An Interview with Prof. Khawaja Masud

Q. What inspired you to become an educationist?
Every civilization faces many challenges, if it faces that challenge with audacity and astuteness, it earns name in history. Before the independence, when I was a student, there was an intense competition among Muslims and non-Muslims in the subcontinent. Muslims were not very skillful in mathematics at that time. I wanted to change this perception about the Muslims. As a matter of fact, Muslims were being deliberately sidelined in every field of life by Hindus that is what persuaded me to opt for teaching as a profession.

Q. What qualities, do you think should be culminated in teachers' personalities?
In my opinion, the responsibility of a teacher is not only to enhance the content knowledge but also to monitor psychological and physical growth of students. Teacher should be disciplined, punctual, and persistent. This job requires commitment, dedication and sincerity towards the profession. Teachers are never to compromise on principles. I believe respect works on give and take rule, as if a two-way traffic. Teachers earn respect by respecting their students. To widen the mental horizons of students, a teacher should welcome questioning, from students and encourage curiosity. Personally I suggest that teachers should apply Socrates’ inquiry teaching technique in the classroom.

Q. In your opinion, what are the major flaws in our education system? Where our education system has gone a miss?
There are many problems:

1. Education system should be rehabilitated at grass root level. We should appoint highly qualified teachers at primary level.
2. We should work on curriculum. Today’s society is in transition. Knowledge is being modernized rapidly. First doubling of knowledge occurred in 1750, then in 1900, 1950, 1960 and so on. Now doubling of knowledge occurs after 10 or even 5 years. New advancement in knowledge should be incorporated in curricula to achieve excellence in scientific technologies.
3. Our students are not used to book reading. Due to lack of interest in books, we are not able to think logically, using scientific standards, methods and techniques. Therefore we are unable to use the potential of brains. Our teachers make notes and emphasize on selective notes study. This attitude has led us to face a very critical situation. Our students have very limited knowledge of their respective fields. A new era has evolved and world is changing at a faster pace so we should change our orthodox thinking. West used brains; there was an awakening and renaissance that lead to modern age and new world. While Muslims as a nation, on the contrary are still in the ultimate world, because they have not realized to keep up with the pace of the modern world. In an age of constant flux, change is the only constant. Students must develop the habit of book reading to acquire knowledge by the use of reasoning, intuition and perception.

Our teachers are working at meagre salaries. We should acknowledge their role and provide handsome salaries. We should encourage teachers by incentives.

Q. What are your views about PEF?
It gives me great pleasure to see Foundation working in marginalized and less privileged areas of Punjab. I personally feel that public money should be spent on the education of poor and downtrodden class of society.

Q. What is the quintessence of your whole experience of life?
Never compromise on your principles. Being a principal (Gordon College Rawalpindi) and a teacher I faced immense social and political pressures but I endured them, and never compromised on my principles. We cannot deny the importance of money but peace of mind and tranquility can only be attained through coaching the people on better and ascertainment watershed.

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Prof. Khawaja Masud sharing his views with Editorial Board "THE HOPE"
Monitoring and Evaluation plays a pivotal role in the success of any project. Projects which have robust Monitoring and Evaluation systems are better managed, more likely to be able to explain the reasons behind project successes and failures. The benefits of project evaluation can be over-stressed and it is recommended that all projects under take at least an internal evaluation. Keeping in view the same philosophy, PEF has established a separate M & E wing, with the intention of bringing in continuous improvement through rigorous surveillance in all programs initiated by PEF.

One of the substantial accomplishments by M & E wing is development of Monitoring and Evaluation Information Management System (MEIMS) for tabulation and timely dissemination of reports to all concerned. Till date all districts of FAS and TICSS partner schools have been covered, while random monitoring of CBT partners and EVS children is taking place simultaneously. M & E intends to model complete process flow with identification of grey areas and their rectification.

School Leadership Development Program (PEF-SLDP)

Considering the school principals’ pivotal role and their decisive input in managing the affairs of the schools even to the minutest details, PEF experimented with the idea of encouraging the school heads to sit in CBTs along with the teachers. The feedback and appreciation from the participating principals/heads was quite encouraging.

Based on the feedback of CBT trainees and incessant demand of school heads, it was realized that many teachers are finding it difficult to incorporate and integrate the newly envisaged teaching techniques in their mentoring practices. Out of many associated reasons for this, non-sensitization of school principals was being cited as the main obstacle. In addition to this, many school principals had repeatedly requested PEF to launch a separate training event for the school principals/heads & second-in-command precisely focusing on their administrative and leadership skills.

Keeping in view above demands, PEF started School Leadership Development Program (SLDP) in February, 2007. By now (From February, 2007 - March, 2007), Punjab Education Foundation has conducted almost 30 SLDP workshops, trained more than 600 Principals/Vice Principals/ Senior Teachers in 250 schools in 10 districts of Punjab including Hafizabad, Bhakkar, Gujranwala, Lahore, Bahawalpur, Rawalpindi, Kasur, Attock, Mianwali and Chakwal. The response of heads of institutions is so encouraging that it defies belief.
Workshop on “Principles of Pedagogical skills”

To strengthen the pedagogical skills of subject specialists from various districts working under the TICSS program, a six-days teachers’ training workshop was held at IER department, University of the Punjab, Lahore. Mr. Mahmood Ahmed Gaillani, Director CPDP, organized the workshop.

Intellectuals of erudition and eminence conducted the sessions. Participants learnt different skills regarding lesson planning, classroom management, Bloom’s Taxonomy, Solo Taxonomy, evaluation and assessment techniques, etc. Gp. Capt. Cecil Chaudhry SJ, SBT, member Board of Directors PEF, highlighted the importance of quality education in Public Private Partnership. Addressing the certificate distribution ceremony, he said that Quality Education is the fundamental part of education; we should integrate finest, modern and innovative techniques of teaching in the present system of education. There are three stakeholders of education namely, Parent, Teacher and Student. This makes an equilateral triangle in which role of all three is important. Teachers are the role models and leave a long lasting impact on the students.

Dr. Fareeha Zafar, Director SAHE pointed out that teachers and trainers should adopt the medium of instruction which is acceptable to a larger audience, especially while teaching in rural and urban areas. Teaching in Urdu is a more pragmatic approach in terms of learning outcomes of the students. She asked teachers to particularly focus on the understanding of terminology and difficult diagrams in sciences.

Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Iqbal, Director IER (PU) stressed the need to incorporate new techniques and skills in teaching. He said that teachers should update their knowledge. He thanked the Managing Director PEF, Dr. Allah Baksh Malik, for placing trust in IER for this training. He was sanguine that cooperation between IER and PEF will continue in future.

Dr. Allah Baksh Malik, Managing Director, Punjab Education Foundation, thanked all the participants for their active participation and emphasized upon them to improve their communication skills.

Presentation to Standing Committee of Senate by MD PEF

A meeting with standing committee of the senate on education and information technology was convened at PEF secretariat on March 9, 2007. Punjab Education Foundation Managing Director Dr. Allah Baksh Malik in his briefing said a comprehensive plan of action was being executed to improve the quality of education in 13 districts of the province. He said that financial assistance to less privileged private schools, provision of free books and capacity building of teachers had helped strengthen the education sector of Punjab.

He said that PEF has established Academic Development Unit in order to organize teachers’ training programs in an integrated manner. He said that Subject Specialists of PEF are playing key role in imparting professional expertise to the teachers of private schools of backward areas. He said that 11,000 teachers had been provided training under the Cluster Based Training program. Chairperson standing committee of the Senate on education and information technology, Senator Rozina Alam Khan, Senator Nighat Agha, Senator Emmar Ahmad Khan, Senator Dr. Ahmad Maqsood, Senator Prof. M. Ibrahim Khan, Senator Molvi Agha Muhammad, Senator Sajid Mir, Senator Dr. Abdul Khalique Peerkhaza, Director General Urdu Science Board, Dr. Khalid Yasar and other high officials were also present.

Chairperson standing committee of the senate on education and information technology, Senator Rozina Alam Khan and other senators appreciated the concrete measures of PEF which it has taken to improve the education sector through various programs.
Sources of Educational Finance: Affordable Quality Education in Public Private Partnership

The paper on "Sources of Educational Finance: Affordable Quality Education in Public Private Partnership" was presented by Dr. Allah Bakhsh Malik, Managing Director, Punjab Education Foundation in stakeholders Forum at 16th Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers (16th CCEM) in Cape Town, South Africa.

He explicated, "Education is quintessential pre-requisite and basic building block for social capital formation in all societies. It is a truism quite valid for all communities and societies that education is the first stepping stone for every thing good in life. Education vastly influences individual's cognitive and conative abilities. It can be said without fear of contradiction that education is one of the most powerful catalyzing agents".

He further elucidated on 'The Sources of Educational Finance: Affordable Quality Education in Public Private Partnership'. Through efficient allocative mechanism, Pareto optimal utilization of the allocated funds and resilient management in Public Private Partnership, not only better quality education could be provided at much lesser cost as compared to public sector schooling system but also the trojanly available resources could be better utilized for the benefit of a larger section of society.

The paper underscored upon the four essential elements.
- Pattern of Fast growing private schooling system in Pakistan.

News

Meeting with members of Sindh Education Foundation

A six member delegation from Sindh Education Foundation headed by Mr. Aziz Kabani, Associate Director SEF, visited Punjab Education Foundation from February 27th to March 4th, 2007. The rationale of the visit was to coordinate and share the working procedures of PEF to replicate the model of FAS in Sindh.

Director (FAS), Mr. Sajjad Khan dillated upon the procedures and schematics of the FAS program. The team visited FAS schools in Bahawalnagar, Narowal and Lahore. SEF Team conceivably admired the efforts of PEF in providing Quality Education to underprivileged masses of Punjab.

Meeting with CPDP Partners

A Seminar with CBT partner organizations was held to mutually discuss the problems, issues and orientate them on the line of action.

Mr. Shahid Hafiz Kardar, chaired the conference and highlighted the need to focus on the following areas.
- Engage partners at Secondary level.
- Improve the amount and content of material being provided to the teachers.
- Share the program with District Governments.
- Expand and accelerate the pace of CBTs.
- Increase the pace of follow up workshops.

Partner organizations had the following suggestions.
- Budget for CPDP should be revised.
- Development of low cost AV aids.
- Allow partner organizations to observe ADU workshops at secondary level.

In the end Dr. Malik gave the tidings to the Partner organizations that PEF has launched School Leadership Development Program (SLDP) to sensitize the school leadership to concentrate on cognition and concept building activity and refrain from encouraging rote learning.
Education Voucher Scheme (PEF-EVS)

The Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) is promoting quality education through public private partnership. The Education Voucher Scheme (PEF-EVS) is a key part of this initiative. The scheme aims to provide financial support to students from low-income families to attend private schools.

Under the PEF-EVS, eligible students receive a voucher that can be used to pay for tuition fees and other educational expenses at participating private schools. The scheme is designed to increase access to high-quality education and promote competition among private schools.

The PEF-EVS has been successful in attracting a large number of participants. In March 2007, the program had more than 11,000 participants, with the number of participants expected to increase in the future.

The PEF-EVS is an example of how public-private partnerships can be used to address educational inequalities and improve the quality of education in Pakistan.
Budgetary Allocation (January - March, 2007)

Finance section ensures internal controls at each level of the organization in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. Finance section is supporting the operations by facilitating the process of payments in time. The total monthly program expenditures disbursed during this quarter are Rs.26.18(M), Rs.26.70(M) and Rs.28.83(M) for the months of Jan, Feb, and March respectively. The expenditures under different programs have been increased by 10.65% in January, 2.06% in February, 2007 and 7.93% in March, 2007 respectively during this quarter.

Program Expenditures

- FAS
- CST
- TCSS
- EVS

Meeting of Finance Committee for the allocation of Budget

PEF: Programs/Projects

- FAS
  - Partner Institutions = 283
  - Districts Reached = 13
  - Students Benefited = 1,00,000

- SLDP
  - Workshops Conducted = 30
  - Principal Trained = 1,000
  - Districts Reached = 16
  - School Benefited = 250

- CPDP
  - Workshops Conducted = 385
  - Districts Reached = 35
  - Teachers Trained = 20,000
  - School Benefited = 4,000

- EVS
  - Teachers Trained = 1,000
  - School Benefited = 10
  - Students Benefited = 5,000

- TCSS
  - Districts Reached = 11
  - School Benefited = 205
  - Students Benefited = 25,000

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