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What Limits the Access of Education for Out of School Children? Implications for Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

Investigation of reasons for being out of school and how to overcome the number of out of school children by identifying some implications for teacher education is the focus of this study. Thematic analysis was used to explore these reasons by using semi structured interviews of 216 children. Views from social media (Face book) were also collected to get the clear picture of out of school children's problems. The analysis was conducted with the help of N Vivo 11 plus software. Data highlighted many reasons of being out of school using codes, themes and subthemes. These reasons were unfriendly schools, poverty, illiteracy, gender, disability, and jobless fathers', fear of sexual harassment, domestic conflicts, high inflation rate and family size. As some of the reasons such as gender bias, unfriendly schools, disability have direct implications for teacher education. Efforts, therefore, were made to identify the required changes in the teacher education. A strategic plan to overcome these barriers was defined at the end for teacher education programs.

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1. Introduction

Provision of equal rights of education is the responsibility of Government. According to Ministry of Education (2015), 6.7 million children were out of schools; of which 55% are girls and Pakistan's Government is working hard to enhance the number of students at primary level. But, Government of Pakistan (2018) identified 22.84 million school age children that were not enrolled in school. First three dimensions of 5D model of exclusion cover those children who never attend any school (UNICEF, 2016).

UN (2014) showed that the main reasons for children either dropping out or not attending schools are poverty, gender, and location. Children from rural and conflict affected areas, girls and disable children also fall under this category. Andrew and Orodho (2014) and Mpyangu et al. (2014)

explained some reasons why children have never attended school? These may be some socioeconomic reasons such as parents' educational level, income of family, and school's physical facilities which enhance teaching and learning process and also affect the access to school. Children interest, family trends, disability, unsafed way to school, sexual harassment, domestic violence are some reasons for being out of school. Boys help in home tasks such as family business and farms while girls are busy in cooking, cleaning, fetching water or wood, etc., tend animals. Some other reasons identified by Kulkarni (2014) in Karnataka, India such as migration, street child or rag picker, puberty, runaway children, and death. Kyrgyzstan Country Study showed that, in dimension 1 the reasons behind out of school children are geographic location, poverty, living without one or both parents and children in new settlements with poor infrastructure. In dimension 2 the reasons are rural areas, poor families, non-Kyrgyz speaking families, street children, children without registration documents, disable children, migrants and children with ethnic conflicts. While in Kyrgyzstan children of Lyuli ethnic minority community are being out of school due to poverty, stigma and discrimination, marginalization, cultural attitudes towards education, lack of job opportunities and child labour (UNICEF, 2012c).

Demand side socio cultural and economic barriers, supply side barriers and the reasons related to the governance, capacity, and financing of government are te root causes that slowdown the access to education in countries studies (UNICEF, 2012; 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2012d; 2013; & 2013). Ababa (2012) and Assessment Capacities Project (2012) also identified the same factors. Mostly children of age 7-18 in South Africa don't like to go to school as too old/young think education is useless and they cant' perform good in schools and will fail in exam. Girls' early marriage and pragnancy also slow down the rate of education. Poverty, illness, disability, family commitment, violence in school and in the way to school disheart children and stop their education (Department of Basic Education, 2013). Kakoli & Sayeed (2013) found that in poor urban areas low enrollment is increased in the presence of illiterate women at home. They said that the economic condition of families increased the probability of out of school children. They also observed that boys and girls have different reasons for being out of school.

Girls are more vulnerable than boys. Poverty, ethnicity, orphanage, disability begging and living in conflict and post conflict areas become the root causes for being out school girls (Stromquist, 2014). Out of school children have not life and social skills, their standard of living is low and many times due to poverty they like to be engged in illegal and risky activities (Vayachuta et al. 2016). The armed conflict in Sri Lanka had caused serious disturbance in people's lives espacially children as they recruited as child soldiers by rebel groups. In this situation rate of teachers' deployment, teachers' and students' attendance, school closure, students' low academic performance and drop out increased. Some other factors are negative attitudes of teachers, uninteresting lessons, and harassment by teachers and peers also increased the number of out of school children. As gender is not important among the main reasons of being out of school, but in some ethnic groups and communities girls pull out of school and into work especially low income Muslim girls who dropped out of school after menarche (UNICEF, 2013). The current education system is failing to provide an environment and opportunity for every child to become effective participants in her/his own growth and learning and towards country's development. Out of school children's accidental learning and planned learning can be increased with increase in participation of teacher educators, and it can be done with the help of change in training and curricula of teacher educators, as teachers help in linking the child and knowledge (Bruce, 1989).

Situation of out of school children in Pakistan is very critical. Parents' permission, children interest, poverty, distance to school, home tasks are te basic reasons for never attending school and leave school before completion in Pakistan (MoE, 2013). In Sindh, poverty, impact of religion, earning, migration and displacement, instructional language, caste, gender, ethnicity, labour, natural diasaster,

disability and location of school become serious problems to the education of children (Bajwa, 2011). UNICEF (2013b) concluded the reasons for being out of school in all the four provinces of Pakistan. Some reasons relate to schools such as deficiencies in the teaching-learning process, lack of facilities especially infrastructure, changes due to the process of devolution and decentralization. Weak coordination between public private partnership, low and inadequate budget allocations and distributions, low and inadequate supply of schools and teachers, incompetent school management also the causes of low enrollment. Other main problems are poverty, gender biases, and distance to school.

Schools have a positive impact on the education of children. You can say that teachers become crucial driver for the enhancement of education and the grooming of the children. Especially those teachers who have professional training transmit information in correct ways. So the role of teacher's education institutes is very important for effective teaching, assessment for learning, inclusion in schools, self-evaluation for schools' improvement and successful leadership.

The main objectives of this study were to;

- Investigate the reasons for being out of school.
- Identify some implications for teacher education.

There are five different dimensions of exclusion at three different levels of education i.e. Pre-primary, Primary and Lower secondary, in two different population groups e.g. children who were out of school and children who dropped out (UNICEF and UIS, 2011). In this study researcher interviewed 216 children who never attend any school to find out the reasons of their non-enrollment. Multistage sampling technique had been used for the selection of children from nine divisions of Punjab, Pakistan. This large sample improves the trustworthiness and quality of this research.

Researcher analyzed the interviews of participants by NVivo 11 plus and used qualitative thematic analysis in inductive, semantic and realistic way for the development of themes (Alholjailan, 2012; Maguire, & Delahunt, 2017; and Nowell, et al., 2017). The whole process of data analysis and interpretation included the collection and organization of data, giving meaning and writing comprehensible story and help others to grasp meaning and inference of the story. All this process is to collect words from the interviews of the participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013; 2013a). So the result is to generate narrow but rich and illuminative story (Bengtsson, 2016).

Thematic analysis of interviews of the participants starts from the process of transliteration. After that the process of transcription has been done. Regmi et al. (2010) explained transliteration as; "it is a process of rephrasing, and changing or harmonizing the meanings of words in one language with the meanings of words in another language". And transcription is the conversion of speech and sounds of interviewee into written statements from video or audio recording. After that researcher familiarized with data and labeled codes. Codes emerged from the interviews of the participants by sequencing and labeling the data (Delaney, et al., 2011; Davies, et al., 2014; Stead, et al., 2016; and Cassol, et al. 2018). After that themes and sub themes arose from arranging, sequencing and reviewing these codes, and at the last a thematic map developed from these codes (Vaismoradi, et al., 2013; Costa, et al.; Javadi, & Zarea; and Vaismoradi, et al., 2016). Facebook data explored these themes in supportive context which might not be generated in interviews. The main agenda of using social media (Facebook Page) was to explore unbiased and fair views of people (Snelson,; Social Media Research Group, 2016). Social media is a powerful tool used in many researches (Kosinski, et al., 2015; Wilson, et al., 2012; and Chover-Sierra, & MartõÁnez-Sabater, 2018). For this study researcher made a page on

Facebook in which this question was asked “Why children are out of school in Pakistan?” The responses were captured from social media by Ncapture Software and organized in the form of word document.

2. Results of Interviews

There were four themes arised from data analysis i.e “Socioeconomic Factors”, “Cultural Factors”, “Demographic Factors” and “Psychological Factors”. These were the actual root causes that restrain children from school.

2.1 Cultural Factors

First theme “Culture Factors” had three sub themes that were “Area’s Environment”, “Literacy”, and “Female Problems”. The fisrt sub theme “Area’s Environment” extracted from codes that were “children of my caste”, “sexual harassment”, “send their mentally retarded children to school”, and “people in my area are poor”. Out of school child 190 said that “The people of my area, who can afford children’s school, send their mentally ill children to school as well as the normal ones. Children of my caste go to school too”.

Second sub theme “Female Problems” emerged from the codes that were “different attitude towards boys and girls”, “grown up girl”, “early marriage of girls”, “give preference to boys”, and “negative attitude towards girls’ education”. Out of school child 216 explained female problem as “My parents and relatives show negative attitude towards girls’ education, they support only boys’ education”.

Third sub theme “Literacy” emerged from the codes that were “father is illiterate”, “parents are illiterate”, and “I am illiterate”. Out of school child 28 elucidated that “My father is illiterate. He never went to school. No one likes to go to school in our family. My mother was not going to school. I have never gone to school, as we can’t afford school”.

2.2 Demographic Factors

Second theme “Demographic Factors” had three sub themes. These were “Family Size”, “Living Area’s Status” and “Distance”. First sub theme “Family size” developed from some codes. These codes were “large family”, “siblings”, and “each of us busy in earning”. Out of school child 75 identified that “We are nine in the family. I have six siblings. None of us are going to school. Second sub theme “distance” reflected from the codes that were “money for transport”, and “does not drop me to school”. Out of school child 115 said that “If I had no money for admission, then how can I get money for transport? My father doesn’t bother about my education. He does not drop me to school in my childhood”. Third sub theme “Living Area’s Status” emerged from some codes. these were “rich area”, “green area”, “disaster area”, and “poor area”. Out of school child 22 told that “People in my area are very poor. I can’t think about my future in those worse conditions of living”.

2.3 Psychological Factors

The third theme “Psychological Factors” had four sub themes. These were “Adjustment Problems”, “Parents and Children’s Relationship”, “Personal Problems”, and “Future Dreams”. First sub theme “Adjustment Problems” emerged from some codes, i.e. “can’t adjust”, and “divide household work”. Out of school child 1 explored that “Sometimes I work for money. I help with house chores; I cut grass for my animals. No one will do house chores in my absence, as we have divided our household work”. Second sub theme “Parents and Children’s Relationship” arised from the codes that were “does not bother about my education”, and “parents are busy in house chores”. Out of school child 42 said that “My parents have to go for labour work so they don’t even drop me to school. I help my parents in earning money and do all household work. Each of us is busy in earning. My siblings are little and no

one will do my house chores, if I will start study". Third sub theme "Personal Problems" emerged from some codes. These were "likes to go to school", "likes to study in my mother tongue", "can't go to school", and "puberty". Out of school child 18 said that "I have never gone to school, as we can't afford school. But, I like to go to school. I can't able to go to school as I have no money for admission in school". The fourth sub theme "Future Dreams" extracted from some codes, i.e. "can't think about my future", "don't think to become anything in future", "successful person", "my strongest wish is to study", "doctor", "my dream will never come true", "teacher", "police officer", and "my wish is only a wish". Out of school child 3 elucidated that "I can't think about my future in those worse conditions of living. I don't think to become anything in the future if I have a chance to study".

2.4 Socioeconomic Factors

The last theme of interviews of out of school children was "Socio Economic Factors". It had five sub themes i.e. "Poverty", "Occupation", "Unemployment", "Family Problems", and "Help in Family". The "Poverty" sub theme had emerged from twelve codes. these were "got relative help", "can't afford school", "no money for admission", "no money for purchasing copies and books", "not a single penny for buying a uniform", "worried about our poverty", "worse condition of living", "my parents can't afford stationary and books", "teachers will send me back to home if I have not uniform", "can't afford any kind of transport", "have not land and money", and "no fee, stationery, uniform, shoes and transport". According to out of school child 105 "I do not go to school, as I have not fee for admission and my parents can't afford stationary and books for my education. They are not able to purchase uniform and shoes for me. School teachers will send me back to home if I have not uniform. We also can't afford any kind of transport for my education. My parents have to go for labour work so they don't even drop me to school. I don't help my parent in earning money but I do the household work". Second sub theme "Occupation" emerged from the codes that were "father is a labourer", "mother is a house wife", "father has a cart and he sells homemade drinks", "works in a shop on daily wages", "father works in a shop", "father sells homemade toys", and "parents are working with a constructor". According to the out of school child 31 "We are very poor and monthly income is nine to ten thousand. My father is working in a factory". The next sub theme was "Unemployment". This sub theme arised from "he is unemployed", "contribute in my family", "wandering for earning", "family income", "father does nothing as he is ill", and "want to get an education for job". Out of school child 188 said "My father does nothing and takes drugs. We collect some amount of money from my relatives and live with my uncle. My mother died". The sub theme "Family Problems" had some codes and these were; "my uncle is our guardian", "my father do nothing and takes drugs", "parents worried about our food not our marriage", "my mother died", "parents quarrel with each other", and "no one will do house chores in my absence". Out of school child 48 explored that "My mother died when I was very young". "As I am only 12 years old, parents worried about our food not our marriage". The last sub theme was "Help in Family". The codes of this sub theme extracted from labeling were "I work for money", "help in house chores", "cut grass for animals", "help my parents in earning money", "help my mother in making food", and "clean home and wash utensils". Out of school child 61 told that "I contribute in my family. Sometimes I work for money. I help in house chores; I make food and take care of our young ones. No one will do house chores in the absence of me, as we have divided our household work".

3. Results of Facebook Data

In order to identify some reasons for out of school a Facebook page with the name of "Why children are out of school in Pakistan" was developed. The attributes on which participants show their willingness were "Parents", "Education", "Behaviour", "Poverty", and "Family size". These attributes were identified by thematic analysis in NVivo 11 plus software.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of Identified Detailed Themes Map of Thematic Analysis in NVivo11 for Facebook Data (Reasons for Out of School).

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study sought to conceptualize the factors which hinder the education of out of school children and seeking some implications for teachers education that improve the literacy. Findings of the thematic analysis showed that four major themes emerged from the data of out of school children.

After the thematic analysis; the researcher concluded that according to the out of school children

their schools were on distance. Their families were large and mostly all the children at home did not go to school. Low income and poverty lagged them behind with other children of their age. Only one child said that their family income is above than 27000 but his father did not admit about family income and at that situation researcher should note the socioeconomic condition of the family. Parents were labourers, but the analysis also showed that unemployed, died and works other than labour were also reflected in the analysis. Most of the parents of out of school children were illiterates, but some fathers had gone to school in their childhood. Results of interviews of out of school children showed that children liked to go to school, but they had not a fee, books, and copies, uniforms, and shoes, no one to drop them. Out of school children of ages, more than 12 years contributed to house chores and in the families earning. They did different works in homes, for instance, girls helped their mothers in cooking, cleaning, and washing while boys helped their fathers in cutting grass for animals. Children thought that the mother will do house chores if they will start study. Whereas, many thought that no one does their house chores in their absence. Parents were busy in and out of the home so they had not timed for their children's education.

According to the viewpoint of out of school children; puberty did not come against their education while some teenagers were worried about their puberty. Most of the out of school children did not feel fear of sexual harassment, but parents were worried about their children especially female children. They thought that the people in their area were not good. Early marriage was not the actual problem of being out of school. Children denied their marriage related problems, but they said about the early marriage of girls in their caste and area. Out of school children refuted the negative attitude towards girls' education, but some reflected the negative attitude of the people of their caste towards girls' education. Mostly, People of their area did not like to send their mentally or physically retarded children to school as they did not bother about their education and they have no money and resources for those children. Participants of this study narrated the positivistic approach of the people of their caste about their children's education, but some children had the same point of view in this regard and others did not agree. Mostly, parents of out of school children did not quarrel with each other, whereas some admitted that due to the high inflation rate they were worried and they quarrel with each other on little matters. Children thought that if they had not any problem they want to go to school. Parents did not change their living place for earning but, some parents said that they change their living place many times for earning. If opportunities were provided to them, out of school children want to get an education in their mother tongue.

Most of the area of Punjab is a green plain area so most of them out of school children and their parents said that their area was not a disaster area. But, who identified it as poor and disaster area had related it with their poor family condition and thought that all area was poor or disaster. They said that the only fee is not the actual cause of being out of school; they required all educational resources for their children. Most of out of school children were hopeless about children's future and thought nothing about it. But, some said about their future wishes, i.e. doctor, teacher, etc. On the whole, poverty was the actual reason for being out of school.

Facebook data showed that children are not in school due to their parents' attitude, their wish to get education, children and parents' behavior, poverty and family size. Parents' attitudes, interests and ideas about their children's education, encourage or discourage their children to go to school. Many parents of out of school children are hopeless, uneducated, and illiterate. They have no concern about the education of their children due to their ignorance and their earning is also not to feed them. Some uneducated parents have a great wish to send their children to school in order to get a good education.

Some children are being out of school due to the fear from studies. They and their parents don't

know the importance of education. In our country now education is free, but parents are unaware of this. In order to provide education to children does not mean to send them to school, but to send them with all accessories to school. So, it becomes difficult for the poor whose actual focus is on about their survival, not to provide education to their children. Now a day, education becomes expensive and people who are underprivileged and unemployed can't afford educational expenses. Facebook data reflected that children have no financial support, they have lack of basic facilities, their business is begging, they are sacrificing basic needs and they belong to large families. Hence, these reasons don't support their education.

5. Implications for Teacher Education

Education is compulsory in Pakistan by law and all the education policies from the birth of Pakistan endorse free basic education as Shami (2010) said that in every announced education policy, the government has a great emphasis on literacy and universal enrollment. Researcher found no any context-specific research to document the voices of out of school children and to map out some plans to solve the problems of out of school children. Government full focus is only on to find out of school children not to decrease the ratio of out of school children. A strategic program for the reduction of out of school children was developed by researcher for in service and pre service teachers as teachers are the agents of change, initiators, facilitators, coordinators, assessors and all in all in educational development of a child.

The below table 1 arranged the core results and their corresponding implications for teacher education.

Table 1: Results and Implications for Teacher Education

Results Themes	Subthemes	Implications for Teacher Education
Cultural Factors	Area's environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the community – teacher collaboration • Prospective teachers' participation in Child Development programmes • Teachers' participation in awareness campaigns for improving Area's environment) • Weekend Mobile schools (For overage out of school children)
	Literacy rate of that area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch-up program(1 teacher 5 out of school children) • Manage a data base for hard-to-reach groups of Out of School Children • Distance learning programs • Publications and brochures
	Female problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social protection strategies with collaboration of human right commission and teachers • Teachers Training Programs aims to discourage early marriage • Gender disparity reduction program (Teachers – Commutinty Participation)

Demographic Factors	Family size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population policy and teachers campaign • Birth control programs for matching family size to household income (Seminars and Conferences)
	Living area status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a program to cope with seasonal needs for labour during harvest (Community –
Psychological Factors	Adjustment problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting teaching and learning methods that take into account the diverse ages and abilities of pupils. • Alternative tutoring programmes for children significantly overage • Schools should be able to adjust their individual calendars to meet the requirements of localized seasonal economic activities. • Accelerated Learning Program for overage children
	Future dreams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' awareness campaign to encourage traditional family and community support systems for orphans
	Parents and children's relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future counseling at local level • Periodic education of parents who could then transfer their new understanding to their children
	Personal Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas' wise counseling therapy of out of school children • Teachers' participation in centers for social work at local level
Socioeconomic Factors	Poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry, community and school collaboration to support access to education and poverty reduction • Teachers training in making crafts or other related activities
	Unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers' campaign to mobilize support from the private sector, philanthropists, and donor organizations • Development of employment promotion program at District level • Vocational guidance programmes

	Family problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers' proactive measures to raise awareness among parents
	Parents' occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance to parents Social insurance scheme
	Help in family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher-Student part-time tutoring program for earning Encourage children participation in home made crafts
Other Factors	Work on daily wages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaign for increase in income per capita
	Wish to get education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop advocacy campaign for parents to enroll their children in school
	House chores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School incentives program for encouraging parents to participate in early or prompt registration of children
	Involvement of other persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School-community participation Regulation of video cinemas, and television with possible heavy fines for violators of education Teachers; political, religious and community leaders should work closely
	Parents' behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide continuing education for parents through the alternative learning systems (ALS).

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