

Causes of Unfair Means Used at Higher Secondary Level in Balochistan:

By

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Abstract:

The use of the unfair means at the higher secondary level in Balochistan is a massive impediment in the way of quality education. The main aim of the study is to look at the main reasons of unfair means used at higher secondary level in Balochistan. In this research paper the survey design has been used to look into the causes of unfair means existing at higher secondary level examinations. On the other hand the size of the sample comprised 500 examinees including boys and girls as well as rural and urban. From supervisory staff 250 of the supervisory staff were sample for this study. Cluster sampling technique was used to collect the responses of the respondents. Questionnaire was developed and used as a tool to collect the data of the respondents. The findings revealed that the rural areas percentage 68.4 in terms of being more affected with the menace of unfair practices than urban areas. This study shows that the reasons behind the unfair means are administrative reason is the main cause ($M=2.95$, $SD=.37$) political ($M=2.45$, $SD=.53$), Cultural ($M=2.43$, $SD=.32$) and social causes was ($M=2.09$, $SD=.38$) which effect the whole examination system in Balochistan. The finding reveals that administrative cause is the main cause of unfair means used in the higher secondary examinations.

Keywords: Balochistan, Supervisory Staff, Unfair means, higher secondary level, education

Introduction:

There is no denying the fact that education is the key to changing the fate of any nation. It has the potential and power to transform the society and it is the base upon which the ethical, moral, socio-

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economic and cultural foundations are made. Where in the world competing on and advanced forms of education are modernizing the society and revolutionizing the living standards of the people, there the use of the unfair means by the students in the exams in order to score better marks is decaying the education system in the developing and backward regions of the world. (Afzal, 2010)

Balochistan is one of such regions, being the largest, but the most backward province of the country of Pakistan; it is witnessing a growing rate of the use of the unfair means in the exams, especially, in the higher secondary exams. The unfair practices used by the students are not solely confined to the students, in fact, there are a variety of reasons behind the excess of the use of the wrong means to have an advantage during the examination. Malpractices have engulfed the education system, especially, higher secondary education which is under administrative, cultural and social unfair influences. (NoorUllah, 2011)

The Administrative Causes of Unfair Means:

The administrative means of the malpractices are the unfair means in the administrative form include the lethargic performance and teachers and their sense of ill-accountability toward their duties. Owing to lack of attention from the ministry of education added by the lack of check and balance from BBISE, the administrative malpractices are very high. The teachers on various occasions do not take the classes on a punctual basis, but in the more important sense, it is the administrative lobbying that puts all the unfair things in motion. The administrative lobbying can cause hurdles in providing quality education to the students, it can delay the release or the proper utilization of the funds that could otherwise help the students get use of the funds through more facilities and knowledge. (Sarwar, 2011)

The faculty most of whose appointments are made through political sources also falls in this category. The growing political influence in the portion, transfer and appointment of the teachers is truly one of the major causes of the backwardness of education. These teachers who themselves come from political sources also use the unfair means during the exams for their personal relations or get pressurized from the political sources to engage in favoritism. They are the ones who fall easily to political pressure as they are appointed on the political basis. Thus, they succumb to political pressure and while conducting the exams as supervisors or invigilators, they

become of the most important sources of administrative malpractice. (Hameed, 2013)

Their leniency to some particular students and their favored attitude to some particular students compel and encourage the other students to use the unfair means or cheat in the exams. An impartially competent faculty and a strong influence free administration is the nucleus of the educational environment which should be forged at the earliest in order to avoid the administrative mishaps. Those teachers who come on the basis of the merit, they remain neutral while conducting the exam and they give their proper time and resources to the students and their sincere devotion often evolves the skills of the students to learn and be committed to learning and transparency. Certain teachers should be the supervisory staff as they are the cornerstone of preventing the administrative lobbies and preventing the malpractices at the administrative level. (UNESCO, 2008)

Cultural Causes of Unfair Means:

The cultural causes mostly involve the political support from the ethnic nationalist political parties or from the student organizations who promote ethnic divide. Though, certain activities are at their peak at the university level, they are also seen in the colleges and the students at the higher secondary level who are new to college life often fall victim to ethnic and cultural politics. The rise of the student organizations mostly based on their ethnic and cultural lineage in the colleges of Balochistan is something very concerning and perturbing. These organizations go for protests and strike at the slightest pretext and disturb the process of studies at the colleges. They are one of the major sources of cheating in the exams on account of their non-studious activities throughout the year and their non-attendance in the classes. They do not care about the studies throughout the year and when the exam approaches, they threaten the faculty members or invigilators to allow them to cheat or flexibly mark them. (Doda, 2011)

These student organizations also use their influence in the colleges to exert pressure on the faculty to allow them to cheat and use other unfair means to pass through the exams. Cheating has hollowed the talent and caliber of the students and it has emerged as one of the biggest social menaces in Balochistan. They use different tactics like bribing and threatening the supervisory staff.

The Social Causes of Unfair Means:

They also use their networks to smuggle cheating material in the exam hall and they also use the electronic devices on the frequent basis to help each other in passing the exams through unfair means. Cheating is the single most important challenge being faced by BBISE. In fact, the entire ministry of education had failed to prevent cheating over the years. The reason why the students tend to cheat in exams or try to gain unfair advantage or favor during the exams is because of the non-accountable attitude of the entire society. Students learn their behavioral patterns from the society. They see their parents, their teachers and other members of the society and they adapt the same manners and the same attitude. (Asghar, 2015)

If the students tend to engage in malpractices, they learn this from the society. Our entire society is living and working without any accountability for their actions or inactions. Students are a part of the same society. They learn the negative behavioral, traits from the society and, as a result, they use the unfair means in the exams. The students are not alone in the malicious practice. In fact, they are well supported by their friends and relatives for cheating. They also use their peer or political influence or try other sources to get the attention and favor of the supervisory staff whenever and wherever it is possible. (EFA, 2015)

Rationale of the Study:

The attainment of education is not only vital for human progress and propriety, as a matter of fact; it is the very fundamental and basic right of every individual in the world to receive education under a free atmosphere. Access to basic and quality education is the need of every human regardless of its race, color, cast or creed. It is education that has modified the human behavioral traits and transformed them in compatibility with the swiftly advancing needs and demands of the modern globalizing world. However, in the context and case of Balochistan, standardized quality education still remains a distant dream remaining to be fulfilled. The ground realities have proven that the education set up in the province of Balochistan is on the lowest in its standard and quality also compared to the other provinces of Pakistan. It should be understood that one of the major causes of the decline of the education in Balochistan is the excessive use of the unfair practices at schools and colleges that is hollowing the future and creativity of the students.

Cheating, nepotism, favoritism and other relevant unfair practices are that malice that decay the productive thinking and mindset of the student and make them reliant upon wrongdoing. As a result, the students do get the desired result for the time being in their exams, but they fail to be productive parts of the society. These kinds of practices are growing at the higher secondary level. The higher secondary level is very essential because it is the place and period which makes the foundation and base of the mindset of the students. If the very foundation of the student is hollowed and weak, how possibly that student would be productive in the course of the national development. In other words, the growing use of the unfair means and practices at the higher secondary level has seriously damaged the future of the society as a nation. If a student uses the unfair means to become an engineer, an architect or a doctor, that student can never be honest to its duty and certainly cannot be honest to the nation. This study gives a detailed analysis of unfair practices being used in the higher secondary exams and their impact on the course of development, especially, on the future of the society and the future of the students.

Objective of the Study:

The main objective of the study was to look at the causes of unfair means used at the higher secondary level in Balochistan

Research Questions of the Study:

What are the social, cultural, political and administrative factors responsible for the practice of unfair means use in the higher secondary school external examinations?

Steps Taken by the Government of Baluchistan to Eradicate Unfair Means:

Following are the main policy initiatives taken by the former and current government of Balochistan. Are mentioned in below:

Baluchistan Examination and Assessment Commission:

As Abdul Malik came in power as chief minister of Balochistan in June 2013, he imposed an education emergency throughout the province. This move was aimed at upgrading the standards of education by taking certain initiatives out of which the most pivotal one was BEAC (Balochistan Examination and Assessment Commission). BEAC was the part of the Balochistan education sector plan of 2013. The notification for the implementation

of BEAC was issued by the government on 2nd of October 2015.(Baig, 5 September 2016)

A series of seminars and meetings were conducted under the supervision of the chief minister where the government officials along the technical expertise debated on different angles and aspects of refining and implementing the intuitive of BEAC. The seminar that led to the adaptation of the draft proposal of BEAC was attended by provincial education minister Abdul Raheem Ziaratwaal, mayor of Quetta Metropolitan Corporation Dr. Kaleemullah, provincial education secretary Umar Babar Khan and former education secretary Abdul Saboor Kakar.(Baig, 5 September 2016)

This intuitive was taken keeping in the mind the competitive environment and the pace of advancement of the world as most of the career opportunities are in the private sector. Since private sector at the national and the international level maintains merit and competition, students with weak record at schools or weak basic learning cannot afford to become the part of the competition. Thus, BEAC is an attempt to strengthen the basic learning stages of the students.(Baig, 5 September 2016)

Balochistan Rural Support Program (BRSP):

In order to have an extensive and deeply analyzed outlook, BRSP analyzed different angles of the province, in terms of the resources, the population, the overwhelming majority of which was living below the poverty line, conflict ridden region and the other key hurdles in the way of planning and executing those plans.

It was revealed that the reason why most of the youth tend to cheat or try to use other unfair means for getting education and degrees is quite linked to their poor backgrounds going back to the rural areas where they have nothing at all in terms of education. The institutes are not present there and there are no faculty staff and no other relevant facilities. Therefore, the educational background of the students is quite weak.

Having no quality education, once these students go for higher education, they cannot make a fresh or impressive start and tend to cheat and become the part of student politics finding other means for their survival and success.(Pakistan's National Education Policy 2010-15)

Awareness Campaign:

Awareness is the state of mind in which the person knows the difference between good and bad and can distinguish them well easily. It is the key to transforming the society and driving the society out of its present troubles and challenges. As cheating, student politics, lack of efficacy by the administrative staff of the educational institutes and lack of interest by the faculty to give their maximum time and energy to the students, are all the problems that are lingering on the society of Balochistan today. (Baig, 5 September 2016)

In the exams of 2015 at the higher secondary level, 57,000 candidates appeared in 157 centers across the province. In the HSSC examination, 120 impersonation and 250 cheating cases were reported and District Administration and BISE inspectors also confiscated 270 mobile phones. These efforts did not stop in the higher secondary exams, they were also witnessed during the masters exams in the University of Balochistan in 2015-16 where high security was observed and the exams halls were kept tight from cheating and other unfair practices embarking upon a new era free of cheating ensuring transparency. (Education Sector Plan 2013-18)

Balochistan Education Sector Plan (BESP):

In 2013, the Education Department showed Balochistan Education Sector Plan (BESP) in light of a division wide procedure, with a complement on enhancing access, and regard and quality at all levels of get ready. In light of condition examination in the Sector Plan and key blueprints in the Balochistan Education Sector Plan, the Secondary Education Department Balochistan is based on get changes get ready division according to BESP.(PSDP 2014-15)

Center Inspections through Administrative Secretaries:

On the orientation of exemplary Chief Secretary, Secretaries were selected area to visit examination centers in the midst of Science, Math's and English papers. Their visits showed greatly strong in motivation and start of the supervisory staff and the district association including judges and Deputy Commissioners.

Every Secretary on return submitted complete checking report close by some awesome recognition concerning general situation of preparing in the zones. Their reports are in a matter of second's collection and

will be given due admiration and conveyance in not all that far off future. (Education Sector Plan 2013-18)

Creation of Organization Structure for Assessment of Quality:

It was a great direction and a great initiative taken for the improvement of the quality of the education. It not only had its assessment on the quality of education, as a matter of fact, it has worked on all the patterns of misconduct including the unfair practices discussed in the research.

The creation of the National Education Assessment System (NEAS) helped the assessment of the quality of education through the establishing of the Provincial Education Assessment Centers. The establishing of certain centers has helped the province as the donor agencies now can directly sponsor the provincial ministry of education with regards to the problems and challenges it is facing. (PSDP 2014-15)

Research Methodology:

The type of the research adapted to check out the causes of the unfair means existing at secondary level education is cross sectional survey design. The data were collected from the supervisory staff of the examination which was conducted under the control of Baluchistan Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BBISE) as well as those students who were taking examination of the higher secondary school certificate. The size of the sample was 250 for the supervisory and 500 for students. Questionnaire has been used as a tool to collect the responses of the respondents. The instruments have two sub parts. First part of the instrument deals with the causes of unfair means used and measures taken by the BBISE to curtail such practices. The second part of the instrument deals with the frequency of UFM used by examinee during examination. The instrument which was created for students had an additional objective type of question which has been added to address the question regarding their last examination. This Multiple Choice Question has four options which deal with the performance of the supervisory staff during examination.

To get legitimate and steadfast information, instruments were developed in Urdu language. This process was done due to the reason that respondents do not have enough information, understanding and efficiency in English language. Questionnaire comprised close ended questions to measure the responses of the respondents. Part I of the questionnaire had

Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree =1, disagree =2, agree = 3, strongly agree = 4.

Results and Discussion:

The very fundamental aim of the given research is to explore the causes of the unfair practices at the higher secondary level in Balochistan. Following are the Demographic variables of the Supervisory staff. 250 questionnaires were distributed among the supervisory staff in which 166 for males and 84 for females, but only 102 male and 59 female supervisory staff returned the questionnaire. Among 250 supervisory staff, 171 respondents belong to the rural area and 79 belong to urban area of the province. Another demographic variable which shows the teaching experience of the teachers is the examination experience majority of the teachers (137) have one to three years' experience while (35) teachers have minimum experience that range more than seven years' experience. A number of 78 teachers have supervisory experience of four to six years. There were 31 among the staff, who had invigilator experience, 67 of them had deputy superintendent experience while 152 of them had the experience of superintendent.

Table 1

Mean score and standard deviation of the cultural cause becoming cause of UFM

	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Cultural Cause	2.43	.32

According to the statistics of the table above with the mean of 2.43 and standard deviation of .32, majority of the supervisory staff denies the existence of the culture of offering and accepting meals and exchanging gifts. However, a minor percentage of the staff has the opinion of other way round.

According to the views of supervisory staff, culture of exchanging gifts and inviting to meals does not exist among local people. There are doubts regarding their claim, because students claim that such a culture exists. However, there are exceptions.

Table 2

Mean score and standard deviation of the administrative cause regarding causes of UFM

	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Administrative Cause	2.95	.37

The mean score of the above table 2.95(SD=.37) shows that the supervisory staff affirm the fact that they get the exam center of their choice and that a candidate having some links with the board staff can get their favorite center allotted. It means that by using teacher's union influence, the board can assign them their desired examination center.

Table 3

Mean score and standard deviation of the social cause regarding causes of UFM

	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Social Cause	2.09	.38

The above table with mean score of 2.09 (SD=.38) shows that there is mixed response regarding social factors (easiness of performing duty, cooperation of the local people and benefits of performing duty at place of familiarity etc.) affecting the duty of supervisory staff. It means that the familiar place of duty at times affects and at other times does not affect.

Familiarity of the relations was another factor that badly affected the performance of the supervisory staff as the people who had acquaintance with the invigilators or their seniors reached out to them asking for favors for their relatives and other kin to help them use unfair means during the exams. This uncertainty whether to cooperate with the acquaintances further affected their performance in conducting the exams in full transparent and fair means. Personal relationships were also another factor to be mentioned. The allocation of the supervisory staff by the BBISE to the neutral places helps them evade the acquainted and other relationships making it very easy for the supervisory staff to neutrally perform their duties.

Table 4

Mean score and standard deviation of the political cause regarding causes of UFM

	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Political Cause	2.45	.53

As the table shows with the mean of 2.45 (SD=.53), most of the supervisory staff agree that a pattern of having affiliation with teachers unions and political parties exists. Political factors are of high importance in this regard since there is often political pressure on the supervisory staff for nepotism and favoritism. The ulterior motives of the supervisory staff are obvious from the fact that they try to use their political sources to allot them the centers where they personally wish to go or where they can easily allow their personal relations to use unfair means in the exams.

Table 5

Aggregate Mean score and standard deviation of the causes of unfair means used at secondary level

	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Cultural, administrative, social and political cause	2.27	.42

As the above table shows with the aggregate mean score 2.27 and standard deviation of .42, the cultural, administrative, social and political causes of using unfair means in secondary school exams are prone to agreement. However, about 25 % responses indicate disagreement that the above mentioned factors do not influence the examination system negatively. From the given facts it is obvious that the exams are being negatively affected by the lack of facilities and the abysmal conditions. This can be applied to the intensions of the supervisory staff that if they are not honest with their duties, they can be a major part of the UFM used in the exams.

Demographic Variables of the Students:

Among 500 of the total students who were given the questionnaires, 315 were male and 185 were female. 326 respondents belong to the rural area and 174 belong to urban area of the province. Another demographic variable which shows the students' experience in the examination that those who appeared in the exams for the first time were 35 percent while those who appeared twice were 36 percent and those who appeared thrice were 24.2 percent and those who appeared four times or more were 4.8 percent.

Table 6

Political, cultural, social and administrative cause of unfair means

Construct	Mean score	Standard Deviation
Political Cause	2.08	.78
Cultural reason	2.46	.44
Social reason	2.05	.41
Administrative reason	2.50	.38

As the mean score of 2.08 shows, political factors tend to influence the use of unfair means at higher secondary level examination. Same is the case with cultural and administrative factors which affect the use of unfair means. However, as the mean score 2.05 shows; social factors are not responsible for the use of unfair means.

Political, administrative and cultural factors tend to affect the use of unfair means at higher secondary level examinations whereas the social uses of UFM are not as threatening as compared to the other causes. The cheating culture and the poor education system with the obsolete curriculum have seriously contributed in pushing the students toward relying on unfair means for passing the exams and for securing good marks. Their use of the unfair means is also exacerbated by the given political conditions of the province of Balochistan. There is no proper political vision for development and education. Politics is always used for vested interests and personal gains.

Politics is also used as a tool for exerting pressure on the supervisory staff during the exams to get favors for their relatives, members or relatives of their political workers and their acquaintances. In

this case, the administrative causes have a great contribution toward the use of the unfair means as well. The supervisors also tend to use political sources for being allotted in their favored centers and they are also not fully honest in conducting their duties.

Conclusion:

Education is the means through which the patterns of human behavior are changed with a positive reflection of thoughts and creativity. This article reveals that still the unfair means and methods are highly practiced in the higher secondary exams conducted by the BBISE in Balochistan. The government has taken several initiatives in this regard but they are still not adequate to check the growing use of the unfair means in the exams. The results of the SPSS reveal that majority of the respondents were between 19 to 35 in age and most of the responses showed that they were not happy with the excessive practice of the unfair means in Balochistan which was deeply decaying the potential and capacity of the students to be creative and productive.

If this issue is not dealt with full seriousness and with promptness, this factor has the power to provide a hindrance to quality and transparent education system, in fact, in the long run; it can prove a massive hurdle in the process of development. No matter how innovative the initiatives and the measures of the government may be to prevent the use of the unfair means, unless, there is sense of accountability, all the measures and policies cannot really change the ground realities. Balochistan is already the most backward province in the country, now the excessive use of the unfair means is further pushing it backward. Everyone has to develop individual accountability in order to be a well responsible citizen. Individual accountability awakens one's conscience to discern between the right and the wrong. Only then can the menace of practicing the unfair means can be eradicated from the society entirely. This individual accountability should extend to the parents, the teachers, the higher authorities and the students themselves as well.

Geographically Baluchistan is the biggest province of Pakistan. Whereas, Balochistan is a rundown province in so many other facilities and necessities of life. it also fall off behind in educational arena. Masses, especially rural are illiterate. There is scarcity of educational facilities. Calamity is that its educational matters are affected by maladjustment and malpractices. Quality of education is low. There may be many more causes behind this appalling situation, but the present study focused on exploring causes behind use of unfair means at the higher secondary level

examinations. After the analysis of data gathered from supervisory staff and students, we come to the following conclusions.

Culture of accepting meals and gifts is undermining impartial vigilance on the part of supervisory staff. Political affiliations are being misused. Most of the forms of unfair means are being used under the auspices of corrupt and lenient supervisory staff. Parents are putting undue pressure on their children to get good marks. Nepotism is affecting the educational system negatively. The situation in the rural areas is more deplorable than that of rural areas. There is lack of motivation to prepare for the examination on the part of student

In order to improve the educational situation, especially at the higher secondary level in Baluchistan, some key recommendations are given below the application of which will improve the standards of education in the province.

There should be totally neutral venues for the supervisory staff for conducting exams the chances of nepotism and favoritism can be curtailed. Supervisory staff should observe the rules and those not observing should be punished accordingly. There should be counseling at the student and parent level in order to motivate the students to prepare for exams seriously rather than relying on cheating.

In the latest exams of higher secondary education conducted by Karachi Board during May 2017, the papers were reputedly leaked into the WhatsApp groups and the answers of the questions were sent to the students through the electronic devices on the frequent basis. This is a seriously alarming situation that how badly the education system has deteriorated across Pakistan and how the students are using the unfair means to get advantage of cheating to score more marks. The poor performance of the invalidators who failed to check the leaking of the papers makes them equally guilty. In this regard, the BBISE has to be very careful and cautious in ensuring that certain incidents do not take place in Balochistan while conducting the higher secondary exams.

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