) describe the successful Iranian tent school programme providing up to a larger extent the true essence of dominant culture and politics, irrespective of the conservative nature of nomads and their ways of life.

Educationally excluded and disadvantage nomad children inclusion into national education system needs greater attention to be considered. National education system shall understand the integration of nomad children within their own household economy, causes of their drop out or under enrolment, and causes of their social, political as well as economic marginalization. If, the aforementioned aspects not properly monitored or considered, then inclusion may give more harm than good, and will leads to further marginalization and exclusion. Modern education is supposed to equip nomadic communities' children to earn outside the community they were born into (SCF, 2000; Dyer and Choski, 1997). The crucial point where educational programmes failed, because of the contradictory nature of sedentarism and nomadism. All decision makers have sought to use education as a tool for transforming nomadic communities in to sedentary ones' (Dall, 1993). In numerous countries, education for nomads is seen as an instrument to change the attitudes, beliefs, practices of livestock, as well as internalising modern knowledge and methods for coping the

new challenges. In Ethiopia, for instance formal education for nomads is seen an instrument for the preparation of agents of change in pastoral life. After acquiring formal education, new skills and other methods these nomads will get back to their community as an agents of change, and will bring change in the lives of their community members (Degefe and Kidane, 1997). In Sudan, formal education for nomads is supposed to enable them to develop their potentialities, national outlook, ensure their rights and privileges, and ultimately to increase their productivity (Suleman and Kheir, 1997).

Policies that have resulted in permanent exclusion of 13500 students in the 1995/96 school year in England, the largest number ever. In many ways, this is the starkest form of social exclusion practised by the educational system as these excluded students can have no alternative system that effectively caters for their specific needs. It clearly goes against the spirit of Article 29 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child which calls for the education to achieve the development of their fullest potential. People who have suffered from childhood social exclusion in education are at risk of being poor and unemployed for longer and more often than others. Apart from the exclusionary effects of these problems, they are associated with lower health outcomes, poorer access to housing, poorer access to food, and poorer access to health care. Recent economic trends, in particular the developments in the labour market for less-skilled individuals, the privatisation of utilities and transport companies, the changes in retailing and the housing market, practised by banks and insurance companies have created ever closer linkages between poverty and social exclusion, where the poor are facing ever greater barriers (and/or greater costs) of meeting their consumption needs and interacting with the rest of society. The question now becomes to what extent the education system supports or hinders this type of exclusion among children. Educational policies can be exclusionary in a variety of ways. One is if education largely draws on the local population and the school resources are dependent on the local tax base. For poor children living in a poor district, the exclusion associated with their poverty can be exacerbated by the educational system that underperforms in contrast to the rest of the country (Smith et al., 1997; Walker, 1997 & Atkinson, 1998).

The sociological studies on social exclusion in Pakistan identifies social class as a major divisor followed by ethnicity, caste, and religion. The division on ethnic grounds has a dire consequence

on poor people because all the benefits are received by the upper class of society. Nomads are ethnically marginalised segment in Pakistani society, have low access to the basic services i.e. potable water, housing, electricity, education, health and information (Ullah & Shah, 2014; Suliman, Shah, & Ullah, 2016).

2. Prevalence of Mobile/Tent School in other countries of the World

In Mongolia white tents were used as a schools for tackling the issue of nomads' children education. Teachers were also nomads, they move along with the household, and the government paid them for their work. In Sumalia, the concept of Quranic schools brought revolutionary changes in the lives of nomads. This was single teacher schools, provided multiple entry points for sparse and remote nomadic communities as compare to national formal schooling (Adaw, 1986; Mostec, 2000).

In Bede community of Bangladesh almost all nomads are illiterate. In each of the nomadic *Bede* groups there are many children but no facilities available for education within the group. Therefore, they have to accept their hereditary occupation (*Jati Babsha*). During the Participatory Action Research (PAR) project seven mobile schools were established in seven nomadic *Bede* groups, which roam around the country in boats. Since these groups change around 90 spots in a year and do not stay more than 3-4 days in one spot, simultaneously, the schools also remain in constant move with them. These mobile schools not only eradicated illiteracy but also proved that it is possible for a nomad to have access to education (Maksud & Imtiaj, 2006).

In Somalia, in 1972 the literacy campaign was started by government to provide education for nomads' children. The government did close secondary and intermediate schools for one year and involve teachers and students in the campaign for enhancement of literacy rate of the country. Besides, other important benefits of the campaign, the increased intimate contact between nomads and teacher/students involved, leads to revival of the traditional culture and strengthening of national unity (Osman, 1978; Brook and Brook, 1993).

3. Material and Methods

The present study was carried out in Malakand District to determine the relationship of social exclusion and education. The study was cross-sectional in nature. A sample size of 97 respondents was drawn from the cluster of 130 tents through

random sampling procedures. Moreover, an area enumeration approach suggested by Degraft (1979) were adopted in the study to resolve the issue of sampling nomads in the area. In this approach the enumeration area represents the cluster of those nomads occupying the land of the area during the time of the research. A list of all tents were prepared during the pilot survey. Sampling with replacement was adopted in case of missing the targeted nomads' tent.

Keeping in view the illiterate nature of the respondents, the interview schedule was utilized in the study. The data was analyzed, by using univariate and bivariate techniques of data analysis. The univariate level consists frequency and percentages, whereas, at bivariate level dependent variable was cross tabbed and indexed with attitudinal statements of independent variables. Chi square test procedure of Tai (1978) was used in the study.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

Where

χ^2 = Chi-square for two categorical variable

$\sum_{i=1}^r \square =$ Total of ith row

$\sum_{j=1}^c \square =$ Total of ith Colum

O_{ij} = Observed frequencies in ith row and jth column

e_{ij} = expect frequencies corresponding to ith row and jth column

Conditions for use of chi square test include that;

1. Subjects for each group are randomly and independently selected
2. Each observation must qualify for one and only one category
3. Sample size must fairly be large such that no expected frequency is less than 5, for r and c > 2, or < 10 if r=c=2.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Univariate Analysis

Perception of the sampled respondents about education

A few statements were put forward with the aim to judge the respondents' attitudes about education. So, 82.5 percent of the respondents were agreeing that education is necessary for capabilities development and every member of society should have access to educational services. It can be seen from the results of Tahir (1991) that an important objective of education for nomad children is to develop their innate pastoral skills. Similarly, 84.5 percent of the respondents opined that formal education is essential for their uplift in society. Other, 76 (78.4%) of them regarded educational role in decreasing the risks of marginality. According to the studies of Aydin, (2013) and Bulut, (2015) "education through proper schooling is the only way where individuals and groups learn new skills and through which they can face the changing circumstances. Therefore, education programs based on dominant culture should be re-designed in a multicultural way considering different cultures". This point was also buttressed by the results of Moestt (1999) that neither nomad parents nor their children like being separated for a long period of time. Similar idea was found in the study of Kenrick (1998) that the Romany and Irish nomads' children will learn unacceptable manners like swear, drug taking and sex from young house dwellers. However, 83.5 percent of the sampled respondents' views about the stillness of educational system and nomadism. They share with the researchers that we are bound of traditions and customs. Our ways of life keep us on constant move, thus remained unable to educate our children. The study of Demberel and Penn (2000) concluded that the school culture and nomad ways of life is antagonistic with each other make hard for them to resolve the issue of education provision. Moreover, 74.2 percent were agreeing that traditional type of education, as it can be known as family education or simply training not prepare member for high level production. Other, 14 (14.4%) of them were disagree while, 11 (11.3%) did not know about the statement. Correspondingly, 85.6 percent respondents were agreeing with the researchers' mobile school suggestion. Bass (1998) study presented the Tibet boarding schools as the solution for nomadic children education. Other study conducted by Barker (1981) explained the presence of tent mobile schools in Iran as a tool to educate nomad children.

Table 1: Perception of the sampled respondents about education

Attributes	Agree	Disagree	Do not know
Education is an indispensable ingredient of human development and a basic right of every citizen	80 (82.5)	5(5.2)	12(12.4)
You and your family needs formal schooling in order to cope with the new challenges	82 (84.5)	7 (7.2)	8 (8.2)
Education decrease the risk of marginality and vulnerability of individual or group by internalizing new skills and coping capabilities	76 (78.4)	6 (6.2)	15 (15.5)
National education system and nomadic ways of life contradict each other is a leading factor for their social exclusion	81 (83.5)	7 (7.2)	9 (9.3)
You or your children needs mobile schooling for social adjustment	83 (85.6)	8 (8.2)	6 (6.2)
You or your family resist children to be enrolled in national schools because of different and antagonistic culture.	72 (74.2)	14 (14.4)	11 (11.3)
Tents or mobile schooling can minimize the issue of nomads' illiteracy in Pakistani society	82 (84.5)	9 (9.3)	6 (6.2)

Values in table present frequencies while parenthesis values represent percentage of the respondents

4.2 Bivariate Analysis

Association between nomadism and educational exclusion of nomad children

Education as an independent variable was put forward for test, to find out its association with social exclusion in the study area. So, according to the results education an indispensable ingredient of human development and a basic right of every citizen in society was found highly significant ($P=.000$) with social exclusion. During, interview the respondents replied that, in fact, we are aware of the importance of education and eager to educate our children but due to our nomadic ways of life, it is not easy for us to accomplish education. According to Gay (2014), culturally responsive teaching is an endeavour to make learning activities more relevant with students and more effective for them considering cultural knowledge, past experience, reference frame and performance styles of students who are ethnically diverse and marginalized. In line with this education plays a pivotal role in the development of society and decrease the risks of individual and group marginality or vulnerability by internalizing new skills and coping capabilities. The association was found significant ($P=.002$) between social exclusion and need of formal schooling for nomads. Barker (1981) study revealed the prevalence of tent schools in Iran as part of the Tribal Education Programme. After a difficult start, the programme enjoyed strong financial support from both the United States and the Persian government and grew quickly. The programme was presented as a genuine commitment to bring education to the tribes and nomads children. An increasingly globalizing world and its formal developmental measures remains highly unsympathetic to nomadic communities. They

realized that their traditional education and skills are inadequate to survive in this modern world, which has drastically encouraged them to pursue formal education in order to support their family members. However, a significant relationship ($P=.002$) was found between social exclusion and national education system of the country. The educational institution criteria of education provision and nomadism contradict each other in every aspect, so it is not easy for nomad children to adapt with. According to Parekh (2002), the education system based on one culture has a tendency to look from the frame of its own-culture and exclude everything out of this culture. This situation leads students not to develop critical thinking and not to be respectful for diversities. In this sense, it is seen important that culturally responsive education concept should have a place in all dimensions and periods of education system considering the possibility that learners who have diverse cultures or are part of minorities can face negativities during education period. Therefore, the researchers suggested mobile/tent schools for resolving their issue of education, almost all of the respondents agreed with, that mobile schools can significantly benefit us i.e. $P= 0.018$. Mobile schools can significantly ($P=.019$) reduce the issue of their illiteracy and social exclusion in the target area. The study of Holland (1996) shows that Kenyan Massai, adopting the modern practices from their traditional ways of life and joining the formal education itself. Another study conducted by Emma & Hamid (2003) revealed the consciousness of nomads about education. They share that education has given the settled groups an advantage over them in many respects, from acquiring land, registering complaints and their representation in local, regional, and national arenas.

Table 2: Association between nomadism and social exclusion of nomad children (mobile schools an alternative way)

Attributes	Responses	Social Exclusion		Total	Statistic
		Agree	Disagree		
Education is an indispensable ingredient of human development and a basic right of every citizen in society.	Agree	45(46.4)	14 (14.2)	59 (60.8)	$X^2=20.750^a$ P=0.000
	Disagree	31(32.4)	1 (1.0)	32 (33.0)	
	Do not know	1 (1.0)	5 (5.2)	6 (6.2)	
You and your family needs formal schooling in order to cope with the new challenges.	Agree	68 (70.1)	11 (11.3)	79 (81.4)	$X^2=12.080^a$ P=0.002
	Disagree	7 (7.2)	6 (6.2)	13 (13.4)	
	Do not know	2 (2.1)	3 (3.1)	5 (5.2)	
Education decrease the risks of individual and group marginality by internalizing new skills and coping capabilities.	Agree	72 (74.2)	14 (14.4)	86 (88.7)	$X^2=12.078^a$ P=0.002
	Disagree	3 (3.1)	1 (1.0)	4 (4.2)	
	Do not know	2 (2.1)	5 (5.2)	7 (7.2)	
National education system and nomadic ways of life contradict each other, thus resist nomad children to join national schools.	Agree	52 (53.6)	9 (9.3)	61 (62.9)	$X^2=12.323^a$ P= 0.002
	Disagree	23(23.7)	6 (6.2)	29 (29.9)	
	Do not know	2 (2.1)	5 (5.2)	7 (7.2)	
You and/or your children needs mobile schooling for social adjustment.	Agree	56 (57.7)	13 (13.4)	69 (71.1)	$X^2=8.027^a$ P= 0.018
	Disagree	17 (17.5)	2 (2.1)	19 (19.6)	
	Do not know	4 (4.1)	5 (5.2)	9 (9.3)	
You want your children to be enrolled in national schools, but you are not able to do so.	Agree	58 (59.8)	14 (14.4)	72 (74.2)	$X^2=7.907^a$ P=0.019
	Disagree	19 (19.6)	4 (4.1)	23 (23.7)	
	Do not know	0 (0.0)	2 (2.1)	2 (2.1)	
Tents or mobile schooling can minimize the issue of nomads' illiteracy and social exclusion.	Agree	57 (58.8)	13 (13.4)	70 (72.2)	$X^2=7.869^a$ P=0.017
	Disagree	16 (16.5)	3 (3.1)	19(19.6)	
	Do not know	4 (4.1)	4 (4.1)	8 (8.2)	

*Values in table present frequencies while parenthesis values represent percentages of the respondent

5. Conclusions and recommendations

The aim of this study was to inquire the contribution of lack of education to social exclusion and diminish the exclusionary state of nomads' children through applying the fruitful approach of mobile or tent schools. The findings of the study suggest that lack of education, ethnic prejudice about nomads, lack of skills, and conservatism of the respondents were major contributors to social exclusion of nomads in the study area. Moreover, the manifestation of social exclusion among nomad children can be reduced by securing them through formal education, tackling their economic, social and housing needs at family and community level. The researchers suggested mobile or tent schools for ameliorating the educational exclusion of nomads' children in the target area.

Education play a pivotal role in decreasing social exclusion of nomadic communities. Their traditional methods of livelihood are outdated. They are facing a kind of siege today in this highly industrialized world. Lack of education and social exclusion was found associative in this study. Drastic industrial and city changes as well as demarcation of governmental boundaries on

encamped sites decrease their chances of suitable accommodation. However, these factors when accompanied by financial, political, poverty, and unemployment leads to social exclusion. Moreover, overcoming disparities based on ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, class, and caste were major policy recommendations of the study.

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